GOLD**VI**

PATHWAYS TO URBAN AND TERRITORIAL EQUALITY

Addressing inequalities through
local transformation strategies

————— **2022**

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Editorial board

Foreword

For decades, many public policies around the world have aimed at reducing inequalities and guaranteeing inclusion. In spite of this, great gaps still persist and can even been described as systemic. Addressing them will be critical not only to handle the many overlapping crises facing our world today, but also to define a sustainable and more equal path forward.

As we approach the mid-term review of 2030 Agenda implementation and follow-up, we will need to be more ambitious in bridging these systemic gaps by reforming our governance systems and our production and consumption models, not only to satisfy the current needs of our communities but also to safeguard the aspirations of generations to come. Inequalities are embedded in the places where people live and which are governed by local and regional governments. Inequalities manifest themselves in the urban and territorial fabric: growing between neighbourhoods, urban systems and territories – between globalized metropolises and regions, intermediary cities and marginalized rural regions and towns.

The international municipal movement led by United Cities and Local Governments is convinced that the provision of strong local public services, accessible to all, in cities that facilitate social inclusion, proximity and the ecological transition, are critical to generate caring societies that have equality and justice at their core. A local, feminist way of governing, leading through empathy, which addresses the needs of populations that have been historically marginalized; an ecological transformation that makes our relationship with nature sustainable; and a renewed governance culture and fiscal architecture are the pillars of the sustainable future we imagine being built from the bottom up.

This sixth GOLD Report builds on these premises, as well as on the grounded experiences of UCLG's membership around the world and the transformative vision that drives their actions. Building on localization efforts to achieve the universal development agendas and considering them as a framework, the Report has been coproduced through broad multistakeholder dialogue involving civil society coalitions, academia, UCLG committees and partners, as well as local and regional governments.

Aware of the complex nature of the responses needed, **the Report innovates by introducing the notion of "pathways to urban and territorial equality"**, which can be understood as trajectories of change, capable of supporting decision-making processes, policies, actions and planning systems that actively seek to improve urban and territorial equality. The Report proposes six such pathways that local and regional governments, in addition to all other stakeholders, need to advance to achieve equality: **Commoning**, **Caring**, **Connecting**, **Renaturing**, **Prospering** and **Democratizing**. Combined, they form the vision that the Report is advancing: a radical revision of urban and territorial development strategies and policies to safeguard the future of people and the planet through better governance.

Acknowledging that no single level of government nor any single actor can tackle these challenges alone, the Report calls for adopting a rights-based approach, effective subnational governance and a reviewed financial architecture. It also encourages alternative ways of conceiving and managing space and time in cities and territories to support incremental practices for localizing sustainable development and addressing inequalities. This calls for enhancing local and regional governments' capacities to lead and support transformative initiatives that stem from alliances at the local level. By going beyond their usual powers and responsibilities, they ensure a new governance that is multilevel and collaborative, promoting ecosystems and partnerships for mutual support in ways that boost cocreation with our communities.

Most importantly, shaping a more equal, just and sustainable future requires transformative action from local and regional governments. The pathways described above and the content of this Report are essential contributions to UCLG policy initiatives and to its Pact for the Future, which will be presented during UCLG's 7th World Congress in Daejeon in October 2022. Built in accordance with its three pillars – people, planet and government – GOLD VI identifies equality as an essential building block of a transformed relationship between people and nature, which requires responsive and accountable governments.

As we head towards the Summit of the Future, it is our hope that our work will be a source of inspiration to our membership around the world. We hope that it will foster renewed leadership practices and governance systems that will continue to shape partnerships and trigger actions contributing to sustainable peace and developing a universal shared agenda for years to come.

Emilia Saiz Carrancedo
UCLG Secretary General

Acronyms

ACHR	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
BRT	Bus rapid transit
CAAP	Community Action Area Planning
CASE-LSE	London School of Economics – Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion Research
CBC	Case-based contribution
CCTV	Closed-circuit television
CITU	Concrete Industry Trade Union (Hong Kong)
CLH	Community-led housing
CLT	Community land trust
COP	Conference of the Parties
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease, originated by SARS-CoV-2 virus
CSO	Civil society organization
e.g.	Exempli gratia
etc.	Et cetera
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
FEDURP	Federation of the Rural and Urban Poor of Sierra Leone
GBP	British pound sterling
GDP	Gross domestic product
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GIS	Geographic information system
GOLD VI	6th report of the Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralization
GNI	Gross national income
GPR2C	Global Platform for the Right to the City
HDI	Human Development Index
HIC	Habitat International Coalition

HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired immunodeficiency Syndrome
HKD	Hong Kong dollar
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
HRC	Human Rights City
IBC	Issue-based contribution
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
ICT	Information and communication technologies
i.e.	Id est
IGP	The University College London's Institute of Global Prosperity
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IT	Information technologies
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
KNOW	Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality
KRW	South Korean won
LGA	Local and regional government association
LED	Local economic development
LEDA	Local economic development agency
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual+
LIS	Luxembourg Income Study Database
LRG	Local and regional government
LSE	London School of Economics
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MIF	Multidimensional Inequality Framework
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MPPN	Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network
MRTC	Mass Transit Railway Corporation (Hong Kong)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NHAG	Namibia Housing Action Group

NIP	Neighbourhood improvement programme
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NUP	National urban policy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PB	Participatory budgeting
PM10, PM2.5	Particulate matter with a diameter smaller than respectively 10 and 2.5 μm
PPP	Purchasing power parity
PWD	Person with disabilities
SDFN	Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDI	Shack/Slum Dwellers International
SLURC	Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SNG	Subnational government
SNG-WOFI	World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Spending
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSE	Social and solidarity economy
SSEOE	Social and solidarity economy organization and enterprise
THN	Thailand Homeless Network
TOD	Transit-oriented development
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USA	United States of America
USD	United States dollar
V-dem	Varieties of Democracy Institute
VLR	Voluntary Local Review

VSR	Voluntary Subnational Review
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	World Inequality Database
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing
WIID	World Income Inequality Database
WRI	World Resources Institute
ZAR	South African rand

Symbols

m (unpreceded by space)	Million
bn	Billion
m (preceded by space)	Metre
km	Kilometre
m²	Square metre
m-3	Cubic metre
µg	Microgram
kWh	Kilowatt-hour
CO₂	Carbon dioxide
NO₂	Nitrogen dioxide
°C	Celsius degree
%	Percent
+	Over

01 ↓

Introduction

Pathways to urban and territorial equality: Addressing inequalities through local transformation strategies

ABSTRACT

Abstract

For UCLG, as an equality-driven movement, addressing inequalities is a key priority for promoting the central role of local and regional governments (LRGs): leaving no one and no place behind. This chapter introduces the aims, objectives, scope and structure of the GOLD VI Report, which focuses on pathways to urban and territorial equality and examines different ways in which LRGs can address inequalities through local transformation strategies. This introductory chapter presents the approach adopted by GOLD VI to combat urban and territorial equality. It is organized in a series of sections. Section 1 introduces the central focus on equality, as well as the important role that local action and LRGs have to play in this challenge. It also presents the strategic objectives of the Report. Section 2 provides a definition of urban and territorial equality and reflects on the multidimensional nature of inequalities and the intertwined relationship between inequality and other challenges to development and crises: equal distribution, reciprocal recognition, parity political participation, and solidarity and mutual care. It then introduces the notion of pathways as a framework in which to discuss LRG responses to inequalities within the Report. Section 3 briefly explains the process behind the coproduction of GOLD VI, which assumes that a transformative agenda for equality needs to be shaped by a collective process that relies on the experiences and knowledges of multiple actors. Section 4 describes the structure and elements of the Report. It explains how to read it, provides a review of the different sections, and offers a brief introduction to the six pathways that structure the Report and to the principles derived from the exploration of these pathways and the resulting recommendations.

1 Urban and territorial inequalities: An urgent challenge for humanity and the critical role of local and regional governments

The last three years have been a challenging time for cities and territories across the globe. While local and regional governments (LRGs), national governments, organized civil society and international agencies have mobilized their capacities to the limit to respond to the unprecedented demands of the COVID-19 crisis, old and new territorial challenges have become more acute and have continued to undermine the human rights of large parts of the population. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimates that global human development declined in 2020; that was the first time

that this had occurred since the concept was developed in 1990.[1] According to projections by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the total number of global hours worked in 2021 was 4.3% below pre-pandemic levels; this was equivalent to 125 million full-time jobs and there was a disproportionate impact on self-employed and informal workers.[2] The World Bank estimates

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1 UNDP, "Coronavirus vs. Inequality," 2020, https://bit.ly/3qahXP8.

2 ILO, "ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the World of Work. Eighth Edition." (Geneva, 2021), https://bit.ly/364fYFp.

that COVID-19 could have subjected as many as 150 million people to extreme poverty in 2021.[3] We know that the impact of this global historical juncture has been unevenly distributed and that it has been experienced differently across populations, regions and cities. It has, in turn, exacerbated the plight of those who were already suffering from multiple, intersectional social disadvantages. At the centre of this lies an undeniable challenge: inequalities. Three-quarters of cities were more unequal in 2016 than in 1996.[4] Inequalities are perpetuated by structures inherited from longstanding trajectories of injustice, but also exacerbated by other adverse phenomena such as wars, the climate emergency, forced migration, and – of course – COVID-19. **This Report is a collective effort to put inequalities at the centre of urban and territorial questions and to actively look for ways to address them through local transformation strategies.**

Although inequalities have been increasingly acknowledged as a global challenge, shaped by structural conditions at multiple scales, coordinated actions at the local level are indispensable to tackle their territorial manifestations, as well as many of their underlying causes. The Durban Declaration of 2017 reconfirmed United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) as an equality-driven movement, recognizing local action as being at the front line in the fight to address inequalities. Local knowledge and practices are crucial for articulating meaningful and effective responses to inequalities that are locally experienced. Addressing inequalities therefore requires collaboration at multiple scales, and the actions of LRGs are a key place to start.

The role of LRGs in reframing and responding to inequalities is fundamental for at least three main reasons. Firstly, local authorities are at the forefront of the territorial manifestations of global phenomena and therefore tend to have better knowledge about how people experience inequalities on a day-to-day basis. Secondly, LRGs have the capacity to act and mobilize efforts and collaboration between the public, private and civil society actors with a presence in their territories, working at different scales. Thirdly, they also have the potential to sustain action overtime and to ensure more direct accountability in the long term. The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the critical role played by LRGs in promoting and guaranteeing local well-being, food security, and the continuity of public services, and also

in protecting people from exacerbated vulnerability and eviction.[5] These local actions have been combined with efforts to coordinate common global agendas and international solidarity, understanding the importance of coordinated action to respond to structural constraints. **It is through these efforts that GOLD VI seeks to add a collective "urban and territorial equality" perspective. It acknowledges that, to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development objective of "leaving no-one and no place behind", it is crucial to promote equality when localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[6]**

GOLD VI has three strategic objectives:

° **Firstly,** GOLD VI seeks to reframe the ways that inequalities are understood in order to capture the complexity and drivers of current disparities, moving beyond narrowly monetarized definitions of equality to include principles related to distribution, recognition, participation and solidarity.

° **Secondly,** as an action-oriented report, GOLD VI seeks to highlight the challenges and alternatives facing urban and territorial governance in the democratic pursuit of urban and territorial equality. Governance-related questions are central and will be approached by identifying current policy and planning actions and through joint interventions that recognize the agency of LRGs in consolidating pathways to equality at different scales.

° **Thirdly,** GOLD VI seeks to highlight inequalities within debates about the role of LRGs in the accomplishment of global development agendas, including equality and justice in agendas such as the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai framework, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing Sustainable Development, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination.

3 World Bank, "COVID-19 to Add as Many as 150 Million Extreme Poor by 2021," 2020, https://bit.ly/3qbpoWu.

4 UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2016: Urbanization and Development - Emerging Futures," 2016, https://bit.ly/3qaczeY.

5 For a compilation of LRG responses to the pandemic, see Metropolis, UCLG, and AL-LAs' "Cities for Global Health" platform, 2022, https://bit.ly/3wcIm2E; and the "Beyond the Outbreak" knowledge hub co-led by UCLG, Metropolis, and UN-Habitat, 2020, https://bit.ly/3MP1f1A.

6 Stephanie Butcher et al., "Localising the Sustainable Development Goals: An Urban Equality Perspective," *International Engagement Brief* #2 (London, 2021), https://bit.ly/3u47cz3.

GOLD VI seeks to advance these strategic objectives by promoting a participatory and collaborative methodology that has been essential for the coproduction of this Report. In this process, there has been space for the voices, experiences and knowledges of a diverse range of actors – including local and regional government representatives, civil society networks, international agencies and academics.

This introductory chapter sets the scene for the journey through GOLD VI. In Section 2, the chapter discusses the meaning of "urban and territorial equality", inviting readers to embrace a multidimensional understanding of inequalities, and to reflect upon the intertwined relationship between inequality and other development challenges. Section 3 then briefly introduces the concept of "pathway", which is the key structuring notion for GOLD VI. Section 4 describes the process behind the production of GOLD VI, which was shaped by a collective process of coproduction that relied on the experiences and knowledges of multiple actors. Finally, Section 5 of this chapter explains to the reader how to navigate through this Report and its different pathways and chapters.

Source: Sam Okechukwu, Nigeria Slum / Informal Settlement Media Team, Know your City TV.
A peaceful protest is held by persons living with disabilities at The Lagos State House of Assembly following the sudden blanket ban on keke and okada (tricycles and motorbikes).

2 Defining "urban and territorial equality"

Urban and territorial inequalities are widening. This is depriving vast sectors of the population of their basic rights and a decent standard of living, while creating collective risks and also social, economic and environmental obstacles to development. Inequalities are growing almost everywhere. As Oxfam highlighted in 2020 in its examination of the profound injustice in the global distribution of wealth: "inequality is not inevitable – it is a political choice".[7] The world's richest 1% have more than twice the wealth of 6.9 billion people, or 90% of the world population; this situation is also mirrored in urban and territorial contexts.

Inequality is not only an urgent problem and an ethical and political challenge in itself; it is also a driver of several other global challenges. Addressing inequalities is an urgent task if we are to tackle most of the challenges that humanity is currently facing in a sustainable way. For example, in dealing with the climate emergency, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has argued that the "combination of climate change and inequality increasingly drives risk".[8] In the case of migration-related challenges, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has acknowledged that "migration is a highly visible reflection of global inequalities whether in terms of wages, labour market opportunities, or lifestyles".[9]

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the long-term crisis of care more visible than ever, exposing the weaknesses of "widening and persistent inequality" in almost every society.[10] In terms of democracy, researchers have shown that "the higher the inequality, the more likely we are to move away from democracy".[11] Understanding this intertwined relationship between inequality and other development-related challenges, GOLD VI specifically examines inequalities that are urban and territorial in nature.

Source: Jason Leung, Unsplash. San Francisco, CA, USA.

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7 Oxfam International, "A Deadly Virus: 5 Shocking Facts about Global Extreme Inequality," 2020, https://bit.ly/3ifdciY.

8 UNFCCC, "Combination of Climate Change and Inequality Increasingly Drives Risk," News, 2018, https://bit.ly/3CLCij9.

9 Heaven Crawley, "Why Understanding the Relationship between Migration and Inequality May Be the Key to Africa's Development," OECD Development Matters, 2018, https://bit.ly/3JkypE9.

10 UNDP, "Coronavirus vs. Inequality."

11 Branko Milanovic, "The Higher the Inequality, the More Likely We Are to Move Away from Democracy," *The Guardian*, 2017, https://bit.ly/36lAWiQ.

Box 1.1
Equality and equity

It is important to clarify the much-discussed differences between the concepts of "**equality**" and "**equity**". In the urban field, "inequality" is generally used as a descriptive term to refer to differences in people's capabilities for achieving well-being; these differences stem from unevenness in their access to the opportunities required to fulfil their needs and aspirations. On the other hand, "inequity" refers to a lack of fairness and therefore to questions of social justice.[12] GOLD VI uses the term "equality" as a way to embrace both descriptive and justice-related orientations and to reinforce the pursuit of equality as a common aspiration. Equality is understood as a vision that should always be on the horizon of actions undertaken by LRGs and which should serve to advance the collective efforts of "equality-driven movements", such as UCLG. In GOLD VI, the notion of equality also enables us to discuss reforms and distributive responses that can help address actual disparities experienced by people. GOLD VI understands that it is only by tackling the discursive, relational and material inequalities associated with both processes and outcomes that the cause of social justice can be advanced.

What do we mean by urban and territorial equality?

Although most definitions of equality tend to focus on the distribution of wealth and income, over the last few decades, several voices have called for a more multidimensional understanding of equality, based on the principle of justice. Drawing on these debates, GOLD VI proposes a shift in the understanding of equality that could help build pathways for action for LRGs: from a singular focus on *measuring* (in)equality to one based on capturing the *drivers* that perpetuate it; from a *universal* definition of inequality to one that also recognizes the *context-specificity* of how equality and inequality are locally experienced; and from *sectorial* delivery approaches to *cross-sectorial* performance principles. GOLD VI works with a definition of urban and territorial equality that has four key, inter-related, performance principles: equitable distribution; reciprocal recognition; parity political participation; and solidarity and mutual care (Figure 1.1).

The first principle concerns the **distribution** dimension of equality; it refers to equitable access to the material conditions that ensure a dignified quality of life for all, including equitable access to income, decent work, health, housing, basic and social services, connectivity, safety and security for all citizens in a sustainable manner. Equitable distribution is not, however, sufficient to achieve urban equality unless it is accompanied by the **reciprocal recognition** of multiple intersecting social identities across class, gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, and sexuality, among others. As, historically speaking, populations with certain identities have been misrecognized, oppressed or rendered invisible, promoting reciprocal recognition means that citizens and governance structures must recognize this diversity when collectively organizing, coproducing knowledge, and planning and managing urban and territorial activities. This recognition is of particular importance when populations are affected by socio-economic and ecological processes, political conflict or environmental disasters that may result in migration, displacement and/or other forms of marginalization. The third principle of urban and territorial equality is **parity political participation**. This refers to creating equitable conditions that: allow the demo-

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12 Carolyn Stephens, "Urban Inequities; Urban Rights: A Conceptual Analysis and Review of Impacts on Children, and Policies to Address Them," *Journal of Urban Health* 89, no. 3 (2012): 464–85; Alexandre Apsan Frediani, *Cities for Human Development: A Capability Approach to City-Making* (Rugby: Practical Action Publishing, 2021).

Figure 1.1

Principles of urban and territorial equality

Guaranteeing the provision of care, prioritizing mutual support and relational responsibilities between citizens, and between citizens and nature, actively nurturing civic life

Equitable access to the material conditions that ensure a dignified quality of life for all, including equitable access to income, decent work, health, housing, basic and social services, connectivity, safety and security

Citizens and governance structures recognizing multiple claims and intersecting social identities, regardless of class, gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, ability and sexuality, amongst others

Equitable conditions that allow the democratic, inclusive and active engagement of citizens and their representatives in processes of urban and territorial governance, and in thinking up, deliberating upon and taking decisions about current and future trajectories

Solidarity and mutual care

Equal distribution

Reciprocal recognition

Parity political participation

Source: authors, based on the KNOW proposal

cratic, inclusive and active engagement of citizens and their representatives in processes of urban and territorial governance; help to address conflict; and fully encompass and promote the collective imagination, deliberations and decisions about current and future urban and territorial trajectories. Finally, the fourth principle refers to fostering **solidarity and mutual care**. This entails moving towards cities and territories that guarantee the provision of care and that prioritize promoting mutual support and relational responsibilities between citizens, and between citizens and the natural environment, by actively nurturing the civic life of cities and territories.[13]

Rights-based approaches lie at the heart of these four principles of urban and territorial equality; these are approaches that challenge and seek to transform power relations in order to guarantee human rights for all. Likewise, applying these principles relies on recognizing a diverse knowledge base of personal and collective experiences of inequalities and acknowledging different voices and sources of knowledge relating to the promotion of equality.

13 For further reflections on these four principles, see Christopher Yap, Camila Cociña, and Caren Levy, "The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

3 Pathways as trajectories of change

Understanding equality in this multidimensional perspective invites LRGs to find different ways to tackle inequalities. LRGs act through different institutional mechanisms, through which they galvanize policies, programmes, planning, finance, organizational tools and local alliances. These instruments allow them to find ways to advance in one or more dimensions to make cities and territories more equitable for everyone. GOLD VI understands these different routes as *pathways* to urban and territorial equality. These pathways are trajectories for change. Creating pathways that promote more equitable futures involves taking strategic decisions that include both material and discursive practices. Pathways help define the collective criteria required for decision making and working towards a common vision.

The focus on pathways in GOLD VI acknowledges that addressing structural inequalities and current unsustainable development trends requires the collective construction of alternative channels of action. Faced by the housing crisis and the financialization of housing, land and services, **Commoning** has emerged as a pathway for enhancing collective practices and guaranteeing everyone access to decent housing and basic services. As we have witnessed a generalized crisis in social protection, **Caring** has become a response through which to prioritize the provision of care for different groups and also for those who care for others. By bridging evident gaps in mobility and access to infrastructure, as well as a growing digital divide, **Connecting** has become a pathway to help ensure adequate physical and digital connectivity for everyone. In the face of an undeniable climate emergency, **Renaturing** has emerged as an approach for creating a renewed and sustainable relationship with the ecosystem and natural resources. As urban and territorial economies have become more precarious and inequalities between territories have increased, **Prospering** can help to create decent and sustainable livelihoods that are appropriate for diverse conditions and different social identities. As we encounter global and local threats to democracy, and growing calls to improve existing mechanisms of representation, **Democratizing** is a vehicle that will ensure more inclusive governance that recognizes all voices, and especially those that have been historically marginalized. Finally, the incremental and cumulative effect of joint action coordinated between these different agendas will produce pathways to equality. Together, they can reach tipping points for radical positive transformations. This will be only possible through appropriate policies capable of upscaling and expanding these transformative changes.

These trends are framed and further discussed in Chapter 2 of this Report. Thereafter, these pathways have been used as a structuring element in GOLD VI. The current Report provides concrete examples, highlights ongoing debates and examines the experiences of LRGs working closely with other stakeholders, such as organized civil society. The pathways seek to

provide concrete tools to help LRGs when they are looking to define their own routes to change. The pathways discussed in GOLD VI do not seek to provide all the answers, but rather to present alternative ways of jointly constructing the *conditions* necessary to make cities and territories more equal. In this way, the pathways can become collective vehicles for promoting transformative action. By creating capabilities and mechanisms that work at multiple scales, LRGs can use these pathways to promote the different principles of equality. Above all, the pathways and their coconstruction lead us to think more about the question of governance. With this in mind, the discussion about pathways will be expanded in Chapter 3 of this Report, where urban and territorial equality as a question of governance will also be considered.

Source: Alan Veas, Unsplash. Santiago, Chile.

4 GOLD VI coproduction: An engaged international process

A multidimensional understanding of equality involves questioning how knowledge is produced, whose voices are considered, and the ways in which global agendas can be collectively coproduced, considering the experiences of different actors through just and accountable processes. **Acknowledging the production of knowledge as an equality challenge in itself, the methodology behind GOLD VI has sought not only to produce rigorous and relevant output, but also to facilitate a rich process of exchange and collective agenda setting.** Through a series of workshops, meetings, and coproduction mechanisms, GOLD VI has sought to support and strengthen multistakeholder dialogues and to ensure the fullest possible participation and involvement of the UCLG network and its members, civil society coalitions, and researchers and academics. From the beginning of this process, this approach has been regarded as being as relevant as the output itself. GOLD VI has sought to bring a perspective of equality to a process aimed at strengthening local learning and alliances for action, facilitating translocal learning, and collaborating within international networks.

In order to enable this process, GOLD VI has established a specific governance structure that facilitates this cross-learning and coproduction experience (Figure 1.2). The structure has been created by the GOLD VI Steering Committee, which is composed of members of UCLG and the Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality (KNOW) team.[14] From the beginning, the Steering Committee envisaged a Report that could offer more than just a snapshot of current inequalities. Instead, building on an understanding of the structural drivers of inequality and their manifestations in urban and territorial areas, the Report seeks to propose routes for transformative action. In order to discuss these different routes, or pathways, each chapter of GOLD VI has been produced by specific chapter curators, with recognized experience in their respective fields, from different countries, disciplines and institutions. We have called these colleagues "chapter curators", rather than just "authors", because each of them has brought their own approach and experience to the Report. In

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14 Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality (KNOW) is a four-year programme funded by ESRC under the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) of the United Kingdom. Led by Professor Caren Levy, of the Bartlett Development Planning Unit (DPU) of University College London, KNOW is a global consortium of researchers and partners which includes 13 institutions from nine different countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The GOLD VI Steering Committee includes three members of the KNOW team: Prof Caren Levy, Dr Alexandre Apsan Frediani and Dr Camila Cociña. More information at
https://www.urban-know.com.

writing up the chapters, they have collaborated with, and coordinated the work of, a constellation of actors who have contributed to building the central arguments of the chapters.

These contributions constitute a key element of the Report, as they not only provide information about grounded experiences, but also key insights that help shape future pathways towards equality. Each chapter includes contributions from four different kinds of sources:

° the **UCLG Network**, with contributions from 17 teams, committees, fora, communities of practice and partner networks and the direct participation of its members. These draw on grounded experiences from local and regional governments that ensure a good balance of different geographies and territories;

° **civil society networks**, which draw on the experiences of the members of mainly six global coalitions: Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR), CoHabitat Network, Global Platform for the Right to the City (GPR2C), Habitat International Coalition (HIC), Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI), and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO);

° **KNOW partners**, from 12 research institutions, which draw on the collective experiences and lessons learned from their activities in cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America; and

° other **academics and researchers** working on issues relevant to the Report, from several different universities and research institutions.

Over the last two years, GOLD VI organized several collective workshops, which were held online due to the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and various feedback and exchange sessions. They allowed the collective crafting of key messages, topics and cases, in which each set of participants contributed to the final product that you are now reading. The virtual workshops were spaces for discussing and exchanging views, validating key messages, and agreeing the content and focus of the 66 case-based contributions (CBCs) and 22 thematic or issue-based contributions (IBCs) which were produced for inclusion in GOLD VI. The chapters of this Report draw directly on the wealth of knowledge and experience included in these contributions. Being aware that some of these contributions could be of interest to the general public, UCLG and KNOW launched a *GOLD VI Working Paper Series* that enables access to these IBCs in their full versions, and

Source: Jack Prommel, Unsplash. La Paz, Bolivia.

a *Pathways to Equality Cases Repository* where the CBCs are also available.[15] Through this process, we hope that the legacy of GOLD VI will transcend the content of this Report. This legacy will also lie in strengthening relationships between organizations that act locally and which have generated knowledge and responses to urban and territorial equality in different territories.

15 To review the full content of the *GOLD VI Working Papers Series and the Pathways to Equality Cases Repository*, visit https://gold.uclg.org/reports/gold-vi.

Figure 1.2

Organization of the GOLD VI process

GOLD VI Steering Committee

UCLG — United Cities and Local Governments   KNOW — Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality

Edgardo Bilsky [UCLG GOLD]
Caren Levy [KNOW-DPU]
Anna Calvete Moreno [UCLG GOLD]
Camila Cociña [KNOW-DPU]
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UCLG NETWORK, ITS MEMBERSHIP AND PARTNERS

Commission on Local
Economic Development

Committee on Culture

Committee on Social Inclusion,
Participatory Democracy
and Human Rights

Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV)

Global Social Economy Forum

Intermediary Cities
International Association
of Educating Cities

International Observatory on
Participatory Democracy

Metropolis

UCLG Accessibility

UCLG Digital Cities

UCLG Ecological Transition

UCLG Learning

UCLG Migration

UCLG Peripheral Cities

UCLG Regions

UCLG Global Observatory on Local
Democracy and Decentralization (GOLD)

UCLG Women

CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORKS

Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR)

CoHabitat Network

Global Platform for the Right
to the City (GPR2C)

Habitat International Coalition (HIC)

Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI)

Women in Informal Employment:
Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)

UrbaMonde, Co-Habitat network

Cultural Occupation's Bloc - Culture
Movement of the Peripheries

World Enabled

CISCSA Ciudades Feministas

Asiye eTafuleni

KNOW PARTNERS

ACHR, Thailand

Ardhi University, Tanzania

Centre for Community
Initiatives, Tanzania

CUJAE, Cuba

Indian Institute for Human
Settlements (IIHS), India

Institute of Global Prosperity (IGP), UCL

Makerere University, Uganda

PUCP, Peru

Sierra Leone Urban Research
Center (SLURC)

The Bartlett Development
Planning Unit (DPU), UCL

The University of Melbourne

The University of Sheffield

OTHER ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

International Institute for Environment
and Development (IIED)

PEAK Urban

Universidad Central de Venezuela

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

University of Greenwich

Raoul Wallenberg Institute

Institut de Recherche pour
le Développement (IRD)

Da Nang Architecture University

5 How to read this Report

The GOLD VI Report provides action-oriented reflections. It explores the conditions and instruments that can be used for the cocreation of pathways to equality. Seeking to avoid the reproduction of sectoral and siloed approaches to equality, the chapters are structured to capture different sets of strategies that LRGs and local partners are adopting to tackle inequalities. **The titles of the chapters refer to *verbs* or *actions* that LRGs are taking in this direction: pathways to address different, but interconnected, agendas.** Table 1.1 shows the diversity of themes that can be found in each chapter.

Chapter 2 gives an overview of the current **State of inequalities**, including a discussion about trends regarding inequality and the challenges they pose to LRGs.

Chapter 3 focuses on **Governance and pathways to urban and territorial equality** and explains why equality should be framed as a question of governance. It also focuses on the importance of understanding local government institutional frameworks, decentralization, and multilevel governance structures, and proposes a rights-based approach as the basis for governance to promote equality. This chapter also explains the notion of pathways and institutional capabilities and their value as practical approaches that enable LRGs to tackle inequalities.

The subsequent chapters are organized around six pathways:

° *Chapter 4* focuses on the **Commoning pathway**. This relates to the governance, planning and provision of access to housing, land and basic services, and to ways in which LRGs can promote approaches that focus on collective action and promote greater urban equality.

° *Chapter 5* centres on the **Caring pathway**. This refers to the multiple actions that can be used to promote the provision of care to different groups within society. This can be achieved through providing safety nets and building solidarity bonds. It also examines the ways in which LRGs can promote caring practices through social policies, in fields such as education and health, which provide support both to those in need of it and to those who have historically "taken care" of others.

° *Chapter 6* discusses the **Connecting pathway**. These pathways include multiple interventions and programmes that increase linkages both between and within cities and among their citizens. The chapter also examines the role of LRGs in the governance and planning of more equitable transport, infrastructure and digital connectivity.

° *Chapter 7* presents the **Renaturing pathway**. This refers to the governance and planning of a renewed

and more sustainable relationship between natural and urban systems. It places specific emphasis on decoupling economic development from resource use and promoting more just ecological transitions to net zero carbon systems, risk reduction and urban resilience.

° *Chapter 8* discusses the **Prospering pathway**. This chapter focuses on such issues as: livelihoods, decent work and worker skills, enterprise development and resilience, and the spatial concentration of productive activities. It looks at the role of LRGs in the governance and expansion of productive, income-generating activities carried out in the urban space and recognizes the formal and informal systems that contribute to urban and territorial equality.

° Finally, *Chapter 9* discusses the **Democratizing pathway**. It focuses on the challenges and opportunities facing LRGs as they seek to implement meaningful participatory processes, to democratize decision-making and to unpack the asymmetries of power. In doing so, it also looks at the underpinning trends that affect processes of democratization.

Source: Programa de Mejoramiento Integral de Barrios, Secretaría de Medio Ambiente, Vivienda y Desarrollo Rural. Alcaldía de Bello, Colombia.

Finally, *Chapter 10* presents the **Conclusions and final recommendations** of GOLD VI and its quest to promote urban and territorial equality. It discusses the cross-cutting challenges related to upscaling the different pathways, and the importance of establishing partnerships and financial mechanisms that draw on collaboration between different levels of government, including the national, regional and local levels. The conclusions propose that LRGs should consider five key principles in their quest for equality:

° a rights-based approach, undertaken from an intersectional perspective;

° the recognition of the spatial dimension of inequalities;

° a new culture of subnational governance for deepening democracy;

° adequate fiscal and investment architecture; and

° practical and transformational engagement with the past, present and future.

These principles, and their interactions within the different pathways discussed in GOLD VI, provide the framework for the political recommendations that close the Report.

Each of the chapters of GOLD VI presents a combination of debates, reflections and concrete experiences that examine how different spheres of governance can help promote greater equality. Central to these efforts are the conjunction of LRGs with other actors, including civil society, which have worked together to plan pathways that can advance equality. The boxes in each chapter provide concrete examples, definitions of concepts, and key information about financial mechanisms related to these pathways. These boxes, alongside the GOLD VI Working Papers Series and Pathways to Equality Cases Repository, provide further information which is complementary to the Report content.

GOLD VI is a collective attempt to define the role of LRGs within the global challenge of addressing inequalities and recognizes the commitment of UCLG to the cause of promoting greater equality. It also highlights the potential offered by interconnected local transformation strategies, and the opportunities that they bring for building pathways to change at different scales. Global sustainability agendas need the full commitment of LRGs if they are to be delivered. As the different chapters of this Report outline, a focus on equality calls for a rethinking of urban and territorial governance, both in terms of its vision and its procedures. At a time at which the challenges associated with ongoing global and local crises are likely to grow and intensify in their complexity, the principles of equality and human rights offer guiding values for the action of institutions and actors at different scales. LRGs, working in tandem with other levels of government and with civil society, have both the opportunity and ethical responsibility to become active and leading voices in this endeavour.

Table 1.1

How to read this Report: The sectorial agendas discussed in the different chapters

Sectors/themes	Pathway chapters
Housing and land	**Commoning** | **Caring** | **Renaturing** | **Prospering**
Infrastructure	**Commoning** | **Connecting** | **Renaturing**
Health	**Caring** | **Renaturing**
Education	**Caring** | **Prospering**
Service delivery	**Commoning** | **Caring** | **Connecting** | **Democratizing**
Transport and mobility	**Connecting** | **Renaturing**
Discrimination and inclusion	**Commoning** | **Caring** | **Connecting** | **Renaturing** | **Prospering** | **Democratizing**
Culture	**Commoning** | **Democratizing**
Migration	**Caring** | **Democratizing**
Food security	**Caring** | **Renaturing** | **Prospering**
Urban economy	**Connecting** | **Prospering**
Income generation, decent work and livelihoods	**Renaturing** | **Prospering**
Participation and democracy	**Commoning** | **Democratizing**
Data collection and management	**Commoning** | **Connecting** | **Democratizing**
Public spaces	**Commoning** | **Caring** | **Connecting**
Urban and territorial finance	**Commoning** | **Caring** | **Connecting** | **Renaturing** | **Prospering** | **Democratizing**

Source: authors

02 ↓ State of inequalities
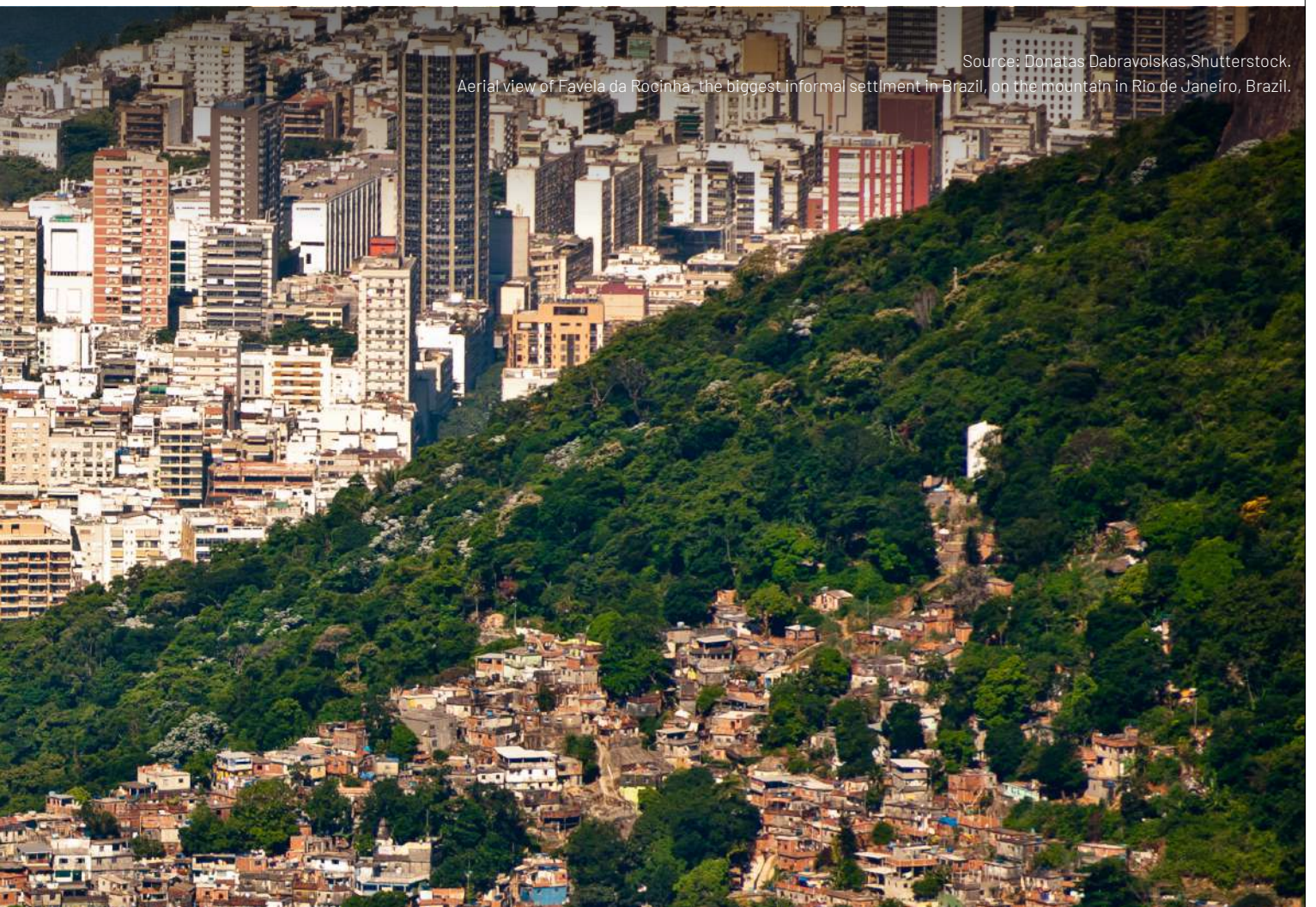
Source: Donatas Dabravolskas,Shutterstock.
Aerial view of Favela da Rocinha, the biggest informal settlment in Brazil, on the mountain in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Chapter Curator   José Manuel Roche

                                       (Independent consultant)

Contributors

This chapter has been produced based on the following valuable contributions, which are available as part of the *GOLD VI Working Paper Series* and the *Pathways to Equality Cases Repository*:

The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality	Christopher Yap Camila Cociña Caren Levy (The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London)
The State of Inequalities in Sub-Saharan African and Asian Cities	Wilbard J. Kombe Neethi P. Keerthana Jagadeesh Athira Raj (Ardhi University and IIHS Bangalore)
The Differential Economic Geography of Regional and Urban Growth and Prosperity in Industrialised Countries	Philip McCann (Sheffield University Management School)

Abstract

The world has experienced incredible transformations in the decades straddling the new millennium. Although these include the reduction of extreme poverty, concerns remain that progress has not been evenly distributed and that inequalities are increasing. Recent shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have made this problem worse. This chapter provides an overview of the state of inequalities in cities and regions, contextualizing other chapters in the GOLD VI Report.

Growing concern over the state of global inequalities led the UN Member States to specifically agree to reducing inequalities as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. One explicit goal, to "reduce inequality within and among countries", was incorporated as Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10. The 2030 Agenda also makes a pledge to "leave no one behind" which, in practice, implies reducing inequalities between different social groups. These agreements have been ratified by the New Urban Agenda (NUA). Through its emphasis on *localization*, the 2030 Agenda advocates an inclusive and localized approach to development.

The relationships between urbanization and inequalities are not straightforward. While generalizing is difficult, the overall pattern is that cities tend to be more prosperous and unequal, while at the same time concentrate a large share of national poverty. Urban inequalities manifest themselves differently in each city and world region. Income inequalities are (re)produced through interactions between global and local processes, shaped by local socio-cultural identities, institutional differences at the national level, and local social and economic histories.

The picture is far from homogenous, as countries, territories and cities across the world have notably different levels of inequalities. While income inequality between countries has been closing, inequalities within countries have been on the rise since the 1980s. Some metropolitan cities and territories have also disproportionately benefited from globalization, which has led to an increase in territorial inequalities in some countries. The financialization of urban infrastructure and ghettoization of parts of some cities are good examples of how circulatory flows of capital are boosting certain urban inequalities.

Today, there is wide consensus that well-being, poverty and inequalities are multidimensional in nature. The dynamics behind inequalities in those non-monetary dimensions have their own specificities which, in turn, call for different policy responses at the national and local levels. This chapter provides an overview of inequalities within a set of SDG dimensions that are most relevant to the local context. These include: (a) basic infrastructure and services; (b) spatial planning, land management and housing; (c) education, health and social services; (d) transport, mobility and public space; and (e) employment and decent work.

Inequalities compound and exacerbate one another, especially for those belonging to more than one marginalized group; this often intensifies the severity of their impacts and how they are experienced. Intersecting inequalities are relational, and it is essential to understand the power structures that reproduce them. The pledge to leave no one behind, made in the 2030 Agenda, calls for societies to reduce inequalities in outcomes across different dichotomies and social groups.

Inequalities in exposure to flooding risks between Jakarta's poorer and richer households, Indonesia.

State of inequalities

Global inequalities have significantly increased during the past years

The richest 10% of the global population — **52%** of global income[a]

earns

Whereas

The poorest 50% of the global population — **8%** of global income[a]

earns

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

100m people have fallen into extreme poverty.
This number is projected to remain well above pre-pandemic levels, especially in Africa and Latin America.[b]

150m people have insufficient food consumption.[c]

in 2019	**690m people**
in early 2022	**840m people**

Gender inequalities remain considerable at the global level, and progress within countries is too slow. **The share of total labour income by gender is:**[d]

31% ♀	69% ♂	**1990**
35% ♀	65% ♂	**2015-2020**

Countries experience inequalities differently

Globalization has come at the expense of increased territorial inequalities. The absolute gap between the mean per capita income of high- and low-income countries increased from:[e]

27,600 USD in 1990 → **42,800 USD** in 2018

While the top 1%'s share of income was close to 10% in Western Europe and the USA in 1980, it has since risen to 12% and 20%, respectively, in 2016. Globally, income inequalities are on the rise, with inequalities within countries now even greater than inequalities between countries.[f]

TOP 1%

The % of total income share held by the richest 1%:

2016 — 20%
2016 — 12%
1980 — 10%
1980 — 10%

Income inequalities range[g]

100 (more unequal)

- South Africa | 63
- Namibia | 59.1
- Zambia | 57.1
- Brazil | 53.4
- Colombia | 51.3
- Chile | 44.4
- In high-income countries, such as the USA | 41.4
- Japan | 32.9
- Pakistan & Bangladesh | 31.6
- Republic of Korea | 31.4
- Denmark | 28.2
- Norway | 27.6
- Finland | 27.3
- Czech Republic & Slovakia | 25
- Slovenia | 24.6

0 (less unequal)

Gini coefficient

Cities and the urban population are growing fast, creating complex inequality challenges

55% (4.2bn people) of the world's population lived in cities in 2018.[h] — **2018**

68% (6.7bn people) of the world's population is expected to live in cities by 2050.[h] — **2050**
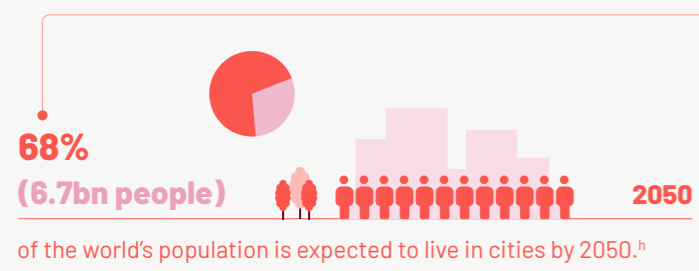
90% of this new urban population is expected to live in Asia and Africa.[h]

Gini indexes at the city level

50 Cities with Gini indexes of 50 and above have been identified in cities in **Southern Africa, Latin America** and **North America.**[i]

40 **Asian cities** appear to be less unequal, with Gini indexes below 40, as do **European cities,** with values normally below 40 (except London, which is above 50).[i]

! Typically, the **greatest inequalities** are found in the **largest cities.**[i]

Growing inequalities

Inequalities do not manifest themselves in the same way everywhere. Oftentimes, they result from political choices, in which LRGs have a strategic role. Although there is a correlation between growing urbanization and growing inequalities within cities, causation between the two has not yet been determined.[j]
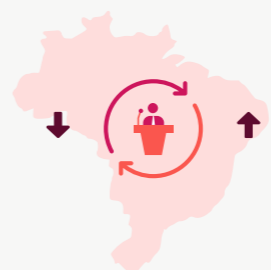
Brazil, from 55.6 to 51.9:
Between 2006 and 2016, urban inequalities in Brazil (Gini index) fell but increased again after a change in national policies. In 2021:[j]

The poorest 50% of the population earned — **27 TIMES LESS** — **than the richest 10%** of the population.

1 Introduction

The world has experienced an incredible transformation over the decades straddling the new millennium. Positive stories include the rise of emerging economies and the progress made in reducing extreme poverty in most countries around the world. China alone lifted 74.5 billion people out of extreme poverty between 1990 and 2016.[1] Rwanda saw a sharp fall in under-five child mortality between 1990 and 2019, from 150 to 34 under-five deaths per 1,000 live births.[2] The number of child marriages has reduced considerably, particularly in South Asia. In Bangladesh, it fell from 47% to 16% between 1994 and 2019, and in India, from 18% to 5% between 1993 to 2016.[3] The world continues to urbanize: in Sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion of population living in urban areas increased from 27% to 41% between 1990 and 2020, and it is expected to increase rapidly in the coming decades.[4] At the same time, countries are overcoming some of the challenges of urbanization; for example, the percentage of people using safely managed sanitation services in Tanzania increased from 5% to 26% between 2000 and 2020.[5]

Unfortunately, concerns remain that progress has not been evenly distributed and inequalities are still rising. It is important to note that inequalities within countries have significantly increased since the 1980s.[6] In particular, the accumulation of wealth by global multimillionaires has grown to extraordinary levels, with the 1% having captured 38% of all the additional wealth accumulated since the mid-1990s, whereas the bottom 50% of the world's population has accrued only 2%.[7] **In many countries, globalization has come at the expense of increased territorial inequalities.** In China, the gap between coastal and inland regions has widened notably, as has the urban/rural divide.[8] The world's largest metropolises, such as **London** (UK), **New York** (USA) and the **Northern California Bay Area** with the **San Francisco** – **San Jose** conurbation (USA), also appear to have disproportionately captured the benefits of globalization, while inequalities within cities are also increasing in many areas.[9] **Persisting inequalities remain a major barrier to reducing poverty in many contexts.** An analysis of 88 countries found that children living in the poorest households were three times more likely to die before the age of five than those in the richest households. What is more, this is a trend that worsened in most countries between 2000

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1 The level of extreme poverty in China fell from 66% in 1990 to 0.5% in 2016 (according to the most recent data available). Figures correspond to the World Bank's extreme poverty estimates based on the $1.90 a day poverty line. Source: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator

2 Estimates from the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, UN DESA Population Division). Source: UN-IGME, "United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation," 2022, https://bit.ly/3kic3bG.

3 Data from the World Bank compiled from: UNICEF Data; Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), AIDS Indicator Surveys (AIS), Reproductive Health Survey (RHS), and other household surveys. Source: World Bank, "Mortality Rate, under-5 (per 1,000 Live Births)," Data, 2022, https://bit.ly/3visHhs.

4 UNDESA, "World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision" (New York, 2019), https://bit.ly/3L7nEWT.

5 Estimates from WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene: UNICEF and WHO, "WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene," 2022, https://bit.ly/3rTZYNS.

6 Lucas Chancel et al., "World Inequality Report 2022," 2022, https://bit.ly/3tVKOI4.

7 This figure refers to the average annual wealth growth rate between 1995 and 2020 provided by the World Inequality Report 2022. Source: Chancel et al. Note that inequality in wealth increased at a higher rate than inequality in income. As discussed in Section 4.2 in this chapter, the top 1% of earners in the world captured 23% of total world growth between 1980 and 2020, as opposed to the 9% increase for the bottom 50%. For differences on how to measure wealth and income inequality, see Box 2.5.

8 Shi Li, Terry Sicular, and Finn Tarp, "Inequality in China: Development, Transition, and Policy," *WIDER Working Paper*, 2018.

9 Simona Iammarino and Philip McCann, *Multinationals and Economic Geography: Location, Technology and Innovation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2013); Philip McCann and Zoltan J. Acs, "Globalization: Countries, Cities and Multinationals," *Regional Studies* 45, no. 1 (2011): 17–32.

and 2014.[10] In other countries, regional disparities in human development have widened. For example, the North East region of Nigeria, where more than half of the children under 5 have suffered stunted growth, has seen that malnutrition growth in recent years has increased existing territorial inequalities.[11] The stories are many and varied, and far from unidirectional, but there are growing concerns about the state of global inequalities and the prospect that they may worsen if the right counter measures are not quickly put into place.[12]

Global and national crises have also caused important setbacks. In early 2021, United Nations (UN) agencies warned that acute hunger was set to soar in over 20 countries due to a combination of factors that included conflict and the COVID-19 crisis.[13] The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) estimated that, worldwide, schoolchildren lost 1.8 trillion hours of in-person learning due to COVID-19 lockdowns between March 2020 and February 2021.[14] Emerging data have also shown that all types of violence against women and girls, and particularly domestic violence, have intensified during COVID-19 lockdowns.[15] According to World Bank projections, the economic crisis generated by COVID-19 may push 88-115 million people back into extreme poverty, aggravating previous reversals suffered during the 2008 financial crisis. Indeed, the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis already showed that resilience and the capacity to bounce back after setbacks varies between cities and territories, which can aggravate existing territorial disparities in many countries.[16] Alarmingly, environmental disasters are becoming more and more frequent and tend to have a disproportionate impact on poorer regions. There is concern that the climate crisis and other crises will further aggravate the inequality crisis.

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the current state of inequalities in different cities and regions. It explores inequalities at different scales and discusses the current debates and trends about the measurement and responses to inequalities in cities and territories. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first sets the scene by framing the discussion around current policy debates, including the growing concern about the state of global inequalities and the international commitments to tackle inequalities as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda. The second section looks at the global geography of income inequalities, first by assessing differences between countries, and then by comparing inequalities across metropolitan areas and cities. In the process, this chapter provides an overview of how to measure economic inequalities and provides suggestions about where to find data. The third section takes a more dynamic approach and explains how global economic inequalities and territorial inequalities within countries have changed since the 1980s. Emphasis is placed on how global and local processes interlink to produce the patterns of economic inequalities experienced today. The fourth section adopts a more multidimensional perspective, moving away from a narrow focus on income and wealth. It starts by explaining why multidimensional inequalities matter and outlines the best ways in which to measure them at both the local and territorial levels. While providing an overview of the state of multidimensional inequalities, the section also discusses the issue of intersecting inequalities by assessing how belonging to more than one disadvantaged or marginalized group impacts on the severity of inequalities and how they are experienced. This section covers a set of dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are most relevant to the local context. These include: (a) basic infrastructure and services; (b) spatial planning, land management and housing; (c) education, health and social services; (d) transport, mobility and public space; and (e) employment and decent work. The chapter concludes with several remarks that form a bridge for discussion in conjunction with the rest of the Report.

10 Zhihui Li et al., "Assessing Levels and Trends of Child Health Inequality in 88 Developing Countries: From 2000 to 2014," *Global Health Action* 10, no. 1 (2017).

11 Emma Samman et al., "'Leave No One behind' – Five Years into Agenda 2030: Guidelines for Turning the Concept into Action" (London, 2021).

12 See the historical account in: Mike Savage, *The Return of Inequality Social Change and the Weight of the Past* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021).

13 WFP and FAO, "Hunger Hotspots. FAO–WFP Early Warnings on Acute Food Insecurityy: March to July 2021 Outlook" (Rome, 2021), https://bit.ly/3ifyOvE.

14 UNICEF, "COVID-19 and School Closures. One Year of Education Disruption," 2021, https://bit.ly/35JbF2g.

15 UN-Women, "Facts and Figures: Ending Violence against Women," 2022, https://bit.ly/3iaQkkT.

16 Philip McCann, "The Differential Economic Geography of Regional and Urban Growth and Prosperity in Industrialised Countries," Gold VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

2 Growing concern over the state of global inequalities

A series of events attracted attention to growing inequality around the time when UN Member States were negotiating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[17] New evidence on global inequalities revealed uneven gains in welfare since the 1980s. These were especially observed in high income countries and were particularly driven by a sharp rise in the income and wealth of top segments of society.[18] New data also indicated a widening in territorial inequalities in some countries, with large, globally interconnected, metropolises benefiting disproportionally from economic growth.[19] In parallel, social unrest and mobilizations were seen in the streets and public spaces of many cities. Some of these were reactions in the aftermath of the 2007/08 financial crisis while others were associated with a global spike in commodity prices.[20] Seminal research from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demonstrated the detrimental effects of income inequalities on economic growth, which called into question certain economic dogma that had been prevalent since the 1980s.[21] These and other events also contributed to a shift in public opinion. By 2015, international organizations were debating and shifting their position on the need to put a limit on extreme inequalities (e.g. UN, World Economic Forum, World Bank, IMF).[22]

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17 For a historical account see: Samman et al., "'Leave No One behind' – Five Years into Agenda 2030: Guidelines for Turning the Concept into Action."

18 A researcher from the World Bank published the first ever interpersonal global inequality study, producing the well-known "elephant chart" mentioned later in this chapter. See: Christoph Lakner and Branko Milanovic, "Global Income Distribution : From the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Great Recession," Policy Research Working Paper (Washington DC, 2013), https://bit.ly/3JtGFSz; at this time, Thomas Piketty also published his renowned book Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); the Global Wealth Report was published with new long-term data on inequalities adjusted for tax administrative data. See: "World Inequality Database," 2022, https://wid.world/; also new data in: Gilles Keating et al., "Global Wealth Report 2013" (Zurich, 2013); Oxfam published their report with the often-cited statistic that just 85 people owned as much wealth as the poorest half of humanity, a figure that has since been updated. See: Ana Caistor Arendar and Emma Seery, "Even It up: Time to End Extreme Inequality" (Oxford, 2014), https://bit.ly/3wtvRzZ; Max Lawson et al., "Unpaid and Underpaid Care Work and the Global Inequality Crisis" (Oxford, 2020), https://bit.ly/37CJaDM.

19 McCann and Acs, "Globalization: Countries, Cities and Multinationals."

20 Isabel Ortiz et al., "World Protests 2006-2013," Initiative for Policy Dialogue Working Paper (New York, 2013), https://bit.ly/3qorF0t.

21 Neoclassical economic dogmas dominant in the 1980's and 1990's believed that tackling inequalities was harmful for the economy, or that growing inequalities were inevitably linked to economic growth. Hence, the government they believed that governments should not put limits on growing inequalities. These ideas have been challenges by IMF research, see: Jonathan David Ostry, Andrew Berg, and Charalambos Tsangarides, "Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth," IMF Staff Discussion Notes (Washington, DC, 2014), https://bit.ly/3luPnhM.

22 See the statement by Christine Lagarde, managing director of the IMF in 2014, in which she warned of the threat of income inequalities: "Business and political leaders at the World Economic Forum should remember that in far too many countries the benefits of growth are being enjoyed by far too few people. This is not a recipe for stability and sustainability". Full article in: Chris Giles, "IMF Warns on Threat of Income Inequality," *Financial Times*, 2014, https://on.ft.com/3Ljxh4v; see also the speech by World Bank Group President David Malpass, from 2020, about Reversing the Inequality Pandemic: David Malpass, "Reversing the Inequality Pandemic: Speech by World Bank Group President David Malpass," Speeches & Transcripts, 2020, https://bit.ly/36up8uJ; with reference to the World Economic forum, see: Larry Elliott, "World Economic Forum Publishes 14-Point Plan to Tackle Global Inequality," *The Guardian*, 2015, https://bit.ly/3tq2EnK; Winnie Byanyima, "We Must End Extreme Inequality. Now.," World Economic Forum, 2014, https://bit.ly/3isqnxj.

Unsurprisingly, growing concern over the state of global inequalities also became central to the negotiations behind the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. **The discussion moved way beyond just the economic dimension and also considered inequalities in education, health, employment, housing, and many other dimensions of well-being.** A consensus was reached that the previous global goals, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), had an inequality blind spot and that the most vulnerable and structurally discriminated segments of society were missing out on the benefits of progress made in human development while inequalities were increasing at the top.[23] Governments were criticized for prioritizing "low hanging fruits", or easy to reach populations, while making few advances among the poorest of the poor. Evidence suggested that, for disadvantaged populations, the improvements made in many dimensions of human development had not been as fast as for the rest of the population.[24] Academics, civil society and other activists played a key role in persuading UN Member States to commit to reduce inequalities and prioritize marginalized groups as part of the 2030 Agenda.[25] The "leave no one behind" principle, which was agreed in the 2030 Agenda, moved the policy focus beyond national average statistics to shine a light on territories and group-based inequalities, while SDG 10 explicitly commits to reducing inequalities both between and within countries (see Box 2.1). In addition, the emphasis on *localization* in the 2030 Agenda advocates for an inclusive and localized approach, giving the subnational context a greater role in setting local goals and targets, as well as determining the means of implementation.[26] The commitment to reducing inequalities and leaving no one behind has since been reaffirmed at other global conferences, including the New Urban Agenda agreed at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III (see Box 2.2).[27]

Today there is general consensus about the risk inherent in allowing extreme inequalities to continue growing.[28]

Growing inequalities, including territorial inequalities, appear to be eroding social cohesion; in turn, they have become one of the main driving forces behind recent political crises.[29] The COVID-19 pandemic has only accentuated this trend. There are concerns that already disadvantaged populations have been disproportionately hit by COVID-19 because they have experienced a greater incidence of disease and because they have had to withstand a greater impact of the mitigation measures implemented by governments.[30] There are also marked geographic inequalities in how COVID-19 has affected countries and territories across the globe, according to their respective capacities to respond and adapt to the crisis. All of this has led to a new consensus that reducing inequalities will be a central issue in the years to come, forming part of the post-pandemic recovery and also of the route to be followed to achieve the 2030 Agenda and New Urban Agenda.

Source: Alessandro Biascioli, Shutterstock.
Activist from the Black Lives Matter movement protesting against racism and fighting for equality.

23 Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, "Reducing Inequality – The Missing MDG: A Content Review of PRSPs and Bilateral Donor Policy Statements," *IDS Bulletin* 41, no. 1 (2010): 26–35.

24 Jose Manuel Roche et al., "The Lottery of Birth: Giving All Children an Equal Chance to Survive" (London, 2015), https://bit.ly/36AXf41.

25 Ben Phillips, *How to Fight Inequality: (And Why That Fight Needs You)* (London: Wiley, 2020).

26 UCLG, "The Localization of the Global Agendas: How Local Action Is Transforming Territories and Communities" (Barcelona, 2019), https://bit.ly/36aFdGj.

27 United Nations, "The New Urban Agenda" (United Nations, 2017), https://bit.ly/3MBVeEt.

28 This is highlighted in Agenda 2030, but can also be seen in how mainstream institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have significantly shifted their positions.

29 For example, the geography of voting patterns during Brexit in the UK appears to have reflected a "geography of discontent", in which voters have used elections, or a referendum in this case, as an opportunity for "mutiny" and to express their discontent. This has included a certain sense that some communities have been "left behind" while London and the Southeast of England have flourished. See discussion in: Philip McCann and Raquel Ortega-Argilés, "The UK 'Geography of Discontent': Narratives, Brexit and Inter-Regional 'Levelling Up,'" *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and SocietyRegions, Economy and Society* 14, no. 3 (2021): 545–64.

30 The Lancet Editorial, "COVID-19—Break the Cycle of Inequality," *The Lancet* 6, no. 2 (2021), https://bit.ly/3ipcgJe.

Box 2.1

Commitment to reducing inequalities in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Reducing inequalities between and within countries, including city level and territorial inequalities, is recognized as a central commitment within the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as in a set of other, interlinked, key objectives. The UN declaration on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states:

"Sustainable development recognizes that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, combating inequality within and among countries, preserving the planet, creating sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and fostering social inclusion are linked to each other and are interdependent".[31]

SDG 10: a specific goal for reducing inequality

An explicit goal to "reduce inequality within and among countries" (SDG 10) has been incorporated into the SDG list along with a set of related targets that include the well-known "shared prosperity" goal (SDG target 10.1), which is also one of the World Bank's twin goals together with ending extreme poverty.[32] The "shared prosperity" goal stipulates that countries should progressively achieve and sustain growth in the income of the bottom 40% of their populations at rates that are higher than their national averages. This objective has, however, been questioned for overlooking income inequality at the top end of the distribution.[33]

A set of other related targets included in SDG 10 focus on empowering and promoting social, economic, and political inclusion by social group (target 10.2); ensuring equal opportunity and eliminating discrimination (target 10.3); adopting policies, and especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieving greater equality (target 10.4); as well as a set of other targets that are more explicitly oriented towards reducing inequalities between countries.

Leave no one behind: a focus on group-based inequalities

Alongside the explicit commitment to reducing inequalities, the 2030 Agenda also makes a pledge to "leave no one behind", which is closely linked to horizontal, or group-based, inequalities:

"As we embark on this great collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind. Recognizing that the dignity of the human person is fundamental, we wish to see the Goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society. And we will endeavour to reach the furthest behind first".[34]

In practice the leave no one behind pledge has been operationalized by prioritizing structurally discriminated groups ("putting the furthest behind first" using the declaration's own wording) and by closing inequality gaps between these groups and the rest of the society.[35] Data disaggregation has become central to the SDGs framework, breaking down indicators by: sex, rural/urban, regions within a country, bottom/top wealth quintile, disability status, older persons, children, women in reproductive age, people living with HIV/AIDS, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants and arguably also LGBTQIA+.[36]

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31 United Nations General Assembly, "Resolution 70/1 2015. Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2015), https://bit.ly/3qq49jY.

32 "Shared prosperity" is also one of the World Bank's twin goals together with ending poverty. See: Dean Jolliffe and Peter Lanjouw, "A Measured Approach to Ending Poverty and Boosting Shared Prosperity: Concepts, Data, and the Twin Goals" (Washington, DC, 2015), https://bit.ly/3JBemSg.

33 During the SDG negotiations, a group of academics and activists advocated for an inequality target that explicitly put the emphasis on reducing inequalities among the wealthy (top 10% of the population). See: Alex Cobham and Andy Sumner, "Is It All About the Tails? The Palma Measure of Income Inequality," CGD Working Paper (Washington, DC, 2013), https://bit.ly/3qj2xbF.

34 United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 70/1 2015. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

35 On the background history and operationalization of the Leave No One Behind commitment see: Samman et al., "'Leave No One behind' – Five Years into Agenda 2030: Guidelines for Turning the Concept into Action."

Box 2.2

The New Urban Agenda and pledge to reduce inequalities and leave no one behind[37]

"The persistence of multiple forms of poverty, growing inequalities and environmental degradation remain among the major obstacles to sustainable development worldwide, with social and economic exclusion and spatial segregation often an irrefutable reality in cities and human settlements." (paragraph 3)

"By readdressing the way cities and human settlements are planned, designed, financed, developed, governed and managed, the New Urban Agenda will help to end poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions; reduce inequalities; promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth; achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in order to fully harness their vital contribution to sustainable development; improve human health and well-being; foster resilience; and protect the environment." (paragraph 5)

"We reaffirm our pledge that no one will be left behind and commit ourselves to promoting equally the shared opportunities and benefits that urbanization can offer and that enable all inhabitants, whether living in formal or informal settlements, to lead decent, dignified and rewarding lives and to achieve their full human potential." (paragraph 27)

Source: Riccardo Mayer, Shutterstock.
Children pumping water from a public borehole in West Africa.

36 The specific population of concern is mentioned first in the UN declaration, and then more precisely in the targets and indicators. LGBTQIA+ groups are not explicitly mentioned, but some argue that "other status" in target 10.2 can be interpreted as LGBTQIA+ among other structurally discriminated groups. Importantly, there is an obvious unbalance across the SDGs framework. Some goals, such as Goal 4 for education, includes a much greater focus on inequalities across diverse groups and between best and worst performer. Other goals such as Goal 2 on End Hunger, only explicitly request disaggregation by age group and gender. Indicators in Goal 11 "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" includes disaggregation by gender, age, persons with disabilities and urban/rural. On the discussion about LGBTQIA+ and SDGs see: Brieanna Scolaro, " LGBTI and the Sustainable Development Goals: Fostering Economic Well-Being," *LGBTQ Policy Journal*, 2020, https://bit.ly/36etq9O.

37 United Nations, *The New Urban Agenda*.

3 The global geography of income inequalities

The richest 10% of the global population currently concentrates 52% of the global income, whereas the poorest half of the world population earns only 8%. This gap is even more pronounced when we look at wealth. The richest 10% of the global population owns 75% of the total wealth in the world. These are some of the key findings from the recently published *World Inequality Report 2022*.[38] Indeed, when most people think of inequalities, what first comes to mind is the gap between the rich and the poor. **What is the level of income inequality in cities and across territories, and how does it relate to the level of inequality more globally?** This section aims to answer these questions.

Source: Paul Keller, Flickr.
Huts of farm workers overlooking the giant wine fields of Aussenkehr, Namibia.

38 Chancel et al., "World Inequality Report 2022."

3.1 Urbanization and the dynamics of inequalities

The modes of urbanization vary significantly between cities and regions, making generalizations difficult, but there are some clear trends in the relationship between urbanization and inequalities. Evidence shows that, at the global scale, residents of cities generally enjoy a higher quality of life, associated with higher incomes and better employment, education levels, health, and access to services and technology, even after allowing for their greater exposure to crime, congestion, pollution and other problems.[39] However, high rates of urban growth are closely associated with high levels of inequality.[40] The greatest inequalities are normally found in the largest cities.[41] Evidence indicates that the

39 OECD and European Commission, *Cities in the World: A New Perspective on Urbanisation* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020), https://bit.ly/3iluGdM.

40 Barry Hirsch, "Income Distribution, City Size and Urban Growth: A Final Re-Examination," *Urban Studies* 19, no. 1 (1982): 71–74.

41 Ronni Pavan and Nathaniel Baum-Snow, "Inequality and City Size," *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 95, no. 5 (2013): 1535–48; Somwrita Sarkar et al., "The Scaling of Income Distribution in Australia: Possible Relationships between Urban Allometry, City Size, and Economic Inequality," *Environment and Planning B: Urban Analytics and City Science* 45, no. 4 (2018): 603–22.

intra-urban inequalities found in most cases are more severe than the corresponding intra-rural inequalities.[42] Together with higher standards of living, cities normally exhibit a lower relative incidence of poverty in comparison with more rural regions. However, because of their scale, cities tend to concentrate a greater share of the absolute number of poor people in a country.[43] Cities therefore tend to be both more prosperous, but also more unequal, and to concentrate a large share of national poverty.

The rapid rate of urbanization, particularly in Africa and Asia, is one of the major challenges and driving forces behind the fast-growing inequalities in these regions (see Box 2.3). Rapid urbanization makes planning difficult and this leads to poorly structured urban

development and an increase in poverty and inequalities. Paradoxically, experience has shown that measures to restrict urbanization may even exacerbate inequalities. This was seen in Apartheid-era South Africa and in the proliferation of Brazil's favelas as a response to that country's rather passive measures to curb urbanization.[44] **The relationship between urbanization and inequalities is not, therefore, straightforward and involves both economic and socio-political processes.**

Box 2.3
The challenges of rapid urbanization in Africa and Asia[45]

Today, some 55% of the world's population live in cities, with this share expected to increase to 68% by 2050. Furthermore, Asian and African countries are expected to experience an unprecedented growth in urbanization during the current century. These are currently the two least urbanized regions in the world, with 50% of the population of Asia being urban and 43% in Africa; this compares with 82% in North America, 81% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 74% in Europe, and 68% in Oceania. Today, Africa and Asia are home to nearly 90% of the world's rural population.

Africa and Asia are rapidly urbanizing. The average annual rate of change in the percentage of urban population is higher in Africa and Asia (1.3% and 1.1%, respectively) than in regions with higher levels of urbanization (0.3%). By 2050, the percentage of urban population is projected to reach 59% in Africa and 66% Asia. Globally, another 2.5 billion people will be living in urban areas by 2050, and 90% of this growth is expected to take place in Africa and Asia.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, a large share of the population (approximately 63%) of this exponentially rising urban population is being absorbed by small and intermediary cities, with fewer than 1 million inhabitants; in fact, these are the fastest growing urban centres in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 1970, there were hardly any cities with more than 1 million inhabitants in Sub-Saharan Africa; by 2008, there were 41.

42 Michael Lipton, "Urban Bias Revisited," *The Journal of Development Studies* 20, no. 3 (1984): 139–66.

43 World Bank, *World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2009), https://bit.ly/3ucSF4d.

44 Gordon McGranahan and David Satterthwaite, "Urbanisation Concepts and Trends," Working Papers (London, 2014), https://bit.ly/3qkioXd.

45 UNDESA, "World Urbanization Prospects 2018: Highlights," 2019, https://bit.ly/34Y7r6j.

The growth of megacities, with over 10 million inhabitants, is currently dominated by lower- and middle-income countries, with only a small number of such cities in high-income countries. By region, most of the world's megacities are located in Asia (20), followed by Latin America (6), while there are only two or three in each of the remaining regions. In Sub-Saharan Africa, **Lagos** (Nigeria) and **Kinshasa** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) are already megacities, and by 2030, **Dar es Salaam** (Tanzania), **Johannesburg** (South Africa) and **Luanda** (Angola) are also projected to become megacities.

Sustainable development depends increasingly on the successful management of urban growth. However, these rapid rates of urbanization make urban planning extremely difficult, because the time required for appropriate land reclamation, rehabilitation and consolidation and the fact that the time needed to provide appropriate infrastructure and urban design is often longer than that needed for urban growth. Historical evidence has also shown that inequalities are greatest in urban areas, meaning that the process of rapid urbanization is also likely to exacerbate inequalities.

Income inequalities are produced through interactions between global and local processes. These can be exacerbated by certain local socio-cultural identities, differences in national institutions, and the social and economic histories of the cities in question.[46] For this reason, it is generally believed that local, and particularly community-led, action can only go so far in mitigating the economic conditions and macro-level structures that contribute to inequalities in urban income.[47]

Under capitalism, urbanization is central to processes of local, national and global development and plays a key role in the accumulation, mobilization, and spatialization of capital.[48] Capitalist development is shaped by the "perpetual need to find profitable terrains for capital-surplus production and absorption" and cities are central to this process "since urbanization depends on the mobilization of a surplus product".[49] **Urbanization can therefore be understood as a process of socio-spatial reorganization that concentrates and localizes capital flows.**

Urban inequalities manifest differently in each city and region; they are mediated by, and through, political, economic, socio-cultural, and ecological processes and historical legacies, which are nested at multiple levels. The reproduction of inequalities is partially regulated through market mechanisms, but also through the orchestration of social and political interactions and relations.[50] These contribute to "inter-local inequalities",[51] which take a diversity of forms and are experienced differently by different groups and at different times.

The "circulatory flows" of capital and wealth in contemporary cities illustrate the reproduction of inequalities in these new urbanization challenges. For example, while foreign investment in urban infrastructure may contribute to urban development, it often also contributes to urban inequalities through gentrification and the displacement of marginalized urban populations.[52] These international flows of capital also interact with regional, national and local flows of production and exchange. Likewise, hyper-financialization processes have led to and driven the commodification and marketization of land and housing production and this has had direct implications for the ways in which cities reinforce patterns of exclusion and inequality (see Box 2.4).[53]

46 Jack Burgers and Sako Musterd, "Understanding Urban Inequality: A Model Based on Existing Theories and an Empirical Illustration," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26, no. 2 (2002): 403–13.

47 Scott Cummings, "Recentralization: Community Economic Development and the Case for Regionalism," *The Journal of Small and Emerging Business Law* 8 (2004): 131–49.

48 David Harvey, Social Justice and the City (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009); David Harvey, "The 'New' Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession," *Socialist Register* 4 (2004), https://bit.ly/3lAkx7O; David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (London: Verso, 2012).

49 David Harvey, "The Right to the City," *New Left Review* 53, no. Sept/Oct (2008).

50 Abdoumaliq Simone, "The Social Infrastructures of City Life in Contemporary Africa," Discussion Paper (Uppsala, 2010).

51 Richard Schragger, "Is a Progressive City Possible? Reviving Urban Liberalism for the Twenty-First Century," *Harvard Law & Policy Review*, 7 (2013): 231–52.

52 Ramin Keivani, "A Review of the Main Challenges to Urban Sustainability," *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 1, no. 1–2 (2010): 5–16.

53 David Madden and Peter Marcuse, *In Defense of Housing. The Politics of Crisis* (London: Verso, 2016); Raquel Rolnik, *Urban Warfare. Housing Under the Empire of Finance* (London: Verso, 2019).

The next sections will provide an overview of the level and dynamics of global and local inequalities, and how these processes interlink to produce the patterns of inequalities experienced today, at both the city and territorial levels.

3.2 Measuring the level of inequality across the globe

Box 2.4
Urban infrastructure and financialization

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing: "the value of global real estate is about US$ 217 trillion, nearly 60 per cent of the value of all global assets, with residential real estate comprising 75 per cent of the total. In the course of one year, from mid-2013 to mid-2014, corporate buying of larger properties in the top 100 recipient global cities rose from US$ 600 billion to US$ 1 trillion."[54] This volume of assets is critical, as "financialization is linked to expanded credit and debt taken on by individual households made vulnerable to predatory lending practices and the volatility of markets, the result of which is unprecedented housing precarity".[55]

Income inequalities manifest at various levels: global, regional and local. At the global level, we may be interested in comparing inequalities between countries, examining the size of the economies or looking at inequalities in economic development. When our interest is in comparing the size of the economy, absolute metrics, such as gross national income (GNI), are more appropriate. However, when our interest is in comparing the average standard of living for the population, analysts tend to use relative measures, such as per capita GNI. Similar absolute and relative approaches may be used to assess inequalities between territories or cities and to show which cities or territories contribute most to the national economy (in absolute terms) and/or which cities or territories enjoy the highest living standards (in relative terms). In all of these cases, the geographical area is the unit of analysis, whether it is a country, the territories within a country, or cities themselves. A quite different approach

Source: Juan Gómez, Shutterstock.
Houses in the Raval neighbourhood in Barcelona, heavily affected by the financialization of housing, Spain.

54 Leilani Farha, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living, and on the Right to Non-Discrimination in This Context" (New York, 2017), paragraph 3.

55 Farha, paragraph 5.

uses individuals as the unit of analysis, comparing the distribution of income, consumption or wealth within a country, territory or city. This section looks at levels of income inequality using various different lenses to obtain standard measures of inequalities (see Boxes 2.5 and 2.6 for methodologies and data sources referring to income inequality).

Box 2.5

Measuring economic inequality

Inequalities in income, consumption and wealth can be measured using household survey data which is often complemented with administrative fiscal data and macroeconomic national accounts. In richer countries, surveys are conducted with a certain degree of frequency, but in most parts of the world, data on individual and household incomes are only collected sporadically, and perhaps once every 2 to 5 years. While this box focuses on measuring economic inequality, Box 2.8 addresses measuring urban inequalities.

Income, consumption, and wealth

Income data is normally collected at the individual level and for a certain reference period (often annually but this could also be done more frequently). The most advanced surveys measure different sources of income (i.e. wages, rents, transfers, remittances, etc.). Since income may be seasonal, especially in agrarian or rural settings, measuring consumption is a preferred metric, particularly for poverty studies. Consumption surveys are more complex and time consuming but more accurate than those involving income. The concept of wealth is more complex and harder to measure for richer individuals. It requires triangulating household survey data with tax and fiscal data, national macroeconomic data, and information from other administrative sources. A similar triangulation of data can be used to rectify the problem of the under-reporting of income at the top of the distribution. However, this tends only to be performed in more advanced studies and to depend on the research focus.

Equivalence scales and intrahousehold inequality

Equivalent scales are used to allow comparisons between households of different composition. Per-capita income is the simplest metric, but other equivalent scales can adjust for the level of consumption of different age groups. The distribution of income within each household is also frequently overlooked in most analyses, and especially gender-related inequalities within the household. Specially designed surveys can be used to study inequalities within households and many other relevant dimensions of intrahousehold gender inequality.[56]

Comparisons of purchasing power between different contexts

A series of methodological approaches can be used to determine the equivalence in purchasing power. The most common of these is the International Comparison Program used by the World Bank, which produces the purchasing power parity (PPP) conversion factor. This is a spatial price deflator and currency converter that can be used to monitor differences in prices between countries. National offices of statistics and central banks also produce consumer price indexes at the national level or prices of standard shopping baskets that allow comparisons of purchasing power across territories and over time. There are significant challenges involved in correctly equating income levels to purchasing poverty, for example to account for differences between rural and urban areas. Conversion factors have

56 Ardina Hasanbasri et al., "Advancing Gender Equality through Intra-Household Survey Data Collection on Asset Ownership and Labor," *World Bank Data Blog*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3rVurLC.

tended to have an urban bias, almost by design, or to overlook nonmonetary consumption and exchange, which tend to be more common in some rural areas. Consumption surveys are believed to be more reliable when comparing urban and rural areas.

Inequality metrics and different inequality aversion

The Gini coefficient is perhaps the best-known inequality metric, on account of its simplicity and because it is relatively easy to communicate. The Gini coefficient is conceptually associated with Lorenz curves, which also make the values easier to interpret. Gini values range from 0 to 100 (the area covered by the Lorenz curve), with higher scores indicating greater inequality. There are a wide range of other metrics also available, each of which has different properties and adopts a different approach to inequality aversion. For example, the Theil index is less intuitive than the Gini coefficient, but it offers the important property of subgroup decomposability, which is particularly useful when it comes to breaking down overall inequalities into those between groups and also within them. This is particularly useful when studying territorial inequalities and other group-based inequalities. A set of generalized entropy measures allows us to more clearly introduce ethical considerations relating to inequality aversion. This can, for example, be achieved by penalizing either "high-end inequality" or "low-end inequality". A number of other metrics compare the share of different sections of the distribution. The Palma ratio compares the top 10% of earners with the bottom 40%. Other variations compare the top 10% and bottom 50%, or the top 1% and bottom 50%. For example, those used by the *World Inequality Report* also highlight the high aversion to inequality at the top of the distribution. The indicator chosen to measure "shared prosperity" (SDG 10) compares the growth of the bottom 40% against the national average, implying high aversion to inequality at the bottom of the distribution.

Box 2.6
Public sources of inequalities in income and wealth

Several public sources can be used that provide estimates of inequalities in income and wealth:

° The *World Bank Open Data* and *PovCalNet*. PovCalNet is an online interactive computational tool that allows academics to replicate calculations made by World Bank researchers. As well as providing estimates of poverty, it includes the most common inequality indices based on primary household survey data obtained from government statistical agencies and the different country departments of the World Bank.[57]

° The *World Inequality Database* (WID). This is a database on the historical evolution of the world distribution of income and wealth, both within and between countries. This database provides estimates of both wealth and income, and is able to provide a better account of the share of income of top earners by triangulating survey data with tax, macroeconomic national accounting and other administrative data.[58]

° The *World Income Inequality Database* (WIID). This is an online database that provides information on income inequality in developed, developing, and transitional countries. It provides the most comprehensive set of income inequality statistics compiled from various data sources.[59]

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57 World Bank, "World Bank Open Data," Data, 2022, https://bit.ly/3xXak3B; World Bank, "POVcalNet," 2022, https://bit.ly/3wtaBKW.

58 "World Inequality Database."

59 UNU-WIDER, "World Income Inequality Database," 2021, https://bit.ly/3xUV07k.

° The *Luxembourg Income Study Database* (LIS). This is the largest available income database containing harmonized microdata collected from around 50 different countries in Europe, North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia and Australasia, over a period spanning five decades. The microdata collected allow researchers to produce estimates of both household and individual data.[60]

At the local and national levels, national offices of statistics are perhaps the most reliable sources providing estimates of income inequalities. Think-tanks like the Institute for Applied Economic Research in Brazil and other academic institutions also produce their own independent estimates. All of these estimates have often been compiled in previous data sources (the WIID in particular), but only using aggregated data. National offices of statistics may be able to provide estimates at the subnational level for the urban/rural, regional and city levels. In Mexico, for example, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography combines the functions of a national offices of statistics and a national institute of geography and cartography, providing detailed data at the local level.

The Gini coefficient is, as said above, probably the most well-known metric for measuring inequalities among the wide range of available measures. Gini provides a synthesis of the whole income distribution, ranging from 0 to 100, in which higher scores indicate greater levels of inequality. In practice, since 1960, national levels of inequality have tended to range between 20 and 67. High levels of inequality are found in countries like South Africa (63), while low levels are common in states such as Finland (27.3), but there is quite a large variation from state to state. The Gini coefficient measures the whole income distribution, but analysts may prefer a metric that pays more attention to high-er-level inequality aversion and to the concentration of income amongst top earners. One way to measure this is to look at the share of income concentrated amongst the top 10% of earners in countries around the world; this is the approach followed by the *World Inequality Report 2022*. A comparison between South Africa and Finland is again illustrative. According to 2021 data, the top 10% of earners accumulated 66% of national income in South Africa, while in Finland this percentage was only 34%. Indeed, the metrics show different inequality aversions which also reflect different ethical consider-ations. The conclusions reached may vary according to which metric is used, but using a range of metrics can help to achieve more robust results.

At the global level, interpersonal inequalities are considerable. According to global estimates, the Gini coefficient for the world as a whole may be as high as 70.5%, which is way above the highest Gini: that of South Africa.[61] In terms of concentration of income among top earners, the richest 10% of the global population earns 6.5 times more than the bottom 50%. However, a much lower level of inequality is observed when we break

this down by country. In terms of regional differences, similar conclusions are reached using either metric. The greatest levels of inequality are found in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where the top 10% of earners concentrate 58% of total national income. Inequalities are also high in Southern Africa and Latin America, but tend to be much lower in East Asia. Europe is the region with the lowest levels of inequality, with the top 10% of income being shared by around 36% of the population. However, regional inequality levels often mask significant variations across individual countries (see Box 2.7 and Figure 2.1).

Global income inequalities are partly the result of income gaps between countries, and can partly accounted for by interpersonal inequalities within countries. **Evidence indicates that when it comes to income inequalities, people's welfare is still mostly determined by geography, and where they live.** Decomposition analysis shows that as much as 77% of the world's total inequality can be accounted for by inequalities between countries, while only 33% is explained by inequalities within them.[62] This means that closing the inequality gap between countries remains the most important way to reduce global inequalities. While interpersonal inequalities remain large in some countries, they are relatively small in others.

60 Luxembourg Income Study, "Database," 2022, https://bit.ly/3y25h1T.

61 Figures corresponding to 2008, according to: Lakner and Milanovic, "Global Income Distribution : From the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Great Recession."

62 Lakner and Milanovic.

Box 2.7

The level of inequality between countries

According to the most recent Gini coefficient estimates compiled by the World Bank,[63] income inequalities range from high in South Africa (63), Namibia (59.1) and Zambia (57.1), in Southern Africa, to low in some eastern European countries, such as Slovenia (24.6), the Czech Republic (25) and Slovakia (25). In terms of geographical regions, inequalities are greatest in Latin America, ranging from the high levels in Brazil (53.4) and Colombia (51.3) to much lower levels in El Salvador (38.8) and Uruguay (39.7). On average, inequalities are smallest in Asia: Pakistan (31.6) and Bangladesh (31.6), in South Asia; and the Republic of Korea (31.4) and Japan (32.9), in the Asia-Pacific region. On average, income inequalities are low in Europe, and very low in countries such as Finland (27.3), Norway (27.6) and Denmark (28.2). Inequalities can, however, also be high in some high-income countries, such as Chile (44.4) and the USA (41.4). As these figures show, income inequalities vary greatly across the globe.

Statistics from the *World Inequality Report 2022* show a greater inequality aversion to concentration of income among top earners, based on measurements of the share of national income accruing to the top 10% and bottom 50% of income earners.[64] According to recent figures, the highest levels of inequalities can be observed in Southern Africa, and particularly in countries such as South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Swaziland and Botswana, where the top 10% of the population earns between 35 and 63 times more than the poorest 50%. Latin America also displays high income gaps, with corresponding ratios of 31 in Mexico, 29 in Brazil, and 28 in Chile. The lowest income gaps can be observed in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Iceland and Norway, where the top 10% of the population earns less than 6 times more than the bottom 50%. These figures show the wide diversity of income inequality gaps. In China, the top 10% of the population earns 15 times more than the poorest 50%; in India, the ratio is as much as 22 times more. The USA displays one of the highest levels of inequalities among rich countries, with the top 10% of the population earning 17 times more than the poorest 50%.

Source: Erik González, Adobe Stock.
Aerial view from Santiago de Surco and San Juan de Miraflores in Lima, Peru.

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63 These are recent income inequality figures measured using the Gini coefficient (see Box 2.5 on the methodology for measuring inequalities). The data were obtained from POVcalNet, a data repository belonging to the World Bank which compiles estimates based on primary household survey data obtained from government statistical agencies and World Bank country departments: World Bank, "POVcalNet."

64 Chancel et al., "World Inequality Report 2022."

Figure 2.1

Top 10% to bottom 50% income gaps across the world, 2021[65]

Top 10/bottom 50 ratio

- 10.1 – 20.0
- 20.1 – 30.0
- 30.1 – 50.0
- 50.1 – 100.0
- 100.1 – 300.0
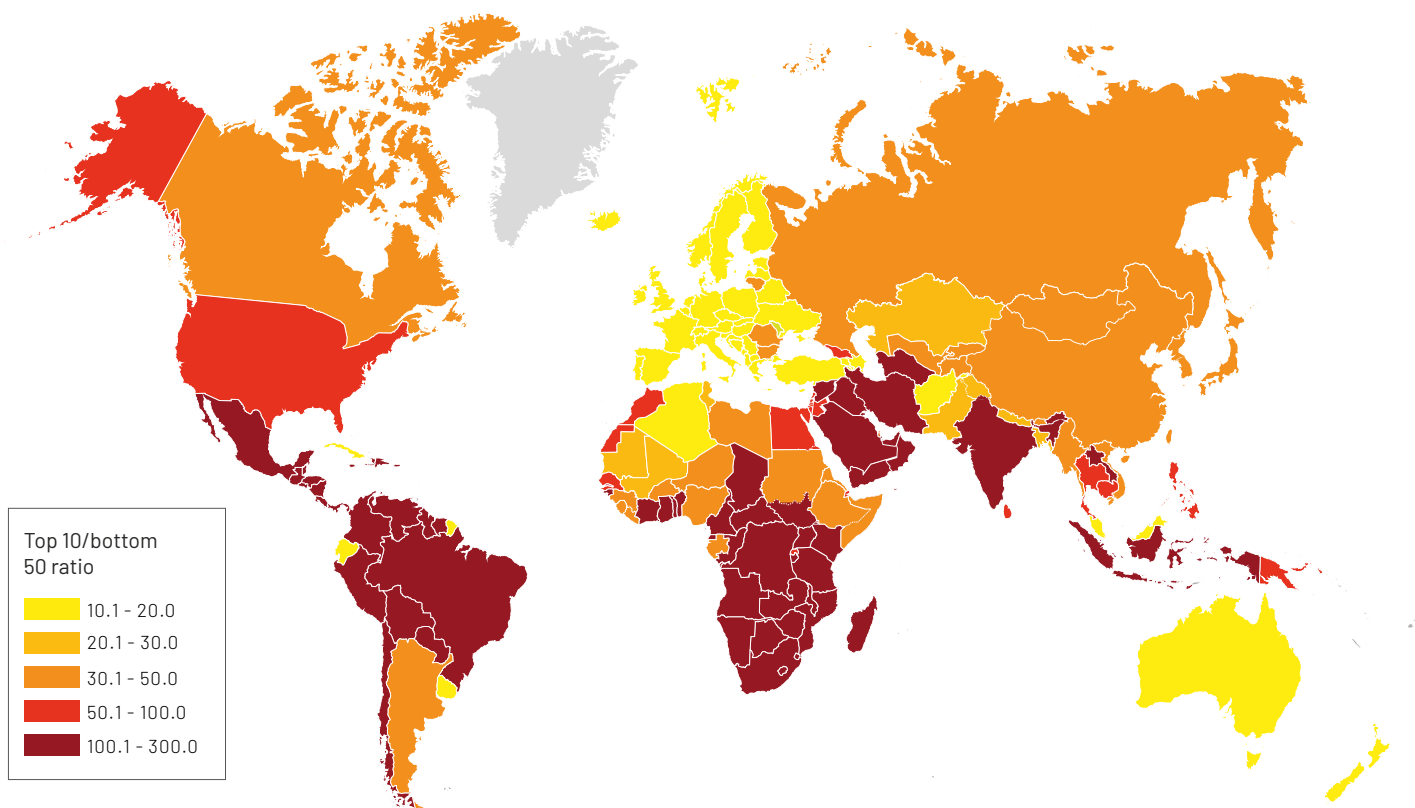
Source: Chancel et al., "World Inequality Report 2022."

3.3 Unequal cities and territories

If countries show a high level of diversity in terms of level of inequality, cities and territories within countries are even more heterogeneous. It should come as no surprise that the highest levels of inequality are often found in urban areas, given their high population densities and contrasting realities: with people enjoying high standards of living existing side-by-side with those experiencing important degrees of deprivation.

Examples of such contrasts can be found everywhere. The photograph of the Paraisópolis favela next to its wealthy neighbour, Morumbi, in Sao Paulo (Brazil), on the next page, became viral after it was first published by its author, Tuca Vieira, on social media, back in 2004. It attracted a great deal of attention not because it is unusual, but precisely because it depicts the marked inequalities experienced in many cities across the world. Despite there being many examples, and the existence of extensive data at the country level, comparable data on income inequalities at the city level are scarce. This section presents some of the available data that are currently available.

Interesting insights can be drawn from data compiled by UN-Habitat in their *World Cities Reports*. It is possible to observe similar regional patterns to those described

65 Chancel et al.

Source: Johnny Miller.
Paraisopolis and Morumbi. On the left, the famous picture taken by Tuca Vieira in 2004. On the right, the picture taken in the same spot, 2020, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Source: Tuca Veira (2004) and Johnny Miller (2020), from "Sixteen Years Later, a Helicopter Returns to the Site of the 'World's Most Famous Photograph of Inequality'" Inequality.org, 2020

earlier.[66] Inequalities are particularly notable in South African cities, with cities such as **Johannesburg**, **Port Elizabeth**, **Pretoria**, **Cape Town** and **Durban** exhibiting Gini coefficients of above 60.[67] The high-income inequalities in South African cities are, in part, a legacy of apartheid, but they are also partly the result of segmentation resulting from recent urban development. Interestingly, other cities in Sub-Saharan Africa also display high levels of inequality. These include **Kigali** (Rwanda) and **Blantyre** (Malawi), with Gini coefficients of 50. Unfortunately, the UN-Habitat report only shows city level inequalities for a small group of Sub-Saharan African countries. It also excludes Nigeria and Kenya, to mention just two large and unequal countries.

Data from the UN-Habitat report also show high levels of inequality in Latin American cities, such as: **Curitiba**, **Belo Horizonte** and **Sao Paulo** (Brazil), **Santiago de Chile** (Chile), and **Quito** (Ecuador), amongst others, all with Gini coefficients of greater than 50. Asian cities appear less unequal, with Gini coefficients below 40, except for **Hong Kong**, which is an outlier, with a Gini coefficient of above 50. European cities are considerably less unequal according Gini coefficients, whose values are normally below 40, with the only notable exception being **London** (UK, with a Gini coefficient of above 50). North American cities are considerably more unequal than their European counterparts. Cities such as **Gainesville**, **New York**, **Philadelphia**, **Los Angeles**

and **Houston** (USA) all have Gini coefficients that are close to, or higher than, 50.

Data on the Palma ratio for 126 countries compiled by Euromonitor also allows us to rank cities by their inequality levels (as shown by Figure 2.2).[68] The Palma ratio compares the income of the top 10% of the population with that of the bottom 40%. It has a stronger inequality aversion to high concentration at the top of the distribution than the Gini coefficient. This analysis again confirms that the most unequal cities appear to be concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.

The highest inequality levels are observed in **Johannesburg** (South Africa), where the top 10% of the population earns, on average, 13.4 times more than the bottom 40%. This is followed by **Lagos** (Nigeria), **Nairobi** (Kenya) and **Santo Domingo** (Dominican Republic), all with Palma ratios of greater than 10. Other Latin American cities on the list are **Rio de Janeiro** and **Sao Paulo** (Brazil), **Guatemala City** (Guatemala), **San Salvador** (El Salvador), **Bogota** (Colombia), and **Quito** (Ecuador). These figures are illustrative of the high levels of inequality present across much of the Latin American region.

Interestingly, cities in poorer countries appear to be as unequal, or even more unequal, than those in more affluent parts of the Latin American region. This can be seen when comparing countries such as **San Salvador**

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66 Data from: UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization" (Nairobi, 2020).

67 There is less coverage on Sub-Sahara African cities.

68 Fransua Vytautas Razvadauskas, "Income Inequality Ranking of the World's Major Cities," *Euromonitor International*, 2017, https://bit.ly/3D6ng7B.

(El Salvador) or **Guatemala City** (Guatemala) with **Bogota** (Colombia) or **Sao Paulo** (Brazil). **This suggests that there is no direct relationship between the level of development and that of inequality. Evidence from high income countries further confirms this finding.** Inequalities also appear to be elevated in cities in high income countries, such as **Miami**, **San Jose**, **Los Angeles** and **New York** (USA), and **Frankfurt** (Germany).

In contrast, the lowest levels of inequalities can be observed among Asian and Eastern European cities, such as **Mumbai** and **Karachi** (India), **Bratislava** (Slovakia), **Wuhan**, **Guangzhou**, **Beijing**, and **Shen-**

zhen (China), **Kiev** (Ukraine), **Prague** (the Czech Republic), and **Warsaw** (Poland). However, lower levels of inequality within cities are also found in affluent countries. Examples of this include: **Berlin** (Germany), **Birmingham** and **Leeds** (UK), and **Barce-lona** (Spain). This contrasts with the high levels of inequality observed in **New York** (USA), **London** (UK) and **Frankfurt** (Germany) which, incidentally, are the main financial capitals of the world. As we will see shortly, city level inequalities tend to be closely connected to the dynamics of global inequality.

Figure 2.2

Ranking of cities according to their level of inequality measured using the Palma ratio

TOP 20 MOST UNEQUAL CITIES

Palma Ratio (10/40 per cent)

TOP 20 MOST EQUAL CITIES

Palma Ratio (10/40 per cent)
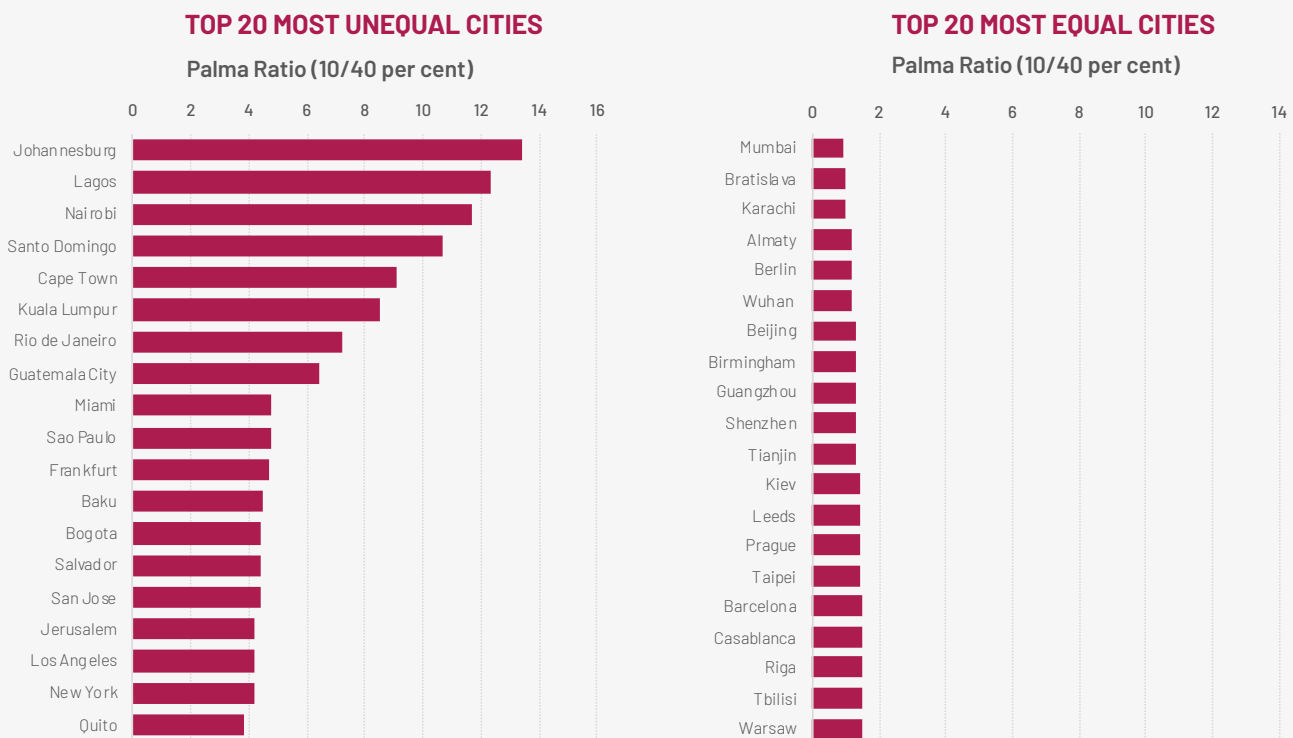
Source: graph produced with data from Euromonitor which compares inequality across 126 cities. For details of the methodology, see: Euromonitor International, "Income Inequality Ranking of the World's Major Cities".

Box 2.8
Measuring urban inequalities

Specifically, urban studies of inequalities began in the late 1980s and 1990s, with detailed household surveys that combined demographic indicators with multiple choice questions about economic and social factors, such as housing, employment and immigration status, as well as specific questions on household income and expenditure.[69]

Recent studies of urban and territorial inequalities have examined how income, or consumption, is spatially distributed within a given territory. This has included using the decomposability property of the Theil index, as well as developing cross-scale spatial indicators for understanding the distribution of inequalities.[70] In this regard, the accessibility and availability of geographic information system (GIS) technology has become key to understanding the spatialization of urban inequalities. GIS has been widely utilized in recent academic studies, but also, and most crucially, by local authorities, community-based organizations, and social movements. A well-documented example is Slum/Shack Dwellers International, which has produced their own data regarding, for example, the distribution of clean water and sanitation infrastructure. This data has been used to increase the visibility of issues facing marginalized urban populations across the Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia regions. Oxfam Brazil has developed detailed guidelines to help produce inequality maps at both the municipal and local levels.[71]

However, approaches to measurement, and also data treatment, are not neutral; they are embedded in power relations and tend to reflect inherited and naturalized values, political positions, and assumptions. Approaches to measuring, mapping, and quantifying different forms of urban inequalities are therefore functions of the contexts and actors involved, as much as they are a product of a specific methodology or type of data. For this reason, it should not be assumed that one methodology or approach to measuring urban inequalities can necessarily be directly transferred from one city or region to another.

Source: Casa da Photo, Shutterstock.
Homeless people living in tents in the center of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

69 Lawrence Bobo et al., "Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality, 1992-1994: [Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, and Los Angeles]" (Ann Arbor, 2008), https://bit.ly/3L1Fr16.

70 Loeiz Bourdic, Serge Salat, and Caroline Nowacki, "Assessing Cities: A New System of Cross-Scale Spatial Indicators," *Building Research & Information* 40, no. 5 (2012): 592–605.

71 See: Rede Nossa Sao Paulo and Programa Cidades Sustentáveis, "Guia orientador para construção de mapas da desigualdade nos municípios brasileiros," 2020, https://bit.ly/3L4JJol.

4 The dynamics of income inequalities

So far, the focus in this chapter has been on the levels of income inequalities and on how to measure them. This next section takes a more dynamic approach and looks at changes over time. It first looks at changes in global inequalities and then analyzes changes in territorial inequalities within countries. It takes a temporal perspective, going back a few decades to assess trends in inequalities since the 1980s. As will be seen, evidence brings some positive news but, more broadly speaking, it has been a story of uneven income and wealth gains, especially since the 1980s. On the bright side, the world has seen a reduction in inequalities between countries, as poor and middle-income countries have increas-

ingly closed the gap with richer ones. Even so, relative income inequalities within countries have increased on average, as has, and even more sharply, the gap between the top earners and the rest of the population. Territorial inequalities have also increased in many countries. Adverse events, such as the financial crisis and the COVID-19 crisis, appear to have exacerbated inequalities when safety net programmes were not in place.

However, the picture is far from homogeneous, with sharp differences between countries. For instance, emerging economies like China have seen an impressive rise in their level of income in recent decades, resulting in rising tides of people entering the middle classes and the country achieving impressive levels of poverty reduction. Even so, Chinese growth has been unequally distributed across the country's territory and has increased the gap between the urban coastal cities and more rural inland towns and villages. In contrast, richer countries, like the UK and the USA, have experienced more moderate growth, coupled with increasing inequalities; this has been particularly evident amongst top earners, and disproportionately so in some cities and territories. Other countries, particularly in Latin America, have had more positive experiences, with periods of decreasing inequalities. This section discusses this dynamic, how income inequalities are changing, and how global and local processes are interconnected in producing and reproducing inequalities.
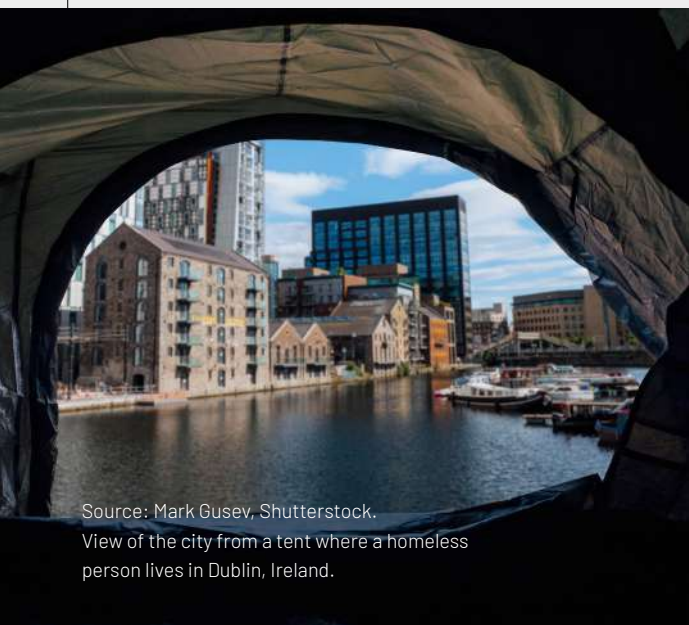
Source: Mark Gusev, Shutterstock.
View of the city from a tent where a homeless person lives in Dublin, Ireland.

4.1 Changes in global inequalities since the 1980s

The story since the 1980s has not been very positive when it comes to income inequalities. This does, however, depend on the metric that is used for analysis, and on the ethical considerations and inequality aversion attached to each metric.[72] The good news is that income inequalities between countries, which had been on the rise since the early 19th century, have started to fall quickly, as poorer and middle-income countries have increasingly closed the gap with respect to higher income countries (see Figure 2.3). The bad news is that, according to various estimates, on average, income inequalities within countries are rising. Recent data from the *World Inequality Report 2020*, whose metric puts higher aversion to top-earner inequality, has shown how the 1980s was a pivotal moment at which within-country inequalities started to rise from the low levels achieved in the 1940s. Other studies, using other metrics that are less averse to inequality (e.g. Gini), show that relative global inequalities may be declining. However, these studies conclude that this decline may not be robust and suggest that increases in within-country inequalities may be cancelling out the effects of reducing inequalities between countries.[73] In turn, estimates using absolute metrics have shown a constant increase in absolute global inequalities over the same period.[74] The evidence is therefore mixed and depends on the inequality aversion assigned to each metric. Even so, they all point to an, on average,

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Figure 2.3

Global income inequalities: Between-country vs within-country inequalities (top 10/bottom 50 ratio), 1820-2020
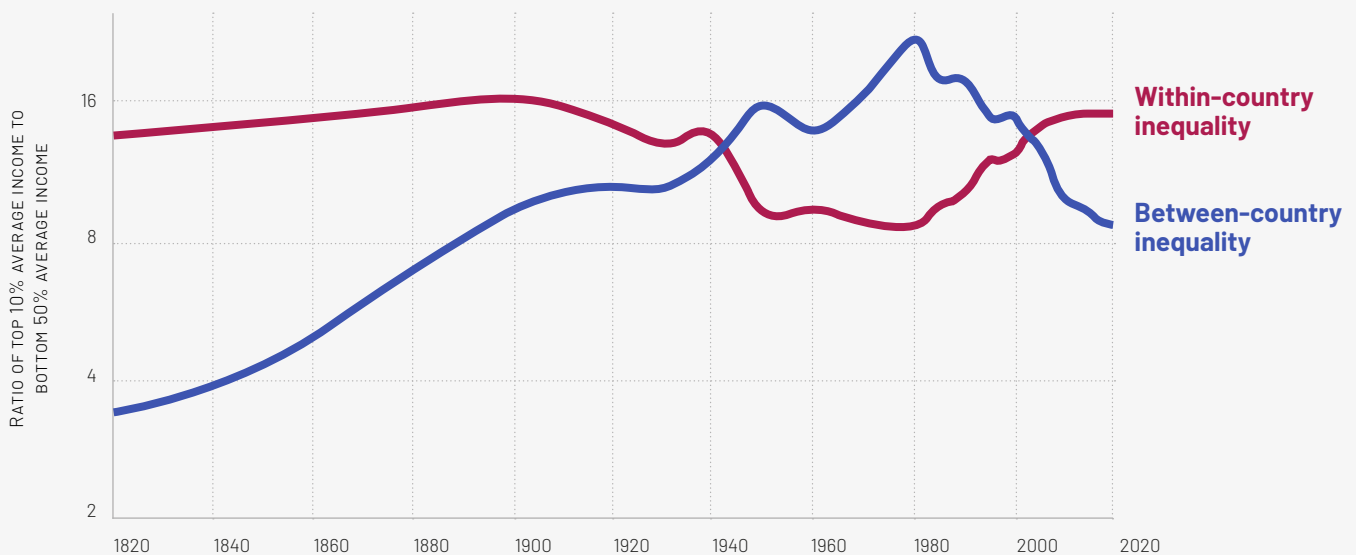
Note: Between-country inequalities are measured by the ratio between the top 10% of average incomes and the bottom 50% (assuming that everybody in a given country has the same income). Within-country inequalities are also measured by the ratio between the top 10% of average incomes and the bottom 50% (assuming that all countries have the same average income).

Source: Chancel et al., "World Inequality Report 2022."

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72 See detailed discussion in: Martin Ravallion, "What Might Explain Today's Conflicting Narratives on Global Inequality?," in *Inequality in the Developing World*, ed. Carlos Gradín, Murray Leibbrandt, and Finn Tarp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 18–48; see also: Carlos Gradín, "Trends in Global Inequality Using a New Integrated Dataset," WIDER Working Paper, 2021.

73 Lakner and Milanovic, "Global Income Distribution : From the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Great Recession."

74 Manuel Niño-Zarazúa, Laurence Roope, and Finn Tarp, "Global Inequality: Relatively Lower, Absolutely Higher," *The Review of Income and Wealth* 63, no. 4 (2016): 661–84.

reduction in between-country inequalities and increase in within-country inequalities since the 1980s.

A focus on changes in the accumulation of income among top earners provides an even more pessimistic assessment. The *World Inequality Report* shows that inequalities, as measured by the concentration of income among the top 10% of earners, have increased in nearly all countries in recent decades.[75] However, the rate at which these inequalities have increased has varied. Since the 1980s, inequalities have increased fastest in North America, China, India and Russia. However, they have only grown moderately in Europe, where the tax system remains more progressive and wage inequalities have been moderated by education and wage-setting policies. The pattern has remained relatively stable at high levels in countries with important income concentrations, such as those in the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and Brazil. These countries are different to Europe in that they did not go through the post-World War II period of equalitarian regimes, which reduced inequalities in that continent during the 20th century.[76]

There has been ample debate regarding the upward trends in income inequalities seen since the 1980s, particularly occurring in rich western countries.[77] Inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient,[78] has increased in the majority of rich western countries: the greatest increases observed have been in the USA (from a Gini coefficient of 32.12 in 1975 to 39.02 in 2019); in Germany (from 25.34 in 2000 to 29.85 in 2017); and in Canada (from 28.14 in 1988 to 31.41 in 2010). Some European countries have experienced fluctuations. For example, the UK saw its Gini coefficient increase from 26.01 just before 1980 to a high point of 37.83 in 2001, but it then followed a downward trajectory and has plateaued at around 31 since 2011. Other countries in the region have also had periods of falling inequalities, as measured by the Gini coefficient; these include Belgium, France, Greece, Hungary and Spain.[79] All in all, however, the overall trend has been for an increase in inequalities in rich western countries. The situation of inequalities at the time of COVID-19 is explained in Box 2.9.

Box 2.9

Inequalities at the time of COVID-19[80]

There has been much debate about the potential impact of the COVID-19 crisis on inequalities. Early evidence suggests that people who already suffered structural discrimination have been hardest hit by higher morbidity and mortality. Likewise, they have been disproportionately affected by lockdowns and other social distancing measures implemented by their governments during the pandemic. Older people face a higher risk of illness, as do those with compromised immune systems. Evidence from the USA and the UK suggests that ethnic minorities may also be at greater risk, both of illness and of facing a stronger impact of lockdown measures. Poorer and working-class households have suffered the greatest impacts as a result of the lockdown measures implemented. There is large evidence on the gender impact of COVID-19. Cases of domestic violence and mental health problems have also increased during this period. Children have also missed school under what have been uneven conditions of digital connectivity, and girls are more likely to drop out.

Evidence appears to indicate that pre-existing inequalities present in many countries have increased. There has also been evidence of rising poverty and yet also an increase in the income of billionaires. According to the data currently available, the ten richest people in the world saw their personal fortunes grow by 540 billion USD between March and

75 Chancel et al., "World Inequality Report 2022."

76 Chancel et al.

77 OECD, "Divided We Stand: Why Inequality Keeps Rising" (Paris, 2011), https://bit.ly/36huWl8.

76 World Bank data retrieved from: World Bank, "POVcalNet."

79 World Bank.

80 This box summarizes arguments from Ferreira: Francisco Ferreira, "Inequality in the Time of COVID-19," *IMF Finance and Development*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3luBmRd. Francisco H. G. Ferreira is the Amartya Sen Professor of Inequality Studies and Director of the International Inequalities Institute at the London School of Economics.

December 2020.[81] In fact, in just nine months, the richest people in the world recovered their losses. However, it will probably take more than a decade for the world's poorest people to recover from the economic impact of the pandemic.

Income inequalities between countries

According to IMF data released in 2020, the pandemic may, in the short-term, have accelerated the trend for average income levels to converge over time. The reason for this is that richer countries have experienced larger economic contractions than poorer countries.[82] There have, however, been exceptions: populated countries, like India, have suffered a great deal both in terms of mortality and economic performance and also a sharp economic contraction. The long-term impact of COVID-19 is yet to be seen. According to an IMF analysis, "despite significant relief measures brought on by the COVID-19 crisis, about 60 per cent of low-income countries are at high risk or already in debt distress. In 2015 that number was below 30 percent".[83] How economies are going to recover from the pandemic slowdown is yet to be seen.

Inequalities within countries

It is still too early to fully measure changes in within-country inequalities since the data on individual incomes come from household surveys and administrative sources which are simply not yet available. However, there are reasons to expect that the pandemic has both created new inequalities and exacerbated pre-existing income gaps within countries. In a recent survey of 295 economists from 79 countries, 87 said that they expected to see an "increase" in income inequalities in their country as a result of the pandemic.[84]

Views from the director of the International Inequality Institute at the LSE

The COVID-19 crisis is inducing a global recession that will have an impact on income levels and access to labour markets, with a particularly negative impact on pre-existing class, territorial, racial and gender inequalities. Early evidence suggests that remote working has also exacerbated inequalities since those in higher-level occupations and better off households find it easiest to work from home. In developing countries, workers in the informal sector have also been more vulnerable during the pandemic and need to face very stark trade-offs, on a daily basis, between staying safe at home or facing the threat of infection in order to provide food for their families. On the other hand, evidence is emerging from some (apparently) unlikely sources that social protection policy responses, such as income transfers targeting poor and vulnerable workers, have worked rather well.

Capital markets are also likely to have played a significant role in generating inequalities during the pandemic, particularly amongst top earners. The monetary policies advanced by the world's main central banks have helped to prevent bankruptcies and to conserve jobs, but the large influx of capital has had other effects too, including keeping asset prices high while helping stock markets to boom. In the end, monetary policies have contributed to inflating the value of assets, which are mainly held by the rich, and this has had a lot to do with the generalized growth in billionaire incomes. Data from 2022 indicates inflation is currently on the rise in many rich countries and is increasing the cost of goods which, in turn, will hit poor and middle-class households disproportionally hard.

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81 Oxfam's calculations based on the Forbes' 2020 Billionaires List: Oxfam International, "Mega-Rich Recoup COVID-Losses in Record-Time yet Billions Will Live in Poverty for at Least a Decade," 2021, https://bit.ly/3qses6R.

82 Angus Deaton, "COVID-19 and Global Income Inequality," *LSE Public Policy Review* 1, no. 4 (2021): 1–10.

83 Kristalina Georgieva and Ceyla Pazarbasioglu, "The G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments Must Be Stepped Up," *IMF Blog*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3uqgupA.

84 Based on a survey commissioned by Oxfam: Oxfam International, "Mega-Rich Recoup COVID-Losses in Record-Time yet Billions Will Live in Poverty for at Least a Decade."

4.2 Increased concentrations among top earners

Evidence indicates that income inequalities at the top end of the distribution have increased sharply, and particularly in rich countries (see Box 2.10). A global perspective provides further insights into the transformation that the world has undergone since the 1980s. A synthetic summary is provided by the "elephant curve" first published by the World Bank in 2016, [85] and recently updated as part of the *World Inequality Report* (see Figure 2.4).[86] A clear narrative emerges from the graph which highlights the "winners" and "losers" of the transformation of the global economy over the last few decades. The positive side of the story tells of a major rise in income amongst the bottom 60% of the global distribution. This was related to a reduction in poverty and to upward mobility, especially in emerging economies such as China and India. The intermediate group, mostly formed by the lower and middle classes in rich countries, grew less, with them losing ground. This is the story of stagnant real wages in some of the richest countries. The most interesting insight is associated with the other group of "winners": the top 1% of earners in the world. This small segment of ultra-rich people captured 23% of total world growth between 1980 and 2020, as opposed to the 9% increase for the bottom 50%.

The story is generally not a positive one and has triggered debate on the effects of globalization and the neoliberal policies implemented since the 1980s. The jury is still out when it comes to explaining this trend, as there are clearly many forces in play.[87] Thomas Piketty has perhaps expressed the most convincing argument when he demonstrated, using new data, how the long-term rate of return on capital has been greater than the rate of economic growth, resulting in a further

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85 Lakner and Milanovic, "Global Income Distribution : From the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Great Recession."

86 Chancel et al., "World Inequality Report 2022."

87 Ravallion, "What Might Explain Today's Conflicting Narratives on Global Inequality?"

Box 2.10

Income accumulation among top earners in rich countries since 1980

The top 10% of earners in the USA accumulated 34% of total national income in 1980; this share had then risen to 45.5% by 2016. Since 1995, the top 1% of US earners have accumulated more income than the bottom 50%, and this is a trend that continues to increase. In the UK, the top 10% of earners accumulated 29% of national income in 1980; this figure had increased to 38% by 2015 and has since fluctuated at around 36%. In Germany, the corresponding share increased from 28.6% in 1980 to 37.8% in 2016. European countries that experienced periods in which their Gini coefficient declined have not seen any reduction in the share of national income going to the top 10%: in France, their share remained at around 33% of national income; in Belgium, it was around 32%; and in Spain, it was around 34%. In Greece and Hungary, the accumulation of income by the top earners has also increased. As these figures show, the picture is more pessimistic when we look at the share of national income going to the top earners because the metric used has a stronger ethical aversion to "high-end inequality" than measures like the Gini coefficient.

Source: Facundo Alvaredo et al., "World Inequality Report 2018," 2018, https://bit.ly/3isykT7.

Source: Word Stock Studio, Shutterstock.
Informal settlements in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Figure 2.4

The elephant curve of global inequalities and growth, 1980–2020
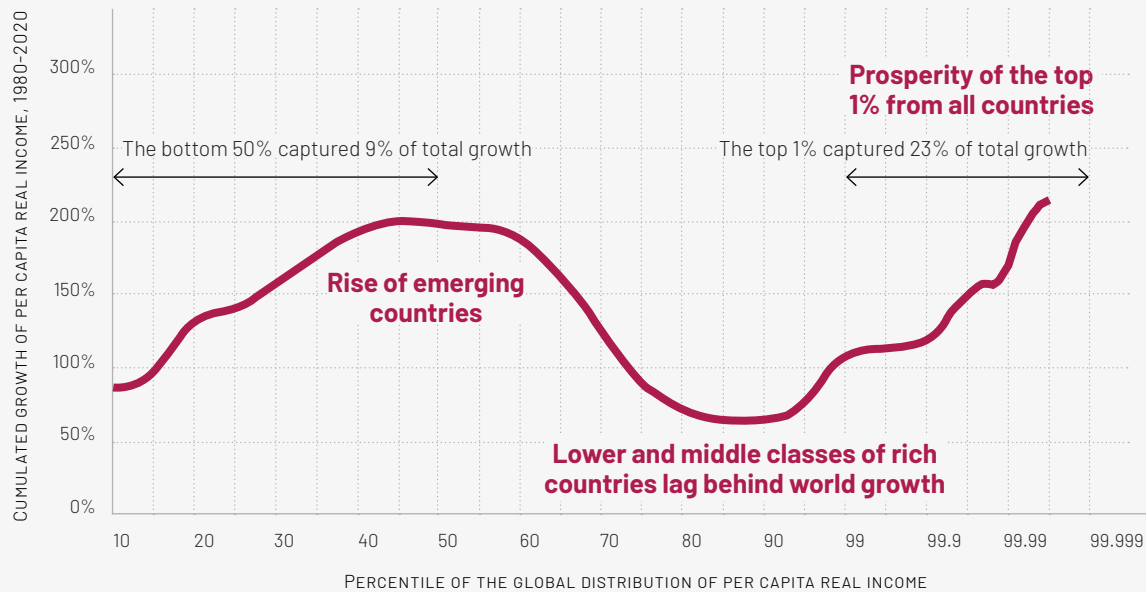
Note: On the horizontal axis, the world population is divided into a hundred different groups of equal population size and sorted in ascending order from left to right, according to each group's income level. The top 1% group is then further divided into ten groups, and the richest of these groups is again divided into ten more groups, with the very top group being divided yet again, into ten more groups of equal population size. The vertical axis shows the growth in total income received by an average member of each group between 1980 and 2020. These values are net of inflation.

Source: Chancel et al., "World Inequality Report 2022."

concentration of wealth.[88] According to Piketty, World War I, World War II, and the Great Depression had an equalizing effect in most of Europe. However, since the 1960s, global inequalities, as measured by the concentration of wealth in the hands of the top 10%, have been moving in an upward direction, with only a slight decline more recently, since 2008. Piketty argues that if this trend of rising wealth inequalities continues, economic elites will reach a similar position to that enjoyed in the 19th century by those who inherited their wealth. He has been calling for policies to tax wealth and inheritance in order to tackle some of these entrenched inequalities.

The problem is not simply an ethical question, or due to a dislike of inequalities concentrated at the top of society. **Accumulation at such a level, amongst the top segments of society, undermines social cohesion and weakens democratic institutions, such as political systems, making them vulnerable to political capture.** At the city level, these marked inequalities are behind the problems of financialization and ghettoization found in certain urban areas, as mentioned earlier. Investment

in real estate has been an important mechanism for generating profits, as housing prices have increased faster than economic growth. **These marked global inequalities reinforce the inequalities observed at the city level, exacerbating the housing crisis and other associated intersecting inequalities.**

The problem is also an economic one. Seminal research published by the IMF has demonstrated the detrimental effect of inequalities on economic growth.[89] Using new data on taxes and transfers, this research demonstrates that lower net inequalities are robustly correlated with faster and more durable growth for a given level of redistribution. It also shows that redistribution appears to be generally benign in terms of its impact on growth. It is only in extreme cases that there is any evidence that it could have a directly negative impact on growth. This research has been pivotal in changing neoclassical positions in economics regarding the role of inequalities and in raising awareness of the necessity to address the growing inequalities in income and wealth.

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88 Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*.

89 Ostry, Berg, and Tsangarides, "Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth."

The next section changes the scale to look at territorial inequalities and how the economic transformation experienced since the 1980s has resulted in diverse patterns of territorial convergence and divergence within countries. The focus will therefore be on the changing geography of economic growth.

4.3 The changing geography of economic growth

A simple characterisation of the geography of economic growth is doomed to fail. Over-simplistic character-izations have suggested that territorial convergence should be the main feature in the long run, as economic development stimulates the movement of capital and labour between regions.[90] However, emerging evidence, especially from the 1990s onward, shows that there is a marked heterogeneity in growth trajectories, with some countries moving towards territorial convergence, while territorial inequalities remain the dominant trend in others. It is therefore important to examine the specifics of each country, many of which display alternative growth trajectories to simple patterns of convergence or divergence.

4.3.1 Territorial divergence and globally connected metropolises

For most of the 20th century, the industrialized coun-tries experienced processes of long-run territorial convergence, whereby economically weaker regions underwent a process of slowly catching up with their wealthier neighbours.[91] However, new evidence which emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s started to point to a change of direction, as some countries began to experience interregional divergence.

In some countries, key cities and core regions increas-ingly enjoyed the benefits of a growth in productivity in a way that was not replicated in others. In particular, knowledge-intensive regions, with globally connected cities at their hearts, such as the South of England, with **London** (UK) at its core, the Ile-de-France, with **Paris** (France), and the Northern California Bay Area, with the **San Francisco – San Jose** conurbation (USA), appeared to be increasingly capturing the benefits of modern globalization, but often to the apparent detriment of other regions in the same countries. These regions tended to have the highest levels of global connectivity, mediated via global companies, and to act as conduits for global flows of knowledge, finance, human capital, goods and services.[92]

During the 1990s, many of these globally connected cities started to account for a greater share of national and global economic growth than in previous decades.[93] This was the consequence of new international markets opening, and global outsourcing and offshoring becoming widespread. Indeed, it was the surge in the performance of these globally connected cities that first started to drive interregional divergence in countries such as the UK and the USA, from the late 1980s onwards.

More generally speaking, cities and urban areas domi-nated economic growth across the Global North[94] and this was also increasingly the case in the newly industrial-izing countries of the Global South,[95] and most notably in the BRICS countries.[96] By the new millennium, economic growth in all parts of the world was dominated by urban areas, and an increasing number of countries began to experience interregional divergence, with this trend being most notable in the newly-industrializing world, although it was also evident in industrialized economies.

Interestingly, in the advanced industrialized countries of the OECD, the increasingly unbalanced interregional

90 World Bank, *World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography*.

91 Philip McCann, *Modern Urban and Regional Economics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

92 Iammarino and McCann, *Multinationals and Economic Geography: Location, Technology and Innovation*; McCann and Acs, "Globalization: Countries, Cities and Multinationals."

93 World Bank, *World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography*.

94 Lewis Dijkstra, Enrique Garcilazo, and Philip McCann, "The Effects of the Global Financial Crisis on European Regions and Cities," *Journal of Economic Geography* 15, no. 5 (July 26, 2015): 935–49, https://doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lbv032.

95 OECD and European Commission, *Cities in the World: A New Perspective on Urbanisation*.

96 Philip McCann, "Globalisation, Multinationals and the BRIICS," in *Globalisation and Emerging Economies*, ed. Ralp Lattimore and Raed Safadi (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2009), 71–115.

Box 2.11

The economic geography of the recovery from the 2008 financial crisis

Fundamental changes in interregional growth patterns were the result of the events associated with the global financial crisis. In many OECD countries, interregional convergence processes were still very much ongoing up to 2008, but the profound financial and fiscal impacts of that crisis re-orientated how regions and cities grew in its aftermath. Although many OECD countries and regions still show signs of convergence,[101] an increasing number have changed and are currently undergoing processes of interregional divergence (as can be seen in Table 2.1).

On average, overall economic growth rates in OECD countries fell in the immediate aftermath of the crisis. Then, interregional divergence primarily emerged due to the fact that only a limited number of cities and regions proved resilient to the associated adverse events.[102] The recovery was therefore very patchy and fragmented, even within many OECD countries, with different places performing differently, which led to divergent rather than convergent growth in many cases.

growth experienced by a subset of countries during the 1990s was not accompanied by higher national growth rates,[97] as had arguably been the case elsewhere.[98] In other words, interregional inequalities were not apparently "needed" to stimulate faster national economic growth. Countries which showed interregional divergence during the 1990s, such as the UK, the USA and Ireland, did not tend to grow any faster than others, such as Germany and Finland, which displayed interregional convergence. Indeed, the majority of industrialized countries experienced interregional convergence processes during this period. Furthermore, this did not lead to any loss in national growth performance in comparison to countries that had started to exhibit interregional divergence processes.

China is another commonly documented case in which economic growth has produced marked territorial inequalities. Since its economic reforms began in 1978, China has experienced remarkable economic growth. Its real GDP per capita grew at an annual rate of 8.4% between 1978-2019.[99] Over this same period, household income in China rose six-fold and the rate and scale of poverty reduction has been unprecedented.

However, this positive story has also been somewhat overshadowed by a sharp rise in income inequalities, a widening of territorial disparities, and the emergence of a new, ultra-rich social class. The widening of urban-rural inequalities and, in particular, the gap between the relatively rich East region, and the poorer Centre and West regions, have been widely documented.[100]

4.3.2 Territorial resilience to crises

Crises shape and often considerably change the geographic pattern of inequalities. The 2008 financial crisis is a good example and one which also provides clues as to how the COVID-19 crisis may reshape territorial inequalities. Evidence from the post-2008 financial crisis shows that cities proved to be generally more resilient to adverse economic events than smaller urban settlements or rural regions. This was true in most of the OECD countries, but certain nuances were also found (see Box 2.11 for details).

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97 Andre Carrascal-Incera et al., "UK Interregional Inequality in a Historical and International Comparative Context," *National Institute Economic Review* 253 (2020): 4–17.

98 This was a popular position, see: World Bank, *World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography*.

99 Calculations based on World Bank data.

100 Li, Sicular, and Tarp, "Inequality in China: Development, Transition, and Policy."

101 OECD, *Productivity and Jobs in a Globalised World: (How) Can All Regions Benefit?* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2018), https://bit.ly/3D2jzzO.

102 Carrascal-Incera et al., "UK Interregional Inequality in a Historical and International Comparative Context."

Table 2.1

OECD countrywide patterns of interregional convergence and divergence

Countries displaying interregional divergence	Countries with stable levels of interregional inequality	Countries displaying interregional convergence
2008-2018	2008-2018	2008-2018
UK, USA, France, Denmark, Poland, Czech Republic, Italy, Greece, Spain, Sweden, Australia, Netherlands	Belgium, Norway, Switzerland, Republic of Korea	Japan, Mexico, Turkey, Hungary, Canada, Austria, Slovenia, Slovakia, Chile, Portugal, Finland, Germany

Source: adapted from OECD, *Regions and Cities at a Glance 2020*, Figure 2.9.

Cities of different sizes played very different roles in the recovery from the 2008 financial crisis, showing how relationships between economic growth and city size varied across the world. In the USA, the post-crisis recovery was almost totally dominated by large cities with at least 1 million inhabitants. Across Western Europe, a wide range of metropolitan urban areas of different sizes played an important role in recovery and growth; these included regions containing functional urban centres with at least 250,000 inhabitants. In Central and Eastern Europe, many types of both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas made significant contributions to growth.

Evidence from the economic recovery indicated that being large, urbanized[103] and somewhat interregional and unequal offered some slight overall advantages in terms of economic resilience.[104] However, amongst the OECD countries, the growth dynamics were not purely related to urban scale; instead, the processes were rather more nuanced. Table 2.2 shows how the nature and patterns of the geography of economic growth within countries can vary enormously.

Table 2.2

Typologies of growth: concentrated versus decentralized; urban versus mixed

	Regionally concentrated growth	Regionally distributed growth
Metropolitan-driven growth	France, Greece, Lithuania, Ireland, South Korea	USA, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan
Diversely driven growth	UK, Czech Republic, Belgium, Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden, Poland	Denmark, Austria, Norway, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain

Source: adapted from Garcilazo, Moreno-Monroy, and Oliveira Martins, "Regional Inequalities and Contributions to Aggregate Growth in the 2000s: An EU vs US Comparison Based on Functional Regions Get Access Arrow."

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103 Enrique Garcilazo, Ana Moreno-Monroy, and Joaquim Oliveira Martins, "Regional Inequalities and Contributions to Aggregate Growth in the 2000s: An EU vs US Comparison Based on Functional Regions Get Access Arrow," *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 37, no. 1 (2021): 70–96.

104 World Bank, *World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography*.

4.3.3 Economic growth and city size

Much has been said about the relationship between economic growth, scale and agglomeration.[105] While it appears that agglomeration and scale offer some benefits for growth, evidence from the OECD countries, relating to the 2008 crisis, demonstrates that these relationships can vary considerably, depending on the context.[106] Between 2001 and 2017, some OECD countries experienced spatially concentrated growth in a small number of cities and regions.[107] In other countries, growth was more widely distributed across a range of different cities and regions.[108] The geography of economic growth can also be classified according to whether it is dominated by large cities, or not.[109]

What this evidence shows is that the relationship between economic growth and scale is complex. The growth of larger cities was important for driving economic growth in much of Eastern Europe, North America, Asia, Australasia, and the Global South, whereas in many parts of Western Europe, smaller cities and rural regions continued to play a leading role.[110] Metropolitan cities and city systems play an important role in boosting economic growth, but the relationship is not simple. No single model fits all.

Source: Adriana Mahdalova, Shutterstock.
Informal settlements in Luanda, Angola.

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105 World Bank.

106 The first categorization emerges from: OECD, *OECD Regional Outlook 2019: Leveraging Megatrends for Cities and Rural Areas* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2019); the second categorization from: Enrique Garcilazo and Joaquim Oliveira Martins, "New Trends in Regional Policy: Place-Based Component and Structural Policies," in *Handbook of Regional Science*, ed. Manfred Fischer and Peter Nijkamp (Berlin: Springer, 2020).

107 Including: Australia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Korea, The Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden and the UK

108 Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and the USA.

109 Countries where economic growth has been concentrated in large cities include Estonia, Italy, Finland, France, Greece, Lithuania, and the USA. Countries where economic growth has not been dominated by large cities include Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

110 Dijkstra, Garcilazo, and McCann, "The Effects of the Global Financial Crisis on European Regions and Cities."

4.4 Success stories in reducing economic inequalities

Online access to educational and job opportunities reduces inequalities.

There is a bright side to the story of income inequalities. In some periods, and in some countries, inequalities have decreased. A recent review of documentary evidence found a reduction in the main factors responsible for creating inequality in developing countries across the globe.[111] Many Latin American countries have seen a reduction in inequalities, particularly since the end of the 1990s, as a result of policy measures taken in response to social and political pressure to offset the effects of neoliberal policies applied in previous years. One commonly mentioned country is Brazil, which considerably reduced its inequalities between 2006 and 2016 (with its Gini coefficient falling from 55.6 to 51.9).[112] The literature suggests that some of the factors behind the reduction in inequality in this region included: strong growth in demand for low-skilled labour which improved employment conditions for the poorest sectors of society; the expansion of education in the 1980s; and the introduction of new social protection policies.[113]

Evidence shows that a number of countries in West Africa: Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, also did particularly well in reducing inequalities. These are all predominantly agrarian societies whose relatively poor, rural small-holder producers benefited from an increase in commodity prices and particularly in staple crops including rice and cotton. This increased the income of rural producers and helped to narrow the rural-urban gap.[114] Several countries in the MENA region: Iran, Tunisia and Algeria, have experienced similar decreases in inequalities. Inequality in Iran, as expressed by the Gini coefficient, fell from 44.8 to 37.4

by around 2010. This has been attributed to a successful cash transfer programme introduced by the Iranian government.[115] Southeast Asian success stories include the cases of Thailand and Malaysia. It appears that the reduction of inequalities in Malaysia can be explained by specific government policies aimed at reducing ethnic inequalities. Thailand has seen a recent reduction in inequalities after they had reached high levels in the early 1990's, which caused a political crisis.[116] These various success stories in reducing inequalities show that choosing the right institutional changes and policy interventions can lead to improvements.

111 Rebecca Simpson, "Mapping Recent Inequality Trends in Developing Countries," International Inequalities Institute Working Papers (London, 2018

112 The available data suggest that inequality increased or remained unchanged in the subsequent period.

113 Simpson, "Mapping Recent Inequality Trends in Developing Countries."

114 Simpson.

115 Simpson.

116 Simpson.

5 The multiple dimensions of inequalities

Multidimensional perspectives on inequality are nothing new, but they have gained particular prominence in recent decades. The Nobel laureate in economics, Amartya Sen, has been a pivotal influence in this debate, through his critique of neoclassical and utilitarian approaches to social justice and the distributional analysis of well-being.[117] His impact on policy and practice was most strongly noted following the publication of several *Human Development Reports* and complementary indices from the 1990s onwards (see Box 2.12). [118] **At the urban and territorial level, this shift in approach has been reflected by a growing body of research that has re-conceptualized urban poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon.[119]**

Income inequality and income poverty provide only a partial picture and need to be complemented with data on other dimensions in order to orient policy. The SDGs provide a good example of this type of consensus as they conceptualize development through a set of multidimensional goals and targets that cover many different dimensions of human development. Other international agreements, such as the New Urban Agenda, follow a similar multidimensional approach.

Source: Publio Furbino, Shutterstock.
Informal settlements in Lima, Peru.

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117 One key early work questioning the neoclassical approach to inequalities was the famous Tanner Lecture, of 1979, given by Amartya Sen: Amartya Sen, "Equality of What?," in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 197–220; his approach to inequality was then further expanded in his book: Amartya Sen, *Inequality Reexamined* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

118 See all the Human Development Reports at: UNDP, "Human Development Reports," n.d., https://bit.ly/3qvtetz.

119 Ellen Wratten, "Conceptualizing Urban Poverty," *Environment and Urbanization* 7, no. 1 (1995): 11–38; Philip Amis, "Making Sense of Urban Poverty," *Environment and Urbanization* 7, no. 1 (1995): 145–58; David Satterthwaite and Diana C N - HV4173 .S38 2014 Mitlin, *Reducing Urban Poverty in the Global South* (London: Routledge, 2014); David Satterthwaite and Diana Mitlin, *Urban Poverty in the Global South: Scale and Nature* (London: Routledge, 2013); David Satterthwaite, "Reducing Urban Poverty: Constraints on the Effectiveness of Aid Agencies and Development Banks and Some Suggestions for Change," *Environment and Urbanization* 13, no. 1 (2001): 137–57.

Box 2.12

Measuring multidimensional well-being

Multiple dimensions of well-being can be integrated into a dashboard of indicators or aggregated into an overall synthetic index. Multidimensional approaches are particularly common in social stratification analysis and multidimensional metrics are often used by human geographers. They have also been increasingly used by researchers specialising in economic development for the study of poverty and inequalities.

Some well-known examples include:

The **Human Development Index** is updated and published annually by the Human Development Report Office.[120] It was developed to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone. The index combines indicators for three dimensions: (a) living a long and healthy life; (b) knowledge; and (c) living standards. While the international index only ranks countries, national chapters of the *Human Development Report* have produced national versions at the subnational level to rank regions within countries and/or to compare disparities within cities.[121]

The **Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)** is an international measure of acute multidimensional poverty covering over 100 low- and middle-income countries. It is updated and published annually by the Human Development Report Office and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative. The MPI complements traditional money-based measures of poverty by capturing the acute deprivation that a person faces simultaneously in three dimensions: health, education and living standards, and uses ten indicators.[122] The data are disaggregated by different subgroups including regions within countries, urban/rural settings, gender, age groups and ethnic groups. While the global MPI aims to compare countries around the globe, many countries have designed their own national MPI which is tailored to local definitions and disaggregated at lower geographical levels, as shown by Figure 2.5.[123]

The **Multidimensional Inequality Framework (MIF)**, developed by CASE-LSE and Oxfam, provides a systematic approach for measuring and analyzing inequalities across the key aspects of life. Overall, it determines the capacity of people to enjoy a good quality of life. In terms of measurement, the MIF follows a dashboard approach, proving a system of indicators covering seven different domains.[124]

Some other approaches incorporate a mixture of methods that have been used to capture inequalities relating to lived experience.[125] This was the method used by Oxfam to study multidimensional inequalities in **Mexico City** (Mexico).[126]

120 Complementary human development indices include the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index, Gender Development Index, Gender Inequality Index, and the Multidimensional Poverty Index. See: UNDP, "Human Development Index (HDI)," Human Development Reports, 2022, https://bit.ly/3Ni3NFS.

121 Consider, for example, the Human Development Atlas from Brazil: UNDP, Fundação João Pinheiro, and Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada, "Atlas do desenvolvimento humano no Brasil," 2022, https://bit.ly/354IMOD

122 OPHI, "Global Multidimensional Poverty Index," Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2022, https://bit.ly/3qupKb3.

123 For the case of CONEVAL in Mexico: CONEVAL, "Medición de la pobreza," 2022, https://bit.ly/3L3paZs; poverty maps in Colombia present estimates at municipality levels: Government of Colombia, "Medida de pobreza multidimensional municipal de fuente censal 2018," Dirección Nacional de Estadística, 2018, https://bit.ly/3txBMIC.

124 See the Multidimensional Inequality Framework (MIF) page in LSE: CASE, "Multidimensional Inequality Framework," Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, 2022, https://bit.ly/3qu72js; and also the Oxfam page: Oxfam International, "Multidimensional Inequality Framework," 2022, https://bit.ly/3D5bf2a.

125 Ingrid Bleynat and Pau Segal, "Faces of Inequality: A Mixed Methods Approach to Multidimensional Inequalities," International Inequalities Institute Working Papers, 68 (London, 2021).

126 Ingrid Bleynat and Paul Segal, *Rostros de la desigualdad: Desigualdades multidimensionales en la Ciudad de México* (México: Oxfam México, 2020).

Figure 2.5

National Multidimensional Poverty Index of Colombia at the street level, in Bogota (Colombia), 2018

Census and administrative data obtained from local authorities can provide detailed statistical information at a granular level that can be used to inform local policy making. The Colombian National Statistics Office has produced maps of poverty at the street level for major cities in the country. These are then used to target resources and orient planning.

Incidence of multidimensional poverty

- + 80%
- 60.1% – 80%
- 40.1% – 60%
- 20.1% – 40%
- 0.1% – 20%
- 0%
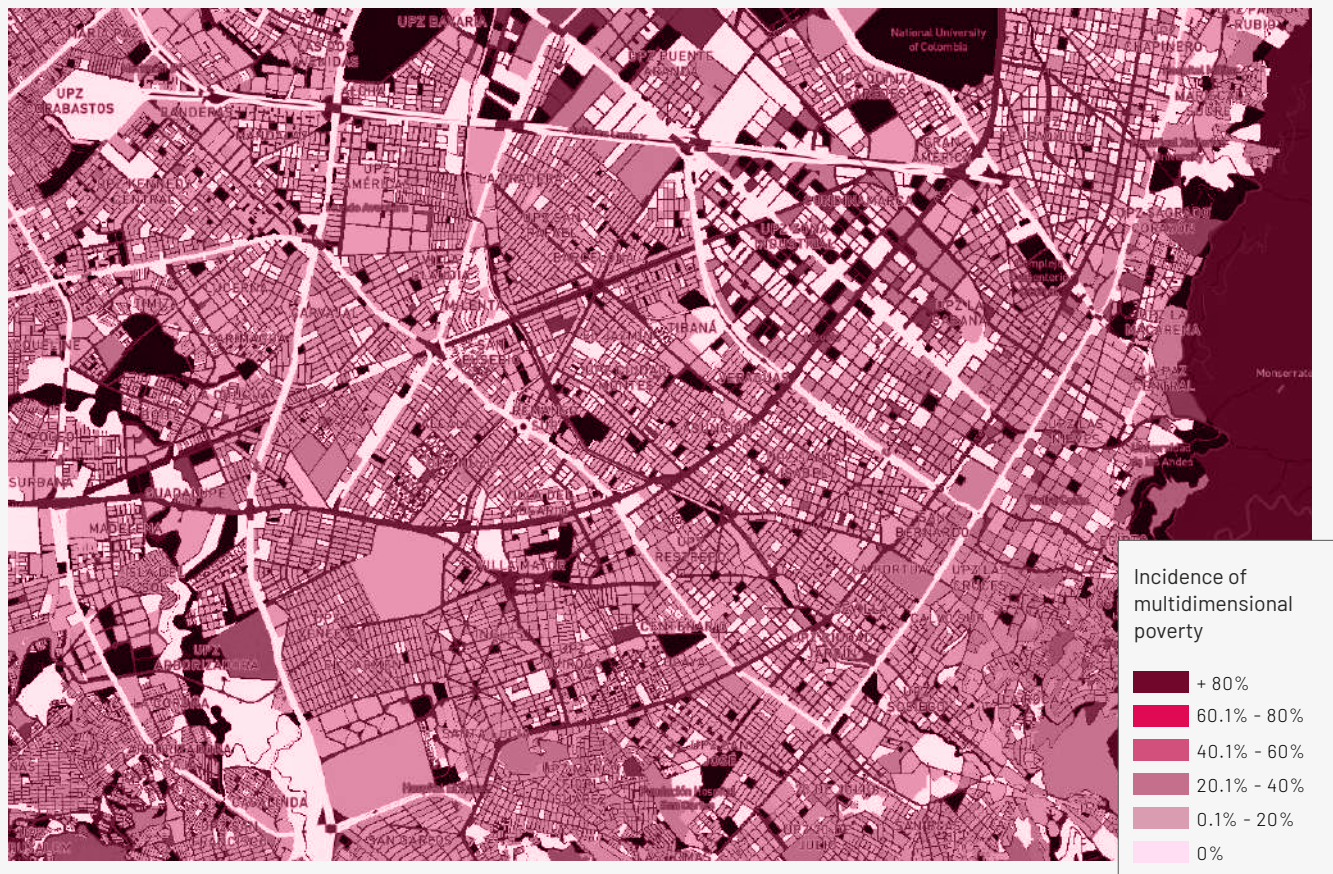
Source: Roa-Clavijo, "Juan Daniel Oviedo's Intervention in the MPPN Conference Call for the Americas. 7th April 2020."

Social relationships and multiple forms of discrimination produce marked inequalities between different social groups that may depend on gender, social class, or race, to mention just a few of the group identifiers. This perspective is particularly embodied in the "leave no one behind" principle in the 2030 Agenda, which specifically calls for the closure of group-based inequalities (see earlier Box 2.1). It is also reflected in how various goals aim to specifically reduce inequalities in outcomes across different social groups (SDG 4 provides the best example). The New Urban Agenda also reaffirms the pledge to leave no one behind and recognizes the need to address multiple forms of discrimination (see Box 2.13). Many other initiatives have also stressed the need to look at intersectionality and how group membership may overlap.[127] The main rationale is that inequalities can compound and exacerbate one another, as in the case of being poor, being a girl, and being a member of an ethnic minority. More importantly, inequalities tend to manifest themselves in different ways and often require different responses for different overlapping

127 Samman et al., "'Leave No One behind' – Five Years into Agenda 2030: Guidelines for Turning the Concept into Action"; see also: Naila Kabeer, "'Leaving No One behind': The Challenge of Intersecting Inequalities," in *World Social Science Report, 2016: Challenging Inequalities, Pathways to a Just World*, ed. UNESCO and ISSC (Paris: UNESCO/ISSC, 2016), 55–58.

groups. For example, a UNESCO report found that gender inequalities in education were more prominent among poor children from remote areas.[128] Any response to this therefore requires focalized action in those geographic areas, and in favour of those economic groups which are worst affected. Intersecting inequalities have also been a prominent feature of the COVID-19 crisis.

This section moves away from a strict focus on income or economic inequalities and looks at other dimensions of well-being and the interlinked dynamics of social, urban and territorial inequalities. **It emphasizes the dimensions that are most relevant for policy making at the regional and local levels with reference to key SDGs: housing, access to basic services, education, health, transport and mobility, amongst others.** Only a brief overview is provided at this stage; these questions are covered in more detail by later chapters in this Report. The main argument is that, although associated with economic inequalities, the dynamics behind inequalities in these

nonmonetary dimensions have their own specific character which, in turns, calls for different policy responses at the local level. The section also discusses how social diversity and territories contribute to the dynamics of social inequalities and explains how this is central to the policy debate related to the "leave no one behind" principle in the 2030 Agenda.

5.1 Basic infrastructure and public services

Inequalities manifest in the unequal distribution of reliable, affordable and accessible public infrastructure and services such as water, sanitation, energy, waste collection and other urban services. Inequalities in access to services have a direct impact on quality of life, but they also have longer-term detrimental effects on people's and society's productivity as a whole. Poor water and sanitation have a damaging impact on health, not only reducing adult productivity but also the long-term potential of future generations. The lack of reliable sources of energy is not only a constraint on business development, but also places limitations on education and health. While the equitable provision of basic public services is a universal challenge, in urban contexts, this challenge takes on very specific forms and it is even more of a problem in the case of informal urban settlements.

Box 2.13

Addressing multiple forms of discrimination as part of the New Urban Agenda

"We recognize the need to give particular attention to addressing multiple forms of discrimination faced by, inter alia, women and girls, children and youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples and local communities, slum and informal-settlement dwellers, homeless people, workers, smallholder farmers and fishers, refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and migrants, regardless of their migration status." (20, p 3)

Source: United Nations, "The New Urban Agenda."

5.1.1 Water and sanitation

According to the most recent estimates made by the UN, in 2020, 2 billion people (26% of the global population) lacked safely managed water services, while 3.6 billion (46%) lacked safely managed sanitation services.[129] Regional inequalities are considerable. In Sub-Saharan Africa, as much as 70% of the population lacks safely managed drinking water services, compared to 38% in

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128 Global Education Monitoring Report Team, "2020 Global Education Monitoring Report" (Paris, 2020), https://bit.ly/3ivOScX.

129 WHO and UNICEF, "Progress on Household Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2000-2020: Five Years into the SDGs" (Geneva, 2021).

Central and South Asia, and 25% in Latin America and the Caribbean. About 79% of the Sub-Saharan African population lacks safely managed sanitation services, compared to 66% in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 58% in North Africa and West Asia.

Coverage is considerably greater in urban areas but inequalities within cities remain large. Research in 15 cities across the globe has revealed considerable inequalities experienced by residents in informal settlements, compared to residents in other parts of the cities (see Figure 2.6).[130] The unequal provision of sanitation infrastructure has a disproportionate impact on low-income households and especially on those living in informal settlements. These inequalities compound others in what is a vicious circle. **Inadequate access to urban sanitation services negatively affects public health outcomes, impedes economic growth and productivity, and degrades the natural environment,**

particularly affecting open spaces and water sources.[131]

Access to physical water infrastructure is not always directly associated with water quality and affordability. **Evidence shows that low-income groups in urban areas may have to pay up to 52 times more to purchase clean water from private tankers than residents who receive piped water supplies.[132]** The overall recommendation is that households should not have to spend more than 3–5% of their average monthly household income on water and sanitation services.[133] Informal access to water is more expensive than receiving piped water and evidence shows that the service gap is widening in the face of growing urban populations.[134]

Figure 2.6

Household urban sanitation management practices (in cities and, in particular, in informal settlements)

Legend:
- Sewer
- Private septic tank
- Communal septic tank
- Pit latrine
- Self-provisioned drain to waterway
- Composting, bucket, hanging toilet
- open defecation

Sub-Saharan Africa

8% Sewer

92% Non-sewer

Kampala — Kalimali
Lagos — Makoko
Maputo — Nhlamankulu D
Mzuzu — Zolozolo West Ward
Nairobi — Kosovo Village in Mathare Valley

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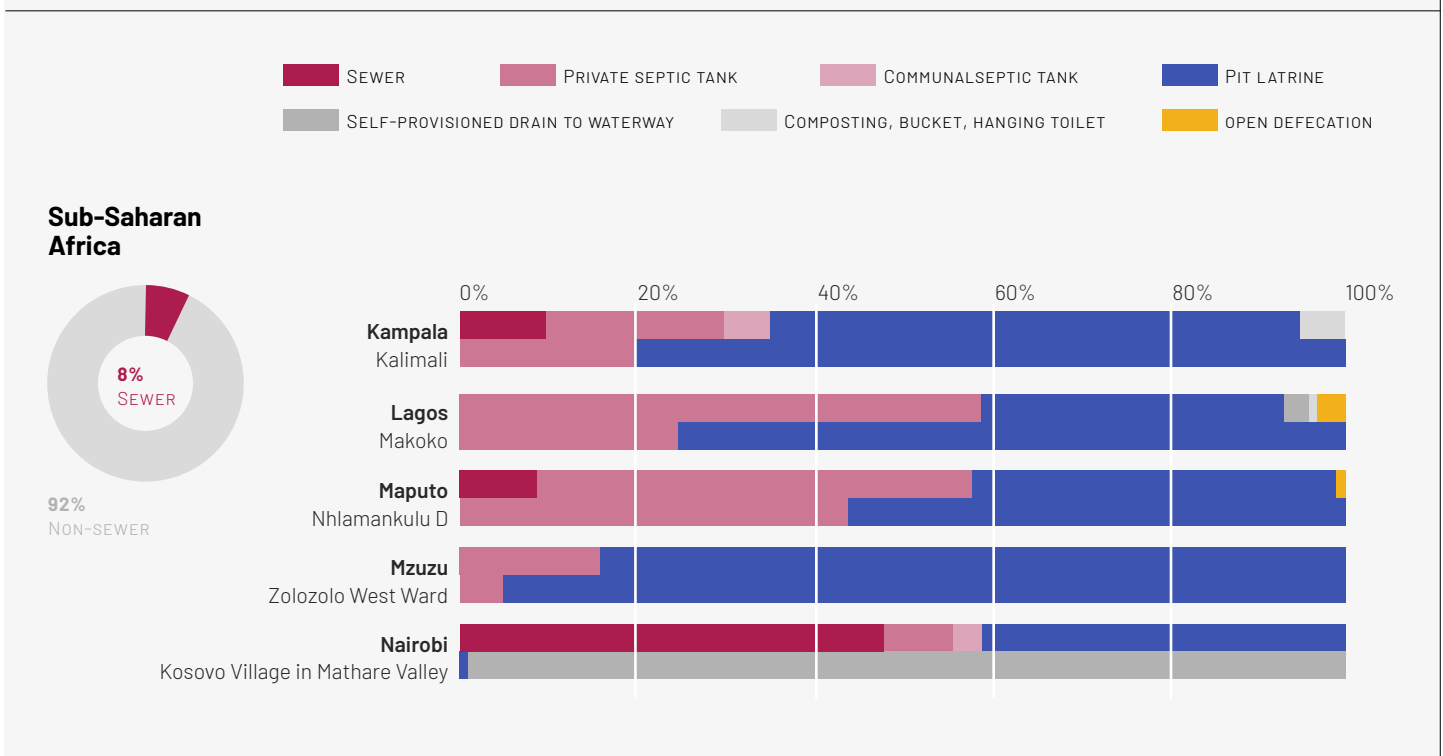
130 David Satterthwaite et al., "Untreated and Unsafe: Solving the Urban Sanitation Crisis in the Global South," World Resources Institute Working Paper (Washington, DC, 2019).

131 Satterthwaite et al.

132 Diana Mitlin et al., "Unaffordable and Undrinkable: Rethinking Urban Water Access in the Global South," *World Resources Institute*, World Resources Institute Working Paper, 2019, https://bit.ly/3D7cK07.

133 Mitlin et al.

134 Mitlin et al.
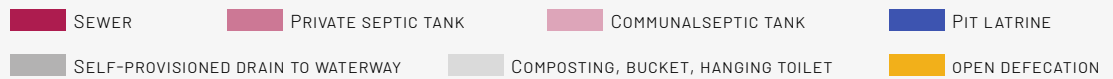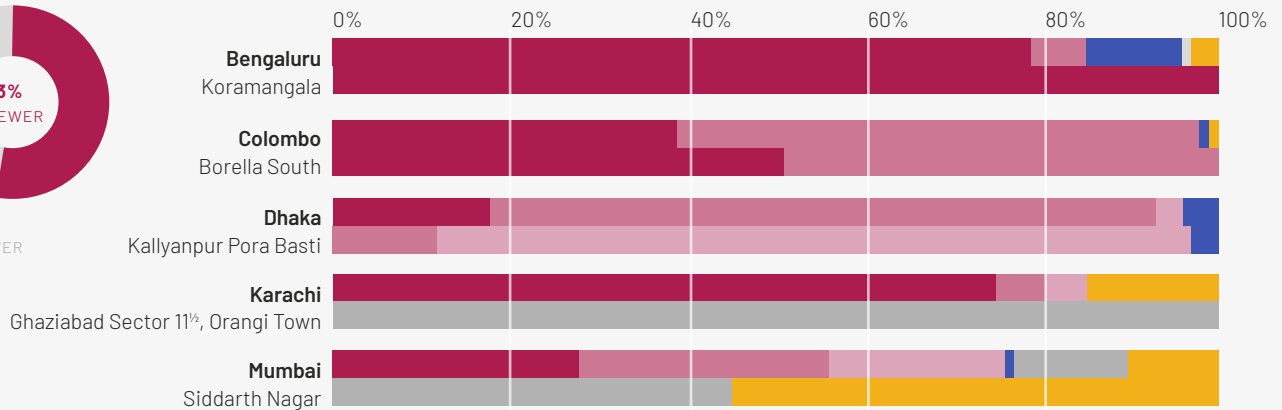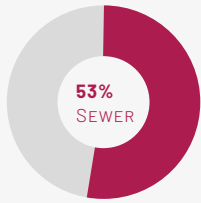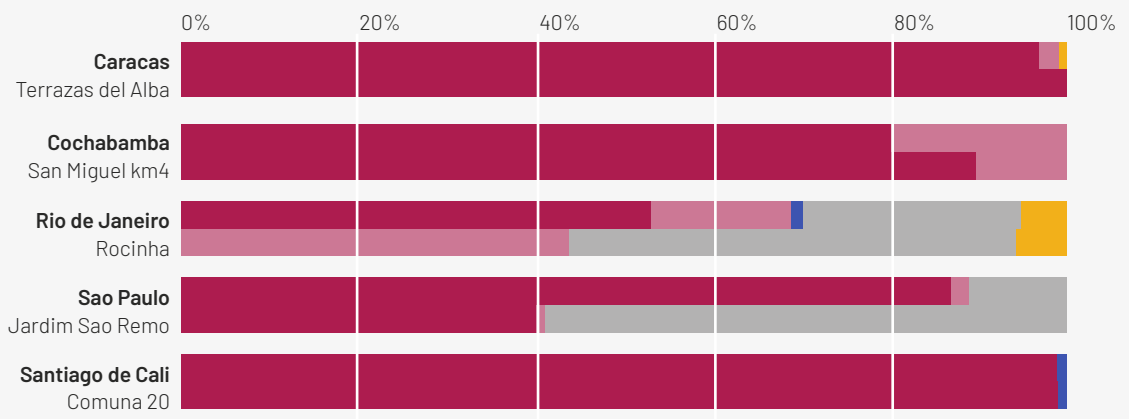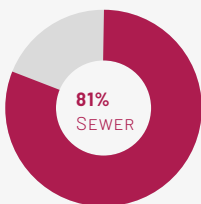
Source: Satterthwaite et al., "Untreated and Unsafe: Solving the Urban Sanitation Crisis in the Global South."

5.1.2 Access to energy

According to the latest data, 759 million people across the globe did not have access to electricity in 2019; this was down from 1.2 billion in 2010.[135] An even larger number: 2.6 billion, did not have access to clean cooking facilities in 2019; down from 3 billion in 2010. While universal access has been achieved in most regions of the globe, a large deficit still remains in Sub-Saharan Africa where only 46% of the population had access to

electricity in 2019. Only a small fraction of the global urban population currently remains unserved (116 million people in 2019), 58% of whom live in fragile and conflict-affected areas.[136] While urban areas have nearly reached universal access (97% coverage since 2016), unreliability and inefficiency remain key challenges in many urban areas in low-income countries.[137] Where

135 Global data corresponding to more recent estimates published by: IEA et al., "Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report" (Washington, DC, 2021), https://bit.ly/3NfbTir.

136 EA, IRENA, UNSD, World Bank.

137 Michael Westphal et al., "Powering Cities in the Global South: How Energy Access for All Benefits the Economy and the Environment," World Resources Institute Working Papers (Washington, DC, 2017), https://bit.ly/3lsWojm.

clean energy sources are inaccessible, low-income groups often rely upon solid fuels and open fires for cooking; this contributes to urban pollution and health problems. This is a problem that particularly tends to affect women. Poor households across the Global South often spend as much as 14-22% of their income on energy;[138] this compares with average household energy expenditure of 4.2% in the UK, in 2019. In urban contexts, these inequalities are frequently distributed in ways that reflect the spatial distribution of inequalities in housing and other basic services.

5.1.3 Waste collection

Coverage of waste collection varies considerably from city to city. While collection rates are nearly 100% in high income countries, coverage is only 51% in middle income countries, and as low as 39% in low-income countries.[139] In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is estimated that only 52% of municipal waste was collected during the period 2010-2018, compared with 99% in Australia and New Zealand.[140] In addition, communities living in informal or unplanned settlements are almost inevitably under-serviced; this directly contributes to the accumulation of waste and the consequent health implications for their residents.

According to recent projections, by 2050 waste production will be 73% higher than it was in 2020, reaching 3.88 billion tonnes per year.[141] This increase will be particularly driven by middle-income countries (see Figure 2.7). Even though small in absolute terms, low-income countries will see their waste production triple during this period, putting significant pressure on local governments and waste collection services. Evidence shows that the amount of waste produced per person across the globe is closely related to population density and to disposable income. The relation is, however, nonlinear. As levels of disposable income increase, the per capita production of household waste first declines, then increases substantially, and then declines again.[142] In practice, this means that the amount of waste produced

Source: Riccardo Mayer, Shutterstock.
Children pushing an informal waste-picking truck.

per household varies significantly both between and within countries.

Across the world, about 80% of municipal waste is collected on a regular basis, but there are significant disparities. It is estimated that door-to-door collection occurs in about 47% of cities across the globe, there is curb-side collection in 18%, and there are centralized drop-off points in 16%.[143] The rate of waste collection in cities in lower-middle income countries is more than double that in their respective rural areas.[144] However, waste collection does not necessarily mean that it is disposed of properly. In many low- and middle-income countries, open dumps are currently contributing to air, water and soil pollution, as well as emitting significant amounts of greenhouse gases.

Informal waste collection is important in developing countries, accounting for 50 to 100% of the total waste collection from their urban areas.[145] As well as contributing to total waste collection, informal waste collection also provides livelihood opportunities to many urban residents who are engaged in such activities.

138 Westphal et al., 13.

139 Silpa Kaza, Siddarth Shrikanth, and Sarur Chaudhary, "More Growth, Less Garbage" (Washington, DC, 2021).

140 UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization."

141 Kaza, Shrikanth, and Chaudhary, "More Growth, Less Garbage."

142 C. C. Chen, "Spatial Inequality in Municipal Solid Waste Disposal across Regions in Developing Countries," *International Journal of Environmental Science & Technology* 7, no. 3 (2010): 447–56.

143 Data from What a Waste Global Database: World Bank, "What a Waste Global Database," Data Catalog, 2022, https://bit.ly/3qzwCUy.

144 World Bank, "Bridging the Gap in Solid Waste Management : Governance Requirements for Results" (Washington, DC, 2021).

145 Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), "Waste Pickers," 2022, https://bit.ly/3Dao6jD.

Figure 2.7

Projected total waste generation by income group

MILLIONS OF TONNES

Low-income: 104, 147, 211, 307
Lower-middle income: 546, 747, 989, 1270
Upper-middle income: 886, 1139, 1329, 1466
High-income: 707, 768, 811, 834

2020 / 2030 / 2040 / 2050
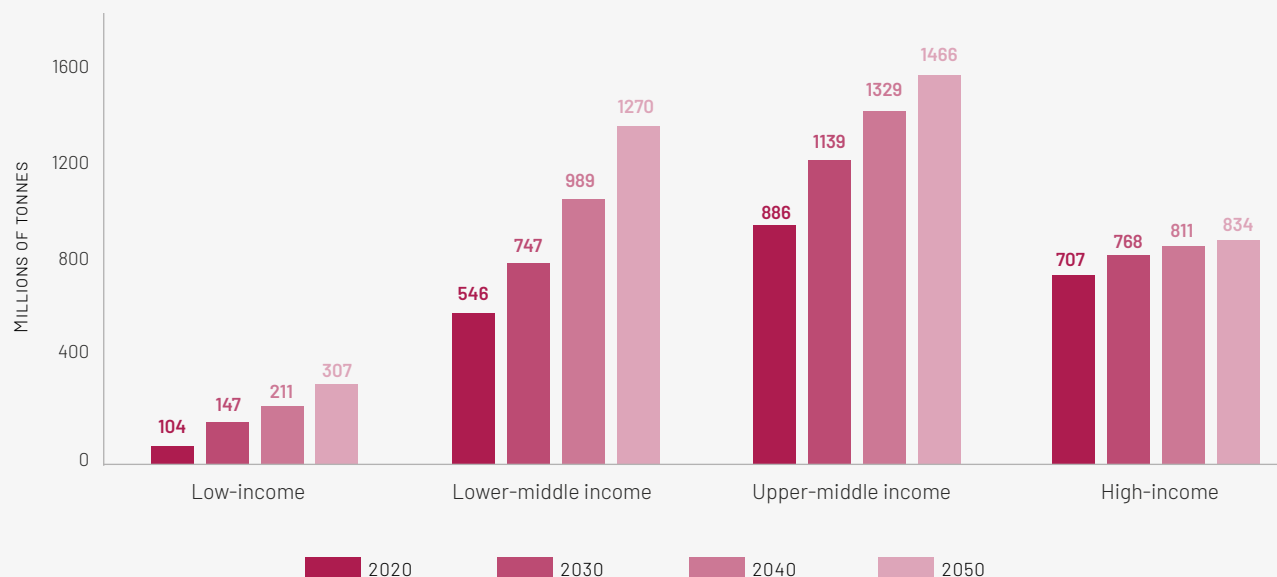
Source: Kaza, Shrikanth, and Chaudhary, "More Growth, Less Garbage."

Chapter 4 on Commoning and Chapter 7 on Renaturing will analyze local alternatives, grounded in community initiatives that partner local government initiatives to help improve access to basic services and sustainable infrastructure for those who are structurally marginalized, thereby creating pathways towards more equal and sustainable cities.

Source: Holy Harry, Shutterstock.
Graffiti about income inequalities.

5.2 Spatial planning, land management and housing

Beyond access to basic infrastructure, multiple inequalities are manifested and reinforced by spatial dynamics related to land, planning and housing. This has particularly acute implications for the rights of those living in informal settlements and in other precarious conditions. For example, housing affordability remains a key challenge in many cities across the world. According to global projections, if current trends continue, there will be 1.6 billion people (one-third of the world's urban population) living in inadequate, crowded and unsafe housing by 2025.[146] *The World Cities*

146 Jonathan Woetzel et al., "A Blueprint for Addressing the Global Affordable Housing Challenge," 2014, https://mck.co/3JGuYli.

Report 2020 states that "tackling urban inequality and unaffordable housing remain urgent priorities: Cities will not be able to offer opportunity and create value if workers do not earn liveable wages that permit them access adequate housing and other services."[147]

The impact of real estate and rental markets on the affordability and availability of land and housing for the poor is considered a key driver of urban inequalities.[148] Recent research has also identified the role of online markets and algorithms in reproducing housing inequalities.[149] Houses are simply unaffordable for many households. Globally speaking, homeowners tend to need five times their annual income to afford the price of a standard house, while renter households often spend more than 25% of their monthly income on rent. [150] The housing affordability crisis is worst in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, where more than half of households (55.4%) lack access to affordable housing.[151] In comparison, about 30% of households experience this problem in West Asia and North Africa, and in Central Asia and South Asia, while the corresponding figure is about 20% in Latin America and the Caribbean and in East Asia and South East Asia.

This crisis has, in fact, been likened to "urban warfare".[152] **Global activists and researchers have called for the recognition that "in almost every single country, in every region, in cities and towns across the globe, we are experiencing a human rights crisis – the housing crisis".**[153] Local governments can play a key role in generating institutional mechanisms to improve access to housing and its affordability as, "[i]n many developing and developed countries, poorly defined property rights and/or land use regulations have a huge economic impact that limits value generation. This institutional deficit

results in higher housing prices and less inclusive cities".[154]

5.2.1 Informal settlements

The proliferation of informal settlements is one of the most visible manifestations of the housing crisis. According to the most recent estimates, over a billion people (24% of the world's population) live in settlements that lack adequate housing (see Figure 2.8). The largest numbers are found in East and South-East Asia (370 million), followed by Sub-Saharan Africa (238 million), Central and South Asia (227 million), Latin America and the Caribbean (114 million) and North Africa and West Asia (83 million). According to UN-Habitat, in much of the developing world, the informal sector accounts for a large percentage of urban housing, 60-70% in Zambia, 70% in **Lima** (Peru), 80% of new housing in **Caracas** (Venezuela), and up to 90% in Ghana.[155]

The character of these informal settlements varies significantly within each context. In most Sub-Saharan African cities, informality is no longer a residual category, or a minor form of access to urban land and development; it is rather a modus operandi, especially for shelter and land delivery.[156] As much as 56% of the urban population of Sub-Saharan Africa lives in informal settlement conditions. In some countries in the region (Central African Republic, South Sudan, Chad, Sao Tome and Principe, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mauritania), this figure can be more than 80%. Most of these settlements exhibit extreme poverty and inequalities, particularly due to a lack of, or poor access to, basic infrastructure and services, insecurity and high levels of unemployment. Living in informal settlements is a trade-off that many low-income households must make because of their desire to live close to their livelihoods.[157]

The positive news is that the percentage of population living in informal settlements has been steadily decreasing in most regions of the world (see Figure 2.9). The fastest reduction has been observed in

147 UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization," xviii.

148 Reinhold Martin, Susanne Schindler, and Jacob Moore, *The Art of Inequality: Architecture, Housing, and Real Estate* (New York: The Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture, 2015); Madden and Marcuse, *In Defense of Housing. The Politics of Crisis.*

149 Geoff Boeing, "Online Rental Housing Market Representation and the Digital Reproduction of Urban Inequality," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 52, no. 2 (2020): 449–68.

150 UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization," xviii.

151 On how to measure inadequate housing and affordable housing: UN-Habitat, "The Global Housing Affordability Challenge: A More Comprehensive Understanding of Housing Sector," 2019, https://bit.ly/3NesV06.

152 Rolnik, *Urban Warfare. Housing Under the Empire of Finance.*

153 The Shift, "The Global Movement to Secure the Human Right to Housing," The Shift, 2022, https://bit.ly/3IBpAop.

154 UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization," xxi.

155 UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization."

156 Wilbard Jackson Kombe and Volker Kreibich, *Governance of Informal Urbanisation in Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, 2006).

157 Kirsten Hommann and Somik Vinay Lall, *Which Way to Livable and Productive Cities? : A Road Map for Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2019).

Figure 2.8

Percentage of the urban population living in informal settlements

Source: Own graph based on most recent data from UN-Habitat, "Housing, Slums and Informal Settlements."

Central and South Asia: from 57% in 1990, to 31% in 2018, followed by East and South-East Asia: from 47% to 27%. The slowest reductions have been observed in Oceania and in Sub-Saharan Africa. **The bad news is that the pace of this reduction has slowed over time, mostly as a result of pressure resulting from rapid urbanization and population growth, which have outpaced the construction of affordable housing.**[158]

5.2.2 Housing segregation and intersecting inequalities

Intersections between social class, race and other identities and experiences often result in housing segregation of different kinds. A particularly extensive body of research has focused on the origins of housing segregation, as this is one of the clearest manifestations of urban inequalities in highly fragmented cities.[159] Some have argued about the possible political roots underlying processes of urban marginalization and

Figure 2.9

People living in informal settlements in 2018 (figures in millions)

Sub-Saharan Africa
237,840

Northern Africa and Western Asia
83,052

Latin America and the Caribbean
114,207

Eastern and South-Eastern Asia
369,967

Central and Southern Asia
226,780
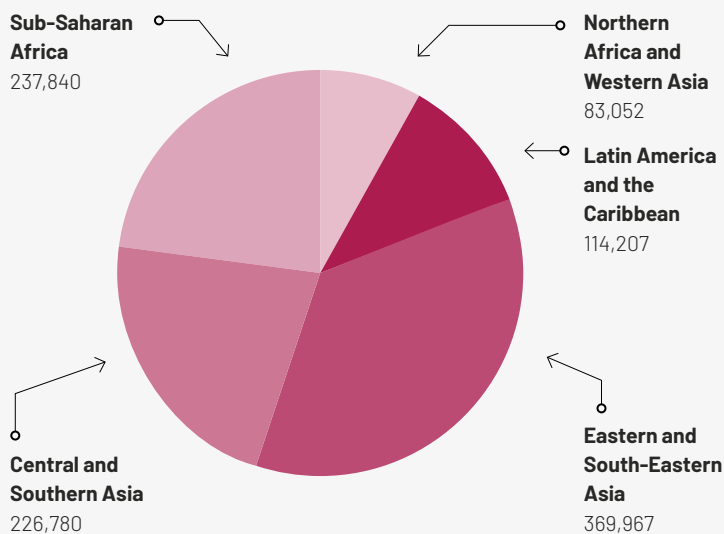
OVER 1 BILLION PEOPLE STILL LIVE IN SLUM CONDITIONS LACKING ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HOUSING

Source: Own grap based on most recent data from UN-Habitat, "Housing, Slums and Informal Settlements."

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158 UN-Habitat, "Monitoring SDG Indicator 11.1.1" (Nairobi, 2019), https://bit.ly/3qwGnT8.

segregation: the "urban outcast is the product of an active process of institutional detachment and segregation (in the etymological sense of "setting apart") fostered by the decomposition of the public sector."[160] The intersection between racial and socio-economic segregation provides a striking example of this, in many cities across the world.

In Sub-Saharan African cities, hygiene and health concerns were used to justify the implementation of racial segregation during the colonial era. This has affected the urban trajectories of housing segregation and inequalities ever since and the resulting patterns still persist, in different forms, in many urban areas.[161] In South Africa, where official and legally reinforced "racial discrimination underlay the fragmented and unequal apartheid city", inequalities have continued well into the post-apartheid era.[162] After most Sub-Saharan African countries gained independence, minor reforms were introduced to the planning paradigms, zoning concepts, regulations and practices that had been imported from the west.[163] As a result, racial and socio-economic segregation still dominate the urban landscape across the continent, with exclusive urban planning, zoning, land uses, regulations and standards resulting in unaffordable land and housing for most inhabitants. In other latitudes, and cities like **Sao Paulo** (Brazil), factors such as length of residence in the city and a person's state of origin have influenced internal migrant and housing patterns and driven social segregation and housing segmentation.[164]

The negative impact of segregation has been widely studied. Some authors have referred to the "neighbourhood effect" to "measure how neighbourhood social processes bear on the well-being of children and adolescents",[165] while others have referred to the concept of a "geography of metropolitan opportunities".[166] Segregation can have significant negative impacts on poor populations. Their location within a city may, amongst other things, result in increased commuting times, hamper access to jobs and good schools, and limit access to a range of other services and to recreational and commercial spaces.[167] In US cities, these discussions have made particular reference to racial segregation linked, for example, to questions of urban marginality, stigma and division,[168] and also to structural power relations and violence.[169] There have also been challenges to the neighbourhood contact hypothesis. These argue that interracial neighbourhood contact helps break down prejudice, but the impact of such contact is not the same for black and white urban populations.[170] They also stress that changes in attitudes do not necessarily lead to changes in the racial makeup of neighbourhoods.[171]

A well-studied manifestation of the role of class in housing segregation can be seen in phenomena such as gentrification and gated communities. Back in the 1950s, gentrification was a spatial expression of class inequalities and displacement in cities such as **London** (UK) and **New York** (USA). New forms of gentrification appear to form part of a global strategy of rent extraction driven by neoliberal urban policies, and also by the growth of the middle classes in Asia

159 Stefanie DeLucca and Christine Jang-Trettien, "'Not Just a Lateral Move': Residential Decisions and the Reproduction of Urban Inequality," *City & Community* 19, no. 3 (2020): 451–88; Laura Tach and Allison Dwyer Emory, "Public Housing Redevelopment, Neighborhood Change, and the Restructuring of Urban Inequality," *American Journal of Sociology* 123, no. 3 (2017): 686–739.

160 Loïc Wacquant, *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

161 M. J. Bockarie, A. A. Gbakima, and G. Barnish, "It All Began with Ronald Ross: 100 Years of Malaria Research and Control in Sierra Leone (1899-1999)," *Annals of Tropical Medicine & Parasitology* 93, no. 3 (1999): 213–24; Ambe J. Njoh, "Colonial Philosophies, Urban Space, and Racial Segregation in British and French Colonial Africa," *Journal of Black Studies* 38, no. 4 (2008): 579–99; Luce Beeckmans, "Editing the African City: Reading Colonial Planning in Africa from a Comparative Perspective," *Planning Perspectives* 28, no. 4 (2013): 615–27; Kenneth Lynch, Etienne Nel, and Tony Binns, "'Transforming Freetown': Dilemmas of Planning and Development in a West African City," *Cities* 101 (2020): 1–14.

162 Jeremy Seekings, "Race, Class, and Inequality in the South African City," in *The New Blackwell Companion to The City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 532–46.

163 Vanessa Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?," *Environment and Urbanization* 26, no. 1 (2014): 215–31; Kombe and Kreibich, *Governance of Informal Urbanisation in Tanzania*.

164 Emily Skop et al., "Chain Migration and Residential Segregation of

Internal Migrants in the Metropolitan Area of São Paulo, Brazil," *Urban Geography* 27, no. 5 (2006): 397–421.

165 Robert J. Sampson, Jeffrey D. Morenoff, and Thomas Gannon-Rowley, "Assessing 'Neighborhood Effects': Social Processes and New Directions in Research," *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002): 443–78.

166 George C. Galster and Sean P. Killen, "The Geography of Metropolitan Opportunity: A Reconnaissance and Conceptual Framework," *Housing Policy Debate* 6, no. 1 (1995): 7–43.

167 Manuel B. Aalbers and Brett Christophers, "Centring Housing in Political Economy," *Housing, Theory and Society* 31, no. 4 (2014): 373–94.

168 Loïc Wacquant, "Urban Outcasts: Stigma and Division in the Black American Ghetto and the French Urban Periphery," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 17, no. 3 (1993): 366–83.

169 Mike Davis, *City of Quartz. Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso, 1990).

170 Keith R. Ihlanfeldt and Benjamin P. Scafidi, "The Neighbourhood Contact Hypothesis: Evidence from the Multicity Study of Urban Inequality," *Urban Studies* 39, no. 4 (2002): 619–41.

171 Keith R. Ihlanfeldt and Benjamin Scafidi, "Whites' Neighbourhood Racial Preferences and Neighbourhood Racial Composition in the United States: Evidence from the Multi-city Study of Urban Inequality," *Housing Studies* 19, no. 3 (2004): 325–59.

and Latin America. [172] In contrast, gated communities, which are often found alongside informal settlements, have also been a growing housing phenomenon and one that expresses class inequalities in urban areas, in both the Global South and the Global North.[173]

5.2.3 Eviction and displacement

While UN-Habitat acknowledges that no global data on forced evictions are systematically collected, they esti-mate that around 2 million people are forcibly evicted each year.[174] Most of these are people living in informal settlements or residents of the most deprived parts of urban areas and territories. However, forced eviction is also an important phenomenon in the "formal" housing sector, through mechanisms such as compulsory purchases or mortgage-related evictions. According to the UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, in Spain alone, more than half a million foreclosures were carried out between 2008 and 2013, resulting in over 300,000 evictions. Similarly, there were almost 1 million foreclosures in Hungary between 2009 and 2012.[175] In many territories, this situation has been aggravated during the COVID-19 pandemic (see Box 2.14).

The implications of evictions are devastating, often both during the process, which can be accompanied by violence, resulting in death, injury and/or sexual violence, and in its aftermath, as a result of the inability to meet the basic needs of all family members. **Eviction often results in the infringement of other rights, such as access to housing, water and sanitation, a livelihood, schooling for children, and other basic necessities which are compromised.[176] This pushes**

household members into deeper poverty, with a disproportionately negative impact on women and children. The UN Advisory Group on Forced Evictions identified five main causes of forced evictions: (a) urban development; (b) large scale development projects; (c) natural disasters and climate change; (d) mega-events; and (e) economically-related circumstances, including the results of the global financial crisis.[177] Local governments have an important role to play in each of these cases, either through direct action or through interaction with other government entities.

Gender inequalities in access to secure land and housing are evident in most urban and territorial contexts across the globe.[178] This relates primarily to differential access to land and secure housing tenure in many contexts. This is often the result of social and legal constraints that adversely affect women, particularly relating to marriage, marriage break up and inheritance practices, as well as to issues related to the affordability and quality of housing. For example, drawing on work done in **Mumbai** (India), researchers have emphasized the ways in which tenure and patrilineal inheritance systems are disadvantageous to women and often lead to gendered tenure insecurity.[179]

Alternative policies, such as participatory slum upgrading and neighbourhood improvement, which will be approached in Chapter 4 on Commoning, can shine a light of hope and promote more equal path-ways to affordable housing. Likewise, Chapter 9 on Democratizing will discuss alternative participatory practices to help advance more democratic forms of spatial planning and decision-making.

172 See: Agustín Cocola-Gant, "Gentrification and Displacement: Urban Inequality in Cities of Late Capitalism," in *Handbook of Urban Geography*, ed. Tim Schwanen and Ronald van Kempen (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019); also: Neil Smith, "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy," *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002): 427–50.

173 Dennis Judd, "The Rise of the New Walled Cities," in *Spatial Practices: Critical Explorations in Social/Spatial Theory*, ed. Helen Liggett and David C. Perry (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1995), 144–66; Francisco Sabatini and Rodrigo Salcedo, "Gated Communities and the Poor in Santiago, Chile: Functional and Symbolic Integration in a Context of Aggressive Capitalist Colonization of Lower-Class Areas," *Housing Policy Debate* 18, no. 3 (2007): 577–606.

174 OHCHR, "The Human Right to Adequate Housing (Fact Sheet No. 21)" (New York, 2009).

175 Farha, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living, and on the Right to Non-Discrimination in This Context."

176 UCLG, *GOLD IV: Co-Creating the Urban Future. The Agenda of Metropolises, Cities and Territories* (Barcelona, 2016).

177 Leilani Farha, "Forced Evictions. Global Crisis, Global Solutions: A Review Of the Status of Forced Evictions Globally Through the Work of the Advisory Group on Forced Evictions" (Nairobi, 2011).

178 Caroline Moser and Linda Peake, *Women, Human Settlement and Housing* (London: Routledge, 1987); Lynne Brydon and Sylvia Chant, *Women in the Third World: Gender Issues in Rural and Urban Areas* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989); Carole Rakodi, "Expanding Women's Access to Land and Housing in Urban Areas" (Washington, DC, 2014); UN-Habitat, "Women and Housing: Towards Inclusive Cities" (Nairobi, 2014).

179 Julian Walker, Alexandre Apsan Frediani, and Jean-François Trani, "Gender, Difference and Urban Change: Implications for the Promotion of Well-Being?," *Environment and Urbanization* 25, no. 1 (2013): 111–24.

Box 2.14
COVID-19 and the risk of eviction

During the COVID-19 pandemic, evictions have continued, despite many governments putting a moratorium on forced evictions during this period. According to the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing at least eight countries have permitted forced evictions during the pandemic (up to 2020).[180] In Kenya, a country without a specific moratorium, approximately 20,000 families were evicted in the **Kariobangi**, **Ruai** and **Kisumu** areas. Furthermore, 150 homes, informal schools and water distribution points were demolished at **Dago**, in Kisumu County, and approximately 8,000 long-term rent-paying residents of the Kariobangi informal settlement, which is on government land in **Nairobi** (Kenya), were left homeless (despite court orders to the contrary).

In the USA, although the federal government issued a temporary moratorium on evictions and foreclosures, both formal and informal evictions have continued, with corporate landlords being responsible for a disproportionate share of such actions. The Special Rapporteur noted that at least 20% of the 110 million renters in the US were potentially at risk in 2021. This, in the context of an expected "cascading wave of foreclosures […] as many homeowners who pay mortgages depend on rent payments to service their debt".[181] Residents who had built temporary structures on public land or who had occupied disused public buildings were evicted during the COVID-19 pandemic in **Johannesburg, Cape Town** and **Durban** (South Africa). In **Cape Town** alone, 58,000 temporary shelters were demolished in informal settlements.[182]

5.3 Education, health and other social services

More traditional dimensions of human development, such as health and education, are also seriously inter-linked with other urban and territorial inequalities. In the case of health, the spatial inequalities in life expectancy at birth of many cities have been widely documented. A study of six large Latin American cities found a 10-year difference in life expectancy between residents of the wealthiest and poorest parts of **Panama City** (Panama). Similarly, an increase of between 8 and 10 years of life expectancy was reported in **Santiago de Chile** (Chile) depending on the levels of education in city areas.[183] In the UK, the gap in life expectancy at birth

between different local areas can be as much as 11.3 years for males and 8.7 years for females, according to recent estimates.[184] Health risks associated with communicable and noncommunicable diseases and related to urban environments, housing and livelihood conditions, are unequally distributed across urban and territorial areas and are experienced differently by different groups.[185] Available evidence suggests strong relationships between health inequalities and multidimensional urban deprivations.[186] Inequalities manifest in differential risks to potentially preventative

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180 Balakrishnan Rajagopal, "COVID-19 and the Right to Adequate Housing: Impacts and the Way Forward. Report of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living, and on the Right to Non-Discrimination in This Context" (New York, 2020).

181 Rajagopal.

182 Juliana Nnoko-Mewanu, "Cities Forcibly Evict Residents in South Africa," Human Rights Watch, 2020, https://bit.ly/36MfRhl.

183 Usama Bilal et al., "Inequalities in Life Expectancy in Six Large Latin American Cities from the SALURBAL Study: An Ecological Analysis," *The Lancet Planetary Health* 3, no. 12 (2019): 503–10.

184 Office of National Satistics, "Life Expectancy for Local Areas of the UK: Between 2001 to 2003 and 2017 to 2019," 2020, https://bit.ly/3lHvfZU.

185 Caroline Hunt, "Child Waste Pickers in India: The Occupation and Its Health Risks," *Environment and Urbanization* 8, no. 2 (1996): 111–18.

186 Carolyn Stephens et al., "Urban Equity and Urban Health: Using Existing Data to Understand Inequalities in Health and Environment in Accra, Ghana and São Paulo, Brazil," *Environment and Urbanization* 9, no. 1 (1997): 181–202.

Figure 2.10

Annual exposure to ambient fine particulate matter (PM2.5) in urban areas, in 2016, weighted by population (values expressed in micrograms per cubic metre or µg/m3)

Legend:
- More than 50
- 35 to 50
- 25 to 35
- 15 to 25
- 10 to 15
- 0 to 10
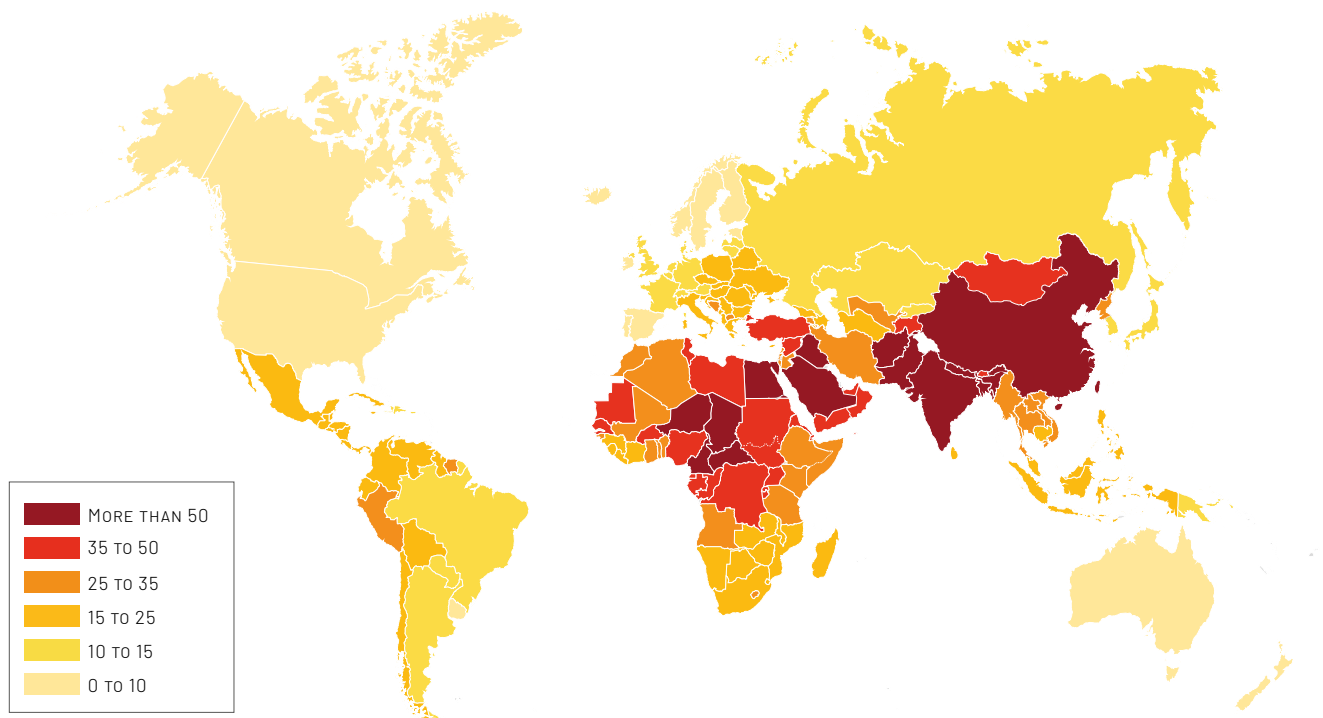
Source: WHO data, represented by UN Stats: United Nations, "Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable."

infectious diseases[187] and in exposure to outdoor air pollution.[188]

Air pollution is another issue related to health inequalities. According to recent estimates, 9 out of 10 urban residents breathe polluted air that exceeds current quality guidelines by the World Health Organization (WHO).[189] More than half are exposed to levels of air pollution that more than double these guidelines, and air quality has worsened for more than half of the global population since 2010. Regional differences are also marked (see Figure 2.10). Air pollution places a major burden on health worldwide. It does so not only in

urban areas, but also in rural settings where cooking and heating that use harmful fuels are responsible for respiratory disease. The evidence suggests that as many as 6.5 million deaths a year, or about one every 5 seconds, can be attributed to exposure to bad quality air.[190] Household air pollution associated with cooking and heating, particularly in poor households, is responsible for at least 2.9 million deaths a year. A further 4.2 million deaths per year are caused by long-term exposure, which contributes to respiratory diseases, lung cancer and heart disease. Air quality often varies considerably across cities. Structurally discriminated populations tend to be most exposed to poor quality air, not only because of where they live, but also because of their lifestyles, including such factors as their commuting options, places of work or schooling, and cooking practices.

187 D. McIntyre, D. Muirhead, and L. Gilson, "Geographic Patterns of Deprivation in South Africa: Informing Health Equity Analyses and Public Resource Allocation Strategies," *Health Policy and Planning* 17, no. 1 (2002): 30–39..

188 Hannah Ritchie and Max Roser, "Outdoor Air Pollution," Our World in Data, 2019, https://bit.ly/3lHd079.

189 According to WHO data and UN Stats: United Nations, "Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable," 2019, https://bit.ly/3iE1GOk.

190 Metadata on PM2.5 air pollution indicator in the World Bank data bank, from: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), "Findings from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017" (Seattle, 2018).

The relationship between informality and health inequalities has been a persistent focus of studies conducted by epidemiologists. **Lack of access to utilities and basic services in the cities of the Global South is a major cause of urban inequity and ill health.**[191] Health shocks have been identified as a key driver of downward mobility associated with lost labour, increased dependency ratios, and the cost of seeking treatment.[192] Ill-health and poverty are mutually reinforcing problems: "the poor are more vulnerable and less resilient to illness and injury, and the sick and injured are more likely to become poor".[193] There is also a strong link between health shocks and intergenerational poverty, as families that have to deal with chronic illness are more likely to have to sell off their assets.[194] This can be especially problematic in urban areas where "[t]he high costs and poor quality of food and water mean that low-income urban residents have relatively poor health and are therefore likely to be more susceptible to other shocks and stresses".[195]

Malnutrition and food insecurity are also acute manifestations of health inequalities. According to most recent estimates, global hunger has increased in the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. As many as 811 million people (9.9% of the world's population) were undernourished in 2020; that was 161 million more than in 2019, before the crisis started.[196] Estimates from 2021 projected a further deterioration in malnutrition in 20 countries due to multiple reinforcing drivers, including the COVID-19 pandemic.[197] Existing regional inequalities have been sharpened, with incidence of malnutrition being much higher in Africa (affecting 282 million people or 21% of the population) despite the larger absolute numbers in Asia (418 million, or 9% of the population). Poorer communities in urban and peri-urban areas are at considerable risk of malnutrition. Forecasts suggest that, in the long term, population growth and urbanization will result in an increasing demand for food putting additional pressure on cities.

Food security debates have recently shifted away from an exclusive focus on the availability of food and to issues associated with access to food and food quality. Malnutrition in urban contexts in low-income countries deserves special attention and, in particular, food insecurity among low socio-economic groups. Interestingly, numerous studies have found that low-income urban households that practice urban agriculture in low- and middle-income countries, whether to generate income or for subsistence, tend to be more food secure than those that do not.[198] Studies in East Africa have also shown that households headed by women tend to be more food secure and, more specifically, that children are better nourished in female-headed households.[199] Estimates indicate that obesity is rising sharply in all regions of the world, but especially among adults with a low-socio economic status; the current global level of obesity is 13%.[200] Problems of malnutrition are also found in richer countries. "Food deserts" can be found in urban contexts in the Global North, where, due to poor public transport and a lack of amenities, there are neighbourhoods that do not have ready access to affordable fresh and healthy food. A recent study found that up to one million people in the UK live in food deserts. This disproportionately affects poorer households and older people and has an effect on obesity and finally on public health.[201]

Finally, **in the case of education, inequalities are directly connected to service provision, policy and resources**. This affects the distribution and quality of schools, their teaching capabilities, and access to childcare provision and libraries, leading to unequal accessibility in many territories. In 2019, 99.7% of children in the Global North had completed primary education, while 97% and 58% had respectively completed lower and upper secondary education. The corresponding

191 Edmundo Werna, Ramin Keivani, and David Murphy, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Urban Development* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

192 Harry Jones, "Equity in Development: Why It Is Important and How to Achieve It," ODI Working Papers (London, 2011); Khurshid Alam and Ajay Mahal, "Economic Impacts of Health Shocks on Households in Low and Middle Income Countries: A Review of the Literature," *Globalization and Health* 10 (2014): 1–18.

193 Ursula Grant et al., "Chronic Poverty Report 2004-05" (Manchester, 2005), 45, https://bit.ly/3Lsm2a7.

194 Jones, "Equity in Development: Why It Is Important and How to Achieve It."

195 David Dodman et al., "African Urbanisation and Urbanism: Implications for Risk Accumulation and Reduction," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 26 (2017): 7–15.

196 FAO et al., *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021. Transforming Food Systems for Food Security, Improved Nutrition and Affordable Healthy Diets for All.* (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 2021).

197 FAO and WFP, "Hunger Hotspots: FAO-WFP Early Warnings on Acute Food Insecurity. March to July 2021 Outlook." (Rome, 2021).

198 Renée Sebastian et al., "The Association between Household Food Security and Urban Farming in Kampala," in *Healthy City Harvests*, ed. Donald Cole, Diana Lee-Smith, and George Nasinyama (Lima: Makerere University Press, 2008), 69–88.

199 Daniel Maxwell, Carol Levin, and Joanne Csete, "Does Urban Agriculture Help Prevent Malnutrition? Evidence from Kampala," *Food Policy* 23, no. 5 (1998): 411–24.

200 FAO et al., *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021. Transforming Food Systems for Food Security, Improved Nutrition and Affordable Healthy Diets for All.*

201 Scott Corfe, "What Are the Barriers to Eating Healthily in the UK?" (London, 2018).

percentages for Sub-Saharan Africa were 64%, 46% and 29%.[202] Even before COVID-19, 258 million primary- and secondary-school age children were outside the school system. Furthermore, many of the children who were at school were learning very little: 53% of all ten-year-olds from low- and middle-income countries experience "learning poverty". This means that they are unable to read and understand a simple text which would be appropriate for 10-year-olds. The learning crisis was already unequally distributed and disproportionately affected the most vulnerable children. In low-income countries, the learning poverty rate is close to 90%, compared to just 9% in high-income countries.[203] Improving access for all to quality education is essential for guaranteeing human rights, facilitating social mobility and for the long-term development of cities. In particular, education in early childhood is one of the best investments that local and regional governments can make, as it is one of the strongest determinants of children's learning outcomes at a larger stage.

The provision of the basic services needed to support quality education is lacking from many schools, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa (see Figure 2.11). Inequalities in learning outcomes and school completion contribute to a cycle that reproduces inequalities in deprived areas. It is also inefficient for long-term prosperity at the city level and constitutes a waste of valuable human resources. Ultimately, this is a question of access to good quality services and to entitlements in the urban setting.

Chapter 5 on Caring will approach many of these social challenges related to health, education and care services, looking for alternative ways to reduce inequalities through proposals for the (re) distribution of care-related responsibilities. Similarly, Chapter 7 on Renaturing engages with questions about environmental conditions and food chains and supplies.

Figure 2.11

The proportion of schools with access to basic upper-secondary school, educational resources both globally and in Sub-Saharan Africa, in 2017 (in %)

World

64
72
76
84
90

Sub-Saharan Africa

57
50
44
40
25

■ ELECTRICITY ■ BASIC DRINKING WATER ■ COMPUTER ■ BASIC HANDWASHING FACILITIES ■ INTERNET
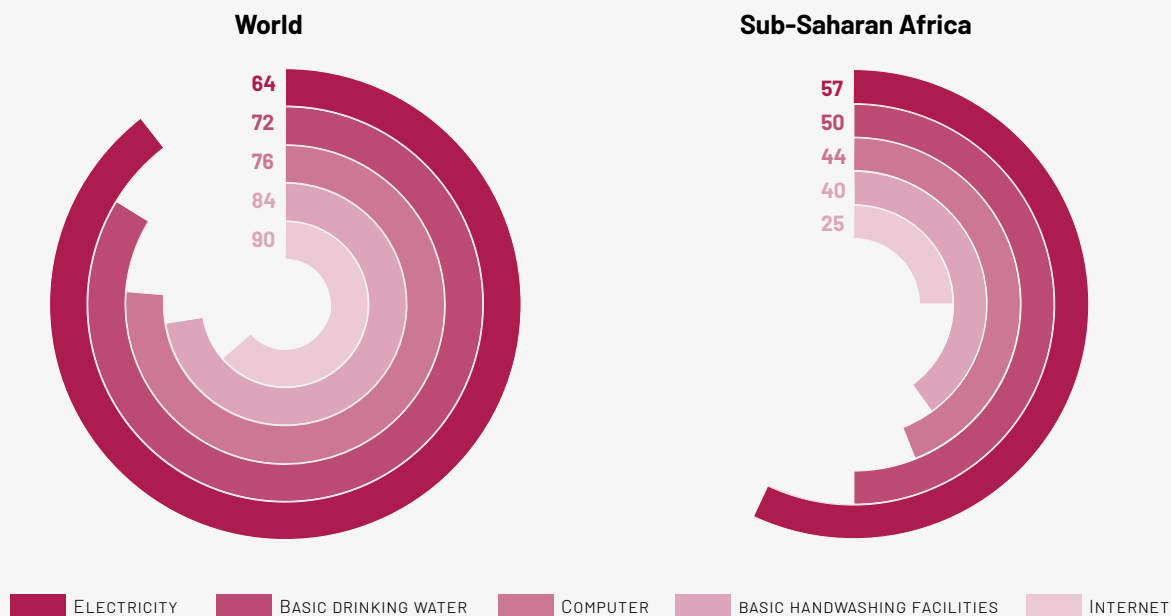
Source: UNDESA, "Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All."

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202 UNDESA, "SDG Indicators Database," Statistics, 2021, https://bit.ly/3LnmKVW.

203 UNESCO, UNICEF, and World Bank, "The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery," 2021, https://bit.ly/36AUEHU.

5.4 Transport, mobility and public space

convenient access to public transport in Northern, Western and Sub-Saharan Africa, and over 70% in richer countries. Maintaining vital public transport services is essential, not only for the safe, quick and affordable movement of people and goods but also because this is key to reducing prices and increasing employment and income-earning opportunities. Making improvements to the measurement of inequalities in transport (see Box 2.15) and to the transport services is therefore a critical consideration when addressing urban inequalities.

Transport is a service that is essential for economic performance and social inclusion, particularly in the urban setting. Transport is an intermediate good that enables accessibility to the urban and territorial activities that make for a decent life. Therefore, transport inequalities have an impact upon, and indeed reinforce, other socio-economic, environmental and political inequalities at all scales. According to the most recent data, 50% of the global population lacks convenient access to public transport (see Figure 2.12).[204] There are, however, wide regional differences, as shown by the contrast between the 33% of the population with

Accessibility is central to the relationship between the spatial distribution of different land uses, and infrastructure and services. Transport is an important factor in social and spatial segregation, and is relevant to the rate and nature of urban sprawl and to the fast-changing peri-urban interface in cities. Along with information and communication technologies, transport is critical to the web of population, socio-cultural and economic resource flows both between and within small towns, large cities and territories at the regional, national and global scales.[205] Transport is therefore also an important factor in the "underdevelopment" and

Figure 2.12

The share of the population with convenient access to public transport, in 2019 (in %)
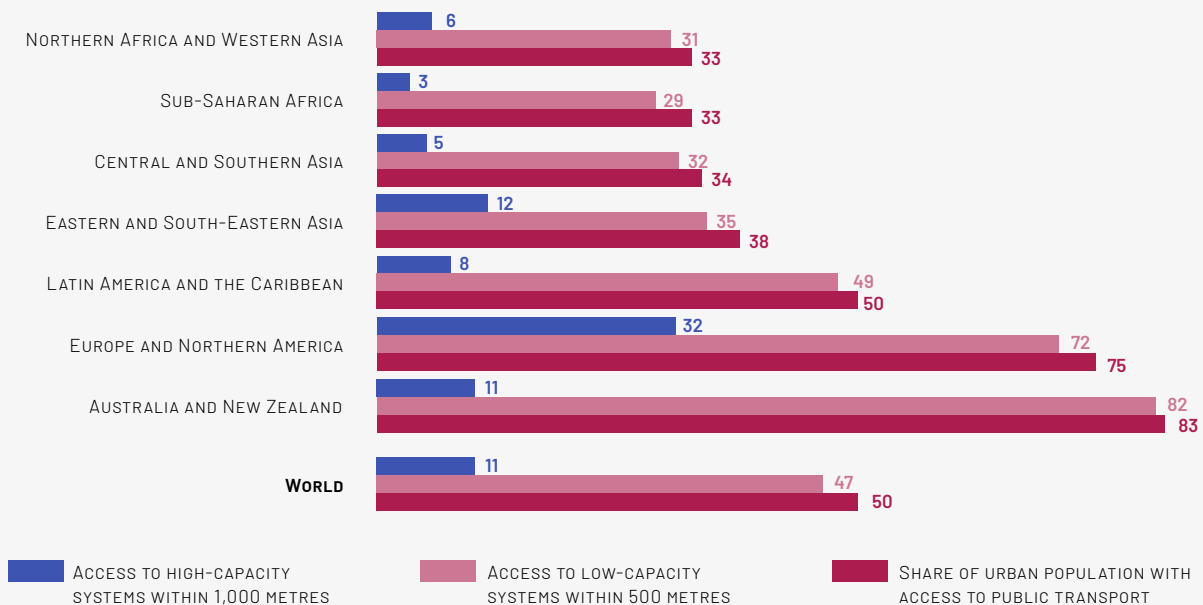
Source: UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization.", 79.

204 Convenient in this context defined as residing within 500 metres (walking distance) of a bus stop or a low-capacity transport system or within 1,000 metres of a railway station and/or ferry terminal.

205 UCLG, *GOLD IV: Co-Creating the Urban Future. The Agenda of Metropolises, Cities and Territories.*

marginalization of towns and territories in different regions, countries and continents.

In most cities, formal, informal and hybrid transport systems all coexist. This is particularly for those occupying marginal, peripheral or poorly accessible land. Across the world, transport challenges include lack of safety, poor labour conditions, pollution, high and sometimes variable fares, poor accessibility for vulnerable groups, sexual harassment, and suboptimal services and network design. A comparative study of **Johannesburg** (South Africa) and **Mexico City** (Mexico) found that 42% and 56% of their urban residents were, respectively, under-served in terms of their ability to reach their places of work, using access to the work-place as a proxy for broader access to opportunities.[206]

Source: Wandel Guides, Shutterstock.
Person transporting goods to the informal settlements of Kabul's hillsides, Afghanistan.

Box 2.15
Measurement of inequalities in transport

At the level of policy and planning, transport inequalities often concern "mechanisms and measures of inequalities such as social disadvantages, accessibility, poverty, and social exclusion".[207] In this complex set of inter-relationships, inequalities involving accessibility as a result of the transport system are measured through diverse variables. These include the distance to transport facilities and the time spent travelling; access to different modes of transport, and, in particular, to public transport; the affordability of transport; and freedom to use transport infrastructure safely and without discrimination.

The distance and time spent travelling are primarily a function of the distribution of the transport system within the context of the distribution of population and land uses in urban and territorial spaces. Locating low-income settlements on the peripheries of cities, combined with poor transport provision and congestion, results in the lowest-income households having disproportionate journey-to-work times.[208] As an indicator of social exclusion and inequality, travel time and distance is particularly pertinent to well-being when it relates to access to employment.

206 Christo Venter, Anjali Mahendra, and Dario Hidalgo, "From Mobility to Access for All: Expanding Urban Transportation Choices in the Global South," World Resources Institute Working Paper, 2019.

207 Shivonne Gates et al., "Transport and Inequality: An Evidence Review for the Department for Transport" (London, 2019).

208 Luis A. Guzman and Juan P.Bocarejo, "Urban Form and Spatial Urban Equity in Bogota, Colombia," *Transportation Research Procedia 25* (2017): 4491–4506.

Livelihoods, and particularly those of the urban poor, are most compromised when they do not have access to vital transport services or convenient access to goods and services. Problems of traffic congestion can be associated with fragmented, dysfunctional urban structures and poor (public) transport systems. These problems tend to exclude poorer citizens from accessing certain income opportunities or force them to pay high transport costs. Fragmented land use development also disconnects people from jobs, services and amenities. In **Nairobi** (Kenya), for example, the average resident can only reach 4% of jobs in the city within 45 minutes on foot, and 11% using a mini-bus or *matatu*. This situation is worse in **Dar es Salaam** (Tanzania) and in most other sprawling Sub-Saharan African cities. In contrast, in **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), a resident can reach 25% of jobs within 45 minutes using public transport even though the population of that city is four times larger than Nairobi.[209]

Affordability is a critical indicator of transport inequalities, particularly in relation to the cost of public transport. This applies not only within cities, but also between cities and rural areas or small villages. Public transport fares are a politically sensitive issue in most urban areas, as seen from the public protests against rising transport fares in **Rio de Janeiro** and **Sao Paulo** (Brazil), between 2013 and 2018, and in **Santiago de Chile** (Chile), in 2019. It is also important to look at the affordability of transport in relation to social identity. Evidence shows that, as a result of high fares, public transport costs are often beyond the reach of 20% of the poorest households in cities like: **Cape Town** (South Africa), **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), **Mumbai** (India), **Mexico City** (Mexico), **Manila** (Philippines), and **Sao Paulo** and **Rio de Janeiro** (Brazil), to mention only a few. As a result, public transport often fails to meet its social objectives.[210]

Access to, and safety in relation to, transport and public spaces highlights inequalities related to the public character of transport hubs, channels and modes. **In this context, mobility can be defined as "the freedom and right of all citizens to move in public space with safety and security – and without censure and social control".[211]** A study of 220 cities in 77 different countries found that a large proportion of the population did not have access to open public space in many cities, indicating the uneven distribution of such spaces within cities (see Figure 2.13). This is detrimental to human well-being and can also lead to territorial segregation. The importance of disaggregating statistics on safety in the public space has also been increasingly recognized. Different groups have mobilized around demands for safety, and transport policy makers and planners have recognized the importance of intersecting social identities in experiencing safety in public spaces. For example, in **El Alto** (Bolivia), a recent study found that 69% of women had had experiences of street harassment and that 88% felt fear in public spaces (see Box 2.16 for more information).[212]

Many of these challenges related to transport are analyzed in Chapter 6 on Connecting, which identifies pathways to reduce inequalities in access to mobility, connectivity and the public space. Likewise, issues related to livelihood will be discussed in Chapter 8 on Prospering.

Box 2.16

Safe cities and public spaces for women and girls

"Safe cities and public spaces for women and girls"[213] is a recent programme led by UN Women in Latin America, with the participation of local governments and other actors in the region. The programme has allowed the generation of new data, the building of alliances, the development of integral responses and investment, and the transformation of social norms through innovative methodologies. This work has mainly been conducted in **Ciudad de Guatemala** (Guatemala), **Cuenca** and **Quito** (Ecuador), **Monterrey** (Mexico), and **El Alto** (Bolivia).[214]

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209 Hommann and Lall, *Which Way to Livable and Productive Cities? : A Road Map for Sub-Saharan Africa*.

210 Julie Babinard, "Is Public Transport Affordable?," *World Bank Blogs*, 2014, https://bit.ly/3NuUClg.

211 Caren Levy, "Travel Choice Reframed: 'Deep Distribution' and Gender in Urban Transport," *Environment and Urbanization* 25, no. 1 (2013): 47–63.

212 UN-Women, "Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces: Global Results Report" (New York, 2017), https://bit.ly/3K6yStp.

213 UN-Women.

214 UN-Women.

Figure 2.13

Distribution of cities by the percentage of land allocated to open public spaces and by the percentage of the population living within a 400-metre walking distance of open public spaces, in 2018 (in %)
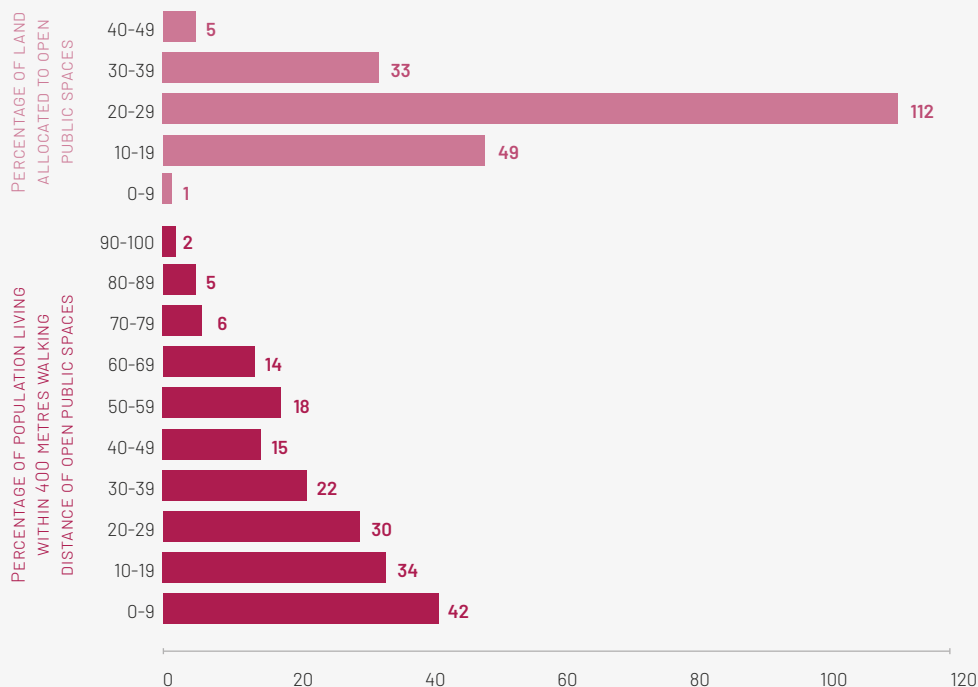
Source: UNDESA, "Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable".

5.5 Employment and decent work

The proportion of the global working-age population living in urban areas has risen from 50% in 2005 to 55% in 2019. This has partly been the result of migration from rural to urban areas taking place in many parts of the world.[215] Over the past fifty years, the employment profiles of many cities around the world have changed significantly; this trend has been influenced by processes of globalization. Variously referred to as the "new economy", the fifth industrial revolution, the knowledge economy, or the creative economy, this change has affected many urban and territorial areas. It has meant a long-term shift away from manufacturing and Fordism and towards digital and high technology enterprises, financial and business services, and media and culture industries.[216] This implies a division of labour that reflects growing inequalities between the skilled labour force at the top and casualized, short-term, precarious forms of employment at the bottom. These forms of employment affect particularly young people,[217] migrants and women. This is a trend that, albeit with important differences, is increasingly identifiable in urban areas of Asia, Latin America and, now, Africa.[218]

215 ILO, "World Employment and Social Outlook. Trends 2020" (Geneva, 2020), https://bit.ly/3qIMeVz.

216 Cummings, "Recentralization: Community Economic Development and the Case for Regionalism."

217 Robert Macdonald, "Precarious Work: The Growing Précarité of Youth," in *Routledge Handbook of Youth and Young Adulthood*, ed. Andy Furlong (London: Routledge, 2016), 156–63; Shaun Wilson and Norbert Ebert, "Precarious Work: Economic, Sociological and Political Perspectives," *The Economic and Labour Relations* Review 24, no. 3 (2013): 263–78.

218 Cummings, "Recentralization: Community Economic Development and the Case for Regionalism."

These shifts have led to well-documented inequalities not only in incomes but also in working conditions and job security.[219] For this reason, the International Labour Organization (ILO) stresses that having employment is no longer a guarantee of having an adequate income or decent working conditions; in fact, over 630 million workers around the world still live in conditions of extreme or moderate poverty.[220] The unequal distribution of decent work is a key driver for other distributional inequalities, including those related to income and health.[221]

The challenge of generating opportunities for a decent livelihood is a global one, but it takes on a particular character in the cities of the Global South, where the informal economy absorbs 50-80% of urban employment.[222] When looking at inequalities in urban labour markets, informal sectors have been a particular focus of research. They highlight not only the ways in which some urban groups are excluded from formal labour markets, but also those in which people may be "unfairly included" or even exploited.[223] Scholars and policymakers have also recognized that informality is not just a condition that exists "outside" formal urban systems, but rather that it relates to a set of market logics that are characteristic of current urban life.[224] **In this sense, informal markets are intricately connected to "formal markets" in myriad ways; they form part of value chains for basic goods and services, frequently negotiating a path between the formal and informal sectors; and millions of urban inhabitants rely upon both formal and informal sources of income.**

These inequalities have a critical gendered dimension. In cities across the Global South, the proportion of women working in the informal sector tends to be higher than that of men.[225] In Africa, 90% of employed women work in the informal sector, compared to 83% of men. Women are also disproportionately likely to be in more vulnerable employment situations, such as in domestic service or employed as home-based workers.[226] In both the formal and informal labour markets, women and young people face additional barriers to employment and to finding decent work. According to data from WIEGO, even if the overall proportion of men engaged in informal employment, worldwide, is higher than that of women (63% and 58% respectively), this ratio shifts when we look at developing countries, where women in informal employment account for 92% of total employment (see Table 2.3). This is particularly relevant for cities in the Global South where half, or more, of all employment is informal, with the highest rates of informality corresponding to Africa and South Asia (see Figure 2.14).[227] **Chapter 8 on Prospering analyzes local alternatives and ways to create pathways towards more decent and inclusive work.**

Table 2.3
Informal employment as a percentage of total employment for women and men (in %)

Countries by income level	Total	Women	Men
WORLD	**61**	58	63
DEVELOPING	**90**	92	87
EMERGING	**67**	64	69
DEVELOPED	**18**	18	19

Source: WIEGO, "WIEGO Online Dashboard."

219 Fernando Ignacio Leiva, "Toward a Critique of *Latin American Neostructuralism,*" *Latin American Politics and Society* 50, no. 4 (2008): 1–25; Franklin Obeng-Odoom, "Neoliberalism and the Urban Economy in Ghana: Urban Employment, Inequality, and Poverty," *Growth and Change* 43, no. 1 (2012): 85–109.

220 ILO, "World Employment and Social Outlook. Trends 2020."

221 Ronald Labonté and David Stuckler, "The Rise of Neoliberalism: How Bad Economics Imperils Health and What to Do about It," *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 70, no. 3 (2016): 312–18.

222 ILO, "Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture. Third Edition" (Geneva, 2018). "The informal economy is the diversified set of economic activities, enterprises, jobs, and workers that are not regulated or protected by the state" (WIEGO, 2021). The term refers to livelihood activities which are not taxed by the State but excludes illicit or illegal activities.

223 Ursula Grant, "Opportunity and Exploitation in Urban Labour Markets," ODI Briefing Paper (London, 2008), https://bit.ly/3Lizzk8.

224 Ananya Roy, "Urban Informality: Toward an Epistemology of Planning," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 71, no. 2 (2005): 147–58.

225 Sylvia Chant and Cathy McIlwaine, *Cities, Slums and Gender in the Global South: Towards a Feminised Urban Future* (London: Routledge, 2016).

226 ILO, "Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture. Third Edition," 20–21.

227 Martha Chen and Victoria A. Beard, "Including the Excluded: Supporting Informal Workers for More Equal and Productive Cities in the Global South," World Resources Institute Working Paper (Washington, DC, 2018).

Figure 2.14

Percentage of informal employment

Region	Percentage
Africa	76%
Arab Nations	64%
Asia & Pacific	47%
Americas	36%
Europe & Central Asia	19%
World	44%

Developed countries ▬ Developing and emerging countries ▬ All countries ▬
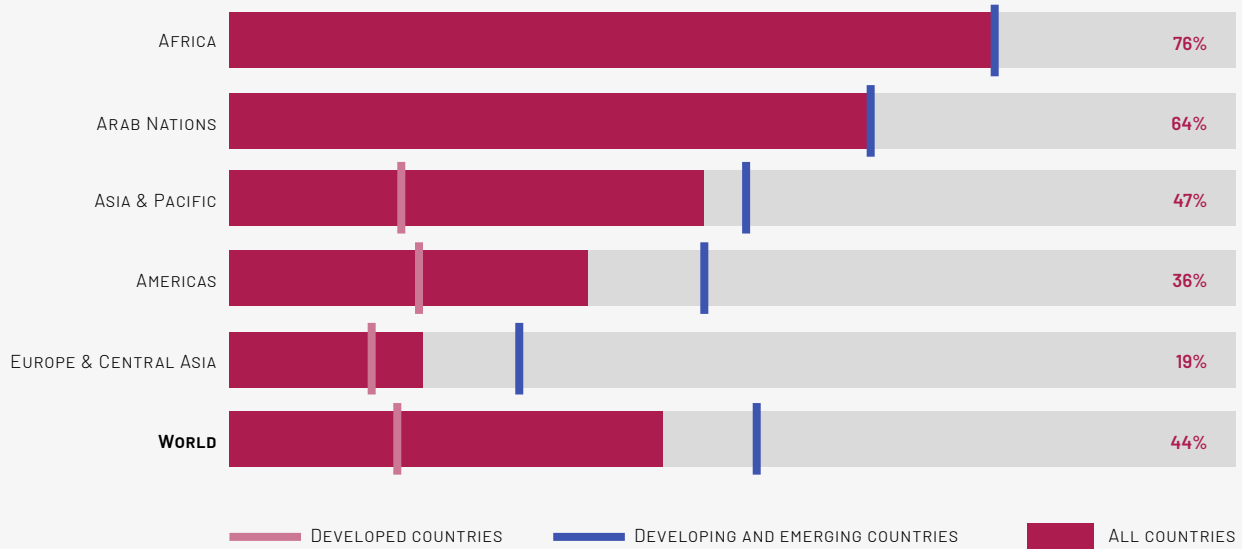
Source: Chen and Beard, "Including the Excluded: Supporting Informal Workers for More Equal and Productive Cities in the Global South."

Source: Lisheng Chang, Unsplash.
Bangkok, Thailand.

6 Concluding remarks

This introductory chapter has provided an overview of the state of inequalities in cities and regions at the global level. After a brief presentation of the different approaches used to assess inequalities, it has taken a multidimensional approach, first discussing inequalities in income and wealth and then moving on to examine the dimensions of inequality that are most relevant to local processes and policy responses at the city level. **This discussion has revealed how inequalities compound and exacerbate one another. This is especially true of intersecting inequalities and of how belonging to multiple disadvantaged or marginalized groups can affect the severity and experience of inequalities. The chapter recognizes that income inequalities and poverty provide only a partial picture. There is international consensus, which has been captured in both the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda, that well-being, poverty and inequalities are multidimensional in nature.** When referring to cities and territories, the emphasis is often naturally given to SDG 11, but this chapter complements this perspective with references to other SDGs that are also relevant for public policy at this scale. The subjacent recognition is that the dynamics behind inequalities in these "nonmonetary dimensions" (housing, education, health, transport) have their own specific character which, in turn, demands different policy responses at the national and local levels.

This chapter also highlights how dynamics at the local level are closely interconnected with global processes of wealth generation and distribution. While inequalities between countries were closing before the pandemic, inequalities within countries were on the rise, and especially extreme levels of wealth concentration among the top segments of society. The chapter also highlights some clear trends in the relationship between urbanization and inequalities: **high rates of urban growth are closely associated with high levels of inequality, and intra-urban inequalities are often more severe than intra-rural inequalities**. Hence, cities tend to be more prosperous and more unequal, and to concentrate a large share of national poverty. The greatest inequalities are normally found in the largest cities. **At the same time, some metropolitan cities and territories have also disproportionately benefited from globalization. This has led to increases in territorial inequalities in some countries, which has aggravated existing gaps between regions and, also often, within metropolitan areas.** The rapid process of urbanization, and particularly that experienced in Africa and Asia, is one of the major challenges facing these regions and an important driver of fast-growing inequalities. The chapter also shows, however, that there is no direct relationship between the level of development and that of inequality as, even if most unequal cities appear to be concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, high levels of inequality also appear in

high income countries, while lower levels of inequality are observed in many Asian and Eastern European cities.

Processes that cause inequalities at the global level are also interlinked with other dynamics that occur at the local level. These include the effects of the financialization of housing, the commodification of land, gentrification and "slumification", and the segmentation of labour markets, to mention just a few. This overview of the state of inequalities reveals how marked deprivations and inequalities in access to public services, housing, work and culture are common in many of the world's regions, cities and territories. It also shows how inequalities are often pronounced within cities, where their consequences can often be seen in the presence of poor neighbourhoods, ghettos, slums and marginalized areas. With reference to this process, this chapter has discussed issues of diversity, and how the dynamics of exclusion may make inequalities particularly problematic for certain social groups. Inequalities intersect and overlap creating dynamics that reproduce and aggravate existing deprivation. Intersecting inequalities are relational and so understanding the power structures and social dynamics that reproduce them is essential if we are to redress them.

Evidence shows that growing inequalities undermine sustainable economic growth and lead to elite political capture which, in turn, has a negative impact on democracy and social cohesion. Growing inequalities, including territorial inequalities, appear to be eroding social cohesion and, in turn, are becoming one of the driving forces behind the recent political crises. This chapter has highlighted how international organizations have undertaken commitments that place the emphasis on addressing different forms of inequalities. This is reflected in the pledge to "leave no one behind", made in the 2030 Agenda. It is also supported in the New Urban Agenda, which calls to close group-based inequalities in all their dimensions.

However, the international picture is far from homogeneous. **Inequalities are not growing everywhere, nor do they manifest themselves in the same way everywhere. There is ultimately a policy choice, and local and regional governments have a role to play in this too.** The transformation of the global economy has also seen the rise of emerging economies and significant improvements in the living standards of the middle classes and the poor in many countries and cities across the globe. Some countries and cities have also experienced rapid progress in other dimensions of human development. Inequalities are being reduced

in some contexts, and in some territories, inequalities also appear to be converging. There is not just one story to fit every situation.

The following chapters in this Report will discuss these nuances in more detail, presenting experiences and stories of positive changes at the local level, as well as an array of policies that can be used to address inequalities at the local and territorial levels. They will address these processes with reference to the six pathways presented in the introduction: advancing through **Commoning**, **Caring**, **Connecting**, **Renaturing**, **Prospering** and **Democratizing**. However, before that, the next chapter will introduce the different dimensions of governance that need to be considered if we are to better understand the role and potentialities of LRGs. It explores the underlying links between the pathway approach and the challenges facing governance. It also highlights the advances needed if we are to establish a rights-based approach as the basis for governance for equality.

Source: Gregoire Jeanneau, Unsplash.
Tokyo, Japan.

03 ↓ Governance and pathways to urban and territorial equality
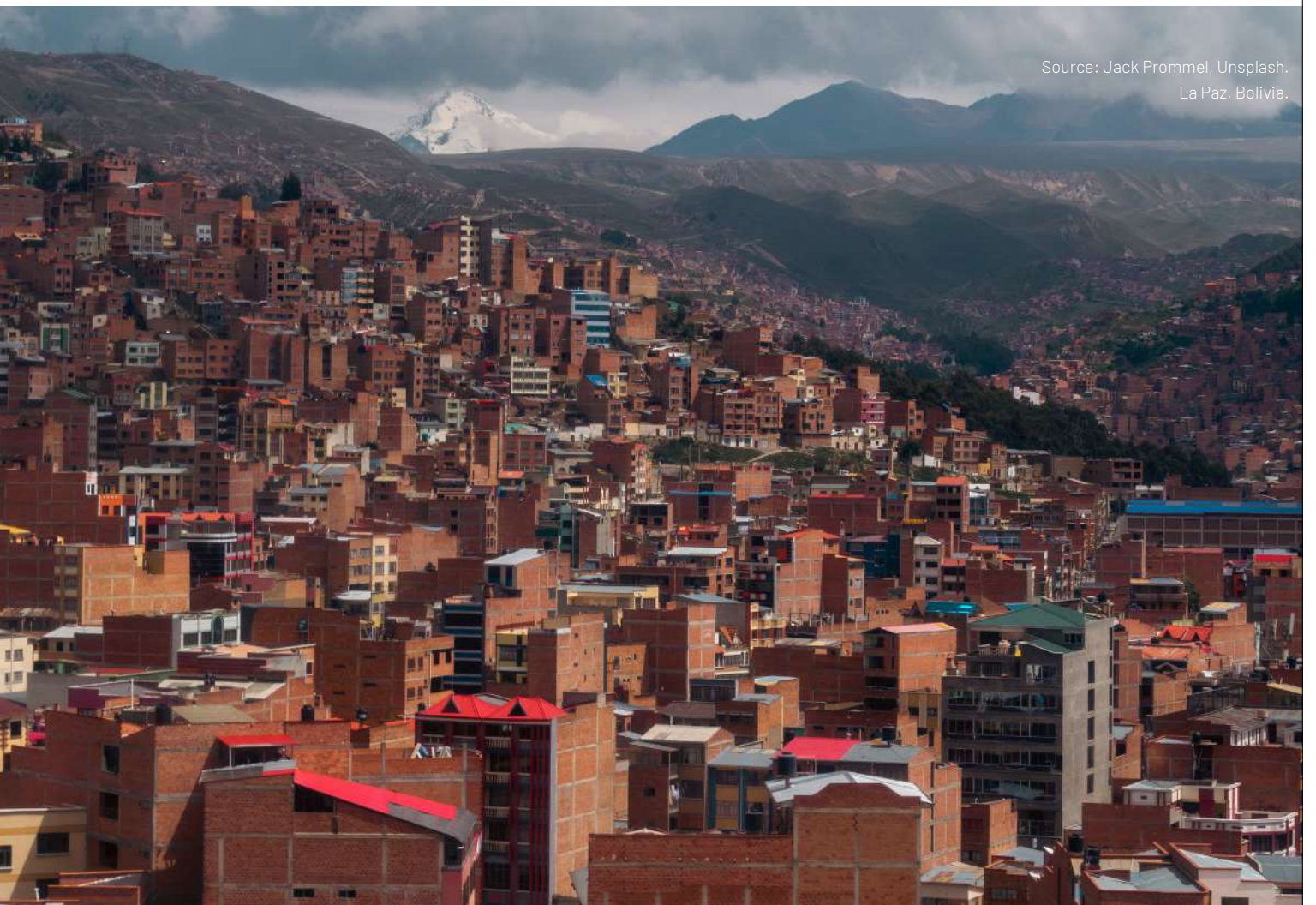
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Reflections on decentralization, subnational governance and reforms

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Abstract

This chapter aims to introduce discussions on governance, decentralization and the notion of "pathways to urban and territorial equality" that frames the discussions presented by GOLD VI. The chapter proposes that urban and territorial equality should be framed as a question of governance, in which there are a series of institutional conditions that are key to consider and work with. Drawing on the definition of "urban and territorial equality" presented in Chapter 1 and on the discussions about inequalities detailed in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 focuses on understanding governance structures and how the notion of "pathways" can help local and regional governments (LRGs) to advance in the task of challenging inequalities from a rights-based perspective.

The chapter starts by discussing why urban and territorial equality should be treated as an issue of governance. This includes understanding the role that should be played by urban and territorial policies, planning, financing and management, and their related programmes and projects, to combat inequalities. The second part of the chapter looks more closely at the definition of governance structures. It discusses key processes and concepts associated with effective decentralization, and the challenges that they pose. To deal with these challenges, the chapter then develops the notion of "pathways" to urban and territorial equality, introducing the ways in which pathways can help us to revise the concept of governance and navigate different governance and planning challenges in pursuit of urban and territorial equality. It does this by defining pathways related to institutions and the power embedded in them. This entails examining the role of governance in framing systems, which might either create lock-in and path dependency that constrains collective action, or create pathways that open up new possibilities for addressing the multiscalar and multidimensional aspects of inequality.

Using pathways as a vehicle for transformative action by LRGs requires a reframing of the notions of urban and territorial governance, particularly in relation to human rights. This chapter proposes a series of reasons why rights-based frameworks can provide a significant and effective driver for governance and for promoting greater urban and territorial equality: (a) synchronizing mechanisms of accountability; (b) providing guiding principles for actions and mechanisms to address inequalities; and (c) drawing on overlaps between a multidimensional understanding of equality and its articulation through guaranteeing human rights. It concludes by discussing the cross-sectorial nature of the pathways proposed in this Report and the importance of promoting local institutional capabilities in order to advance a rights-based global agenda.

1 Introduction: Urban and territorial equality as a question of governance

Local and regional governments (LRGs) are responsible for the management of their cities and regions and must adopt a collective vision to ensure the well-being of the communities to which they are accountable. When they are adequately resourced and empowered, LRGs can play a critical role in the development of policies, planning, programmes and projects aimed at addressing a range of socio-economic, environmental and spatial problems in their territories. **If their vision is based on the notion of "urban and territorial equality", this will have important implications for their lines of action. This implies considering how the methods and tools available to them can be mobilized in order to promote change within their respective systems of governance, and also to transform the very structures that initially give rise to inequalities.** This entails supporting and galvanizing the efforts of multiple stakeholders towards collective goals, as part of medium- and longer-term strategies.

As underlined in the introduction of this Report, the purpose of GOLD VI is to explore different pathways that LRGs can follow in order to shape and advance an agenda that promotes equality. To do so, it understands these pathways as trajectories for change that will enable LRGs to tackle existing challenges at the multiple scales of governance. In this chapter, the

ideas of governance and pathways will be discussed and framed with the understanding that, for LRGs, addressing multiple inequalities and their urban and territorial manifestations requires at its heart dealing with governance issues.

LRGs are at the forefront of urban and territorial affairs: they lead innovation and must manage the multiple interlinkages between access to public services, social inclusion, economic development and environmental protection that can promote social change. According to the latest available global data, on average, LRGs are responsible for 24.1% of general government public spending, 25.7% of general government public revenue, and 36.6% of general government public investment.[1] At the international scale, LRGs are coming together and joining forces to promote social change in such diverse fields as the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), environmental action, the adoption of a human rights-based approach, housing,

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1 More precisely, in federal countries, subnational governments (SNGs) account for 46.9% of public spending or 16.8% of gross domestic product (GDP). In unitary countries, SNG expenditure corresponds to 6.9% of GDP and 19.4% of public expenditure. OECD and UCLG, "2019 Report of the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment – Key Findings," SNG-WOFI (Paris, 2019), https://bit.ly/3prmV8X.

Box 3.1

Multilevel governance

Multilevel governance is a decision-making system based on coordination mechanisms that allow the allocation of governmental competences and responsibilities both vertically and horizontally, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, and that respect local autonomy. These coordination mechanisms include those that help to build trust and structured dialogue. These, together with coherent legal frameworks and regulations, are key to preventing overlaps, gaps and the inefficient use of resources. Establishing clearly defined and reliable financing mechanisms is also critical to creating an effective multilevel system of governance. Multilevel governance should recognize that there is no optimal level of decentralization and that implementation and competences are strongly context-specific. It is important to understand that it is not possible to achieve a complete separation between responsibilities and outcomes in policymaking and that the different levels of government are interdependent. Multilevel governance requires all levels of government to share information and closely collaborate. This is essential so every level can manage horizontal relations with its respective stakeholders in public and accountable ways.

Sources: UCLG, "The Localization of the Global Agendas: How Local Action is Transforming Territories and Communities"; UN-Habitat, "Urban Governance, Capacity and Institutional Development".[5]

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transport and migration. The annual report of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments to the United Nations (UN) High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), *Towards the localization of the SDGs*, shows the progress that has been made by LRGs in the localization of the SDGs on every continent.[2] As of 2022, the Global Covenant of Mayors has brought together over 11,700 cities from 142 countries, on all the continents, and has committed to reducing CO2 emissions by 24 billion tons by 2030. More than 65 regions and 1,040 cities have signed the UN's *Race to Zero* campaign. Over 40 LRGs presented the *Municipalist Declaration of Cities for Adequate Housing* to the 2018 HLPF, in which they committed to promoting new housing strategies in order to overcome the obstacles to delivering the right to adequate housing. Over 150 mayors and city leaders have already signed the 2018 *Marrakech Mayors Declaration "Cities Working Together for Migrants and Refugees"*, which states that cities on every continent are at the forefront of managing the impact of migration and of promoting more inclusive, safe and sustainable societies.[3]

This position on the frontline of facing up to territorial challenges implies that LRGs have a unique responsibility in promoting equality. We know, however, that this position is also loaded with difficulties. Inequalities that are often produced elsewhere, or beyond the LRG scale, are often manifested, made visible and experienced in cities and their surrounding territories. **While local action may ameliorate these problems, the scale of effective intervention to deal with inequalities sometimes goes beyond the sphere of action of LRGs.[4] In other words, if inequalities are to be reduced, action by subnational levels of government needs to take place within a significantly broader policy context.** It is, therefore, only through appropriate multilevel governance structures, which recognize the driving forces that generate inequalities at multiple scales, that LRGs can advance their agenda for equality (see Box 3.1 for the definition of multilevel governance).

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2 GTF and UCLG, "Towards the Localization of the SDGs. Sustainable and Resilient Recovery Driven by Cities and Territories" (Barcelona, 2021), https://bit.ly/3lWaTfE.

3 Global Forum on Migration and Development, "Mayors Mechanism" (Geneva, 2021), https://bit.ly/3jzrahP.

4 Fran Tonkiss, "City Government and Urban Inequalities," *City* 24, no. 1–2 (2020): 286–301.

5 UCLG, "The Localization of the Global Agendas: How Local Action Is Transforming Territories and Communities" (Barcelona, 2019), https://bit.ly/36aFdGj; UN-Habitat, "Urban Governance, Capacity and Institutional Development" (Nairobi, 2017), https://bit.ly/38iM7dj.

Inadequate governance structures, inappropriate policies and plans, and institutional vicious cycles can reinforce existing unequal dynamics. They have impacts in phenomena such as rapid and unbalanced urban growth, territorial polarization and urban segregation, lacking or inappropriate financing, unequal access to services, the urban-rural divide, exposure to risks, and/or limited civic participation. GOLD VI proposes that these dynamics can be disrupted by mechanisms that challenge these cycles and that alternative pathways for action should be created at the local level. The different pathways discussed in this Report – **Commoning**, **Caring**, **Connecting**, **Renaturing**, **Prospering** and **Democratizing** – examine how LRGs, working in collaboration with civil society and multiple stakeholders, can promote policies, programmes and financial mechanisms that **expand transformative change at scale**.

This requires a collective vision of governance that puts questions of urban and territorial equality, viewed from a rights-based perspective, at the very centre. This involves applying principles that promote equality to both the process and the outcomes of collective action. It implies: (a) promoting more equitable distribution, (b) the reciprocal recognition of identities and demands, (c) solidarity and mutual care, and (d) parity political participation. These dimensions need to be fully considered in future governance systems and operations. It is also important to reinforce virtuous cycles within management processes and to orientate outcomes towards coconstructing pathways that promote urban and territorial equality.

To explore the transformative tools that can be used to promote an agenda for urban and territorial equality, this chapter has been organized into four sections. The next section defines and discusses governance structures and examines decentralization and the challenges that it presents. Section 3 explores the concept of pathways, which are a central notion in the structure of GOLD VI. Section 4 argues that, for LRGs to advance pathways to equality, it is necessary to reframe the existing notions of governance, particularly in relation to promoting human rights.

Source: Christian Lue, Unsplash.
Stuttgart, Germany.

2 Understanding governance: Structures, decentralization and challenges

2.1 Governance and decentralization

Governance can be broadly defined as the ways in which social actors wield power to influence and enact decisions and policies concerning public life, and the leadership and guidance that they provide for economic, social and environmental development. Local and regional governance systems are composed of institutions and their respective interactions, which may be formal or informal. These are governed by political and procedural mechanisms, which may be regulatory or relate to their management, and which serve as the basis for responding to, and steering, local and regional development. *Governance* is therefore a broader notion than *government*; it relates to interactions between social agents and formal and informal organizations, and to making decisions and defining the most appropriate actions required for achieving common goals. **Debates concerning subnational governance have tended to relate to a number of different operating principles.** For example, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) defines effectiveness, accountability and inclusiveness as the key principles for effective governance, alongside a series of subprinciples that include: collaboration, transparency, non-discrimination and participation.[6] The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) similarly proposes four key "operating principles" for sound public governance: (a) whole-of-government coordination; (b) evidence-based policy making; (c) public-sector workforce competencies and capacities; and (d) citizen-centred openness, transparency and accountability.[7] The United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) community has embraced and applied most of these principles, with previous GOLD Reports having placed particular attention on the principles of subsidiarity, localization and accountability – which are defined in Box 3.2.

6 UNDESA, "What Makes Effective Governance?," 2019, https://bit.ly/3wPDkcM.

7 OECD, "Toward a Recommendation of the Council on Principles of Sound Public Governance. 54th Session of the Public Governance Committee" (Paris, 2016), https://bit.ly/3NwfhWh.

Box 3.2
Some of the key principles for governance promoted by GOLD

Subsidiarity is the principle according to which public responsibilities should be exercized by the elected authorities which are closest to citizens. Central authorities should have a more subsidiary function, performing only those tasks and responsibilities which cannot be carried out at a more local level. Subsidiarity requires LRGs to have adequate financial, managerial, technical and professional resources to allow them to assume their responsibility in order to meet local needs. This includes carrying out a significant share of public expenditure. LRGs should be granted the authority and power to raise local resources in line with the principle that authority should be commensurate with responsibility as well as with the availability of resources. The principle of subsidiarity is the rationale that underlies the process of decentralization.

Source: UCLG, "The Localization of the Global Agendas: How Local Action is Transforming Territories and Communities".[8]

Localization is described as the process of defining, implementing and monitoring strategies at the local level for achieving global, national, and subnational sustainable development goals and targets. More specifically, it takes into account subnational contexts when working towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. This responsibility ranges from the setting of goals and targets to determining the means of implementation, as well as using indicators to measure and monitor progress. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the LRG movement for the localization of the SDGs has been progressively expanded to all parts of the world, albeit at different paces within and between certain regions. The progress made has been most noticeable in Northern and Western European countries. In North America, an increasing number of pioneering, high-profile cities and states have also demonstrated their commitment to this cause. In Africa and Latin America, significant efforts have been made in different countries towards the development of local plans and strategies aligned with the SDGs. In the Asia-Pacific region, LRGs are advancing in the alignment of their policies and plans with the SDGs. Meanwhile, progress in Eurasian, Middle Eastern and West Asian countries remains incipient (with the notable exception of Turkey, and with a recent acceleration in the Russian Federation). An increasing number of front-running LRGs have elaborated Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) to monitor SDG implementation but also to enhance multilevel dialogue. The role of local and regional government associations (LGAs) is also key to promoting localization. It is worth highlighting that, since 2020, LGAs have been promoting Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) in an increasing number of countries around the world. These political processes have led to the increased involvement of LRGs in SDG coordination mechanisms and national reporting units.

Sources: GTF and UCLG, "Towards the Localization of the SDGs"; UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization"; UN-Habitat and UCLG, "Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews Volume 1: A Comparative Analysis of Existing VLRs"; UN-Habitat and UCLG, "Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews Volume 2: Towards a New Generation of VLRs: Exploring the Local-National Link"; UCLG, "Guidelines for Voluntary Subnational Reviews"; GTF, UNDP and UN-Habitat, "Roadmap for Localizing the SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at Subnational Level".[9]

Accountability is central to the democratic agenda of the municipalist movement, as "promoting transparency and open government with participatory policies is a priority for local and regional governments".[10] This led UCLG to create a *Community of Practices on Transparency and Accountability* in 2018. Accountability is "the means by which individuals

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8 UCLG, "The Localization of the Global Agendas: How Local Action Is Transforming Territories and Communities."

9 GTF and UCLG, "Towards the Localization of the SDGs. Sustainable and Resilient Recovery Driven by Cities and Territories"; UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization" (Nairobi, 2020); UCLG and UN-Habitat, *Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews Volume 1: A Comparative Analysis of Existing VLRs* (Barcelona: UN-Habitat and UCLG, 2020); UCLG and UN-Habitat, *Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews Volume 2: Towards a New Generation of VLRs: Exploring the Local-National Link* (Barcelona: UN-Habitat and UCLG, 2021); UCLG, "Guidelines for Voluntary Subnational Reviews" (Barcelona: UCLG, 2021); UN-Habitat, UNDP, and GTF, *Roadmap for Localizing the SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at Subnational Level*, 2016.

10 UCLG, "A Joint Agenda for the Community of Practice on Transparency and Accountability for 2018," 2018, https://bit.ly/3uE9aGM.

and organizations report to a recognized authority (or authorities) and are held responsible for their actions".[11] Vertical accountability refers to "the direct relationship between citizens and their representatives holding public office. Besides periodical elections, vertical accountability is also a function of political parties, public opinion, media and civil society engagement. There are horizontal accountability relations – between the executive, the legislature, the courts, and special agencies of restraint – through which different state institutions hold each other to account *on behalf of the people*".[12]

Source: UNDP Capacity Development Group, Mutual Accountability Mechanisms: Accountability, Voice and Responsiveness.[13]

According to the analysis of the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Spending (SNG-WOFI), as of 2022, there were over 637,900 LRGs in the world. This number included all the LRGs which complied the definition of being a "decentralised entity elected through universal suffrage and having general responsibilities and some autonomy with respect to budget, staff and assets".[14] Globally, LRGs encompass 624,166 municipal entities, 11,965 intermediate governments, and 1,769 state and regional governments. Looking at different regions, Asia-Pacific has the largest number of LRGs, with 426,611, followed by Europe, Eurasia, North America, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East and West Asia. **These figures show the tremendous heterogeneity that exists within LRGs. This includes differences in the scales of subnational government and in population size, devolved responsibilities, and the availability of resources, amongst other key factors.** There are also noticeable differences in the roles and functions that LRGs perform in federal and unitary countries.

This diversity in LRGs arises from a trend towards decentralization that has spread across the different regions of the world in the last four decades. Particularly since the 1990s, almost all regions of the world have expanded their local self-government authorities, through processes that have involved different degrees of deconcentration, delegation and devolution. Decentralization processes combine administrative, fiscal, and political elements. As underlined in Box 3.3,

these three dimensions must work together and this cooperation needs to be appropriately balanced. Such coordination and balance pose important challenges, as these elements are primarily controlled and influenced by national governments and by actors operating at different scales. Even if the required legal frameworks and mechanisms are put into place, there may still be a degree of disjunction in practice. There may, for example, be a good fiscal structure, but weak administrative and/or political mechanisms that undermine the accountable use of well-designed fiscal provisions. At the same time, dichotomies between ministries and local governments can result in incomplete, or inconsistent, intergovernmental policies that compromise effective decentralization and lead to fragmented, or incomplete, policy implementation. As Figure 3.1 shows, when examining processes of decentralization, assessing intergovernmental functions in relation to administrative, fiscal, and political elements implies a series of different challenges for each of them and their interconnections, at each scale of governance.

11 Michael Edwards and David Hulme, "Too Close for Comfort? The Impact of Official Aid on Nongovernmental Organizations," *World Development* 24, no. 6 (1996): 961–73.

12 Siri Gloppen, Lise Rakner, and Arne Tostensen, "Responsiveness to the Concerns of the Poor and Accountability to the Commitments to Poverty Reduction," CMI Working Paper (Bergen, 2003), https://bit.ly/3Os2Jj1.

13 UNDP Capacity Development Group, *Mutual Accountability Mechanisms*: Accountability, Voice and Responsiveness (New York: UNDP, 2006).

14 It therefore excludes deconcentrated districts or agencies of central/federal/state government established for administrative, statistical or electoral purposes; special purpose entities (i.e. school boards, transport districts, water boards, intermunicipal cooperation groupings, etc.); submunicipal localities, and also communities located on first nation lands but not incorporated into their national territorial organizations.

Box 3.3

Decentralization

Decentralization refers to the existence of self-governing local authorities, which are distinct from the state's administrative authorities, to which the legal framework has allocated powers, resources and the capacity to exercise a degree of self-government with which to meet their allocated responsibilities. The legitimacy of their authority to make decisions is underpinned by representative, elected, local democratic structures that make local authorities accountable to citizens in their respective jurisdictions. The three dimensions of decentralization involve the distribution of powers, responsibilities and resources. Thus, **political** decentralization sets the legal basis for the devolution of power; **administrative** decentralization reorganizes the assignment of tasks between different levels of government; and **fiscal** decentralization delegates responsibilities related to taxation and expenditure, with the degree of decentralization depending on both the quantity of resources delegated and the autonomy required to manage them. These three dimensions of decentralization are interdependent. For a decentralization process to be successful, the linkages between these three dimensions must therefore be carefully considered and guaranteed. There should be no fiscal decentralization without political and administrative decentralization, while reforms that favour political and administrative decentralization are meaningless if not accompanied by fiscal decentralization.

Source: UCLG, "The Localization of the Global Agendas"; OECD and UCLG, "2019 Report of the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment – Key findings".[15]

Source: Marco Oriolesi, Unsplash.
Metropolitan City of Rome, Italy.

15 UCLG, "The Localization of the Global Agendas: How Local Action Is Transforming Territories and Communities"; OECD and UCLG, "2019 Report of the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment – Key Findings."

Decentralization processes have occurred at different paces and through different mechanisms, reflecting regional specificities and different historical contexts and experiences. They are often led by internal processes of territorial reorganization, but may sometimes be shaped by external pressures. As a result, the growth of decentralization in different regions has not been linear and differences in decentralization patterns in different countries have produced diverse outcomes. Across regions, LRGs have different relative weights in terms of the size of their public expenditure, revenue and investment. This has been summarized in Table 3.1.

Figure 3.1

A framework for assessing intergovernmental relations and the local public sector

Panel A: The dimensions of decentralization

Panel B: Multilevel systems of governance

Panel C: Framework for assessing intergovernmental relations

Political decentralization and empowerment

Administrative decentralization and empowerment

Fiscal decentralization and empowerment

Empowering intergovernmental systems

Efficient, inclusive and responsive local governments

Engaged civil society and business community

Empowering political architecture

Intergovernmental administrative systems and coordination

Intergovernmental fiscal systems

Inclusive and responsive local decision-making

Effective local administration

Efficient local financial management

Public participation and accountability

Efficient and engaged delivery of public services

Local taxes and revenues

Source: Paul Smoke, based on World Bank, "Decentralization in Client Countries: An Evaluation of World Bank Support, 1990-2007"; Boex and Yilmaz, "An Analytical Framework for Assessing Decentralized Local Governance and the Local Public Sector"; Boex et al., "Urban Service Delivery Assessment Framework".[16]

16 World Bank - Independent Evaluation Group, "Decentralization in Client Countries : An Evaluation of World Bank Support, 1990-2007" (Washington, DC, 2008), https://bit.ly/37CL5sl; Jamie Boex and Serdar Yilmaz, "An Analytical Framework for Assessing Decentralized Local Governance and the Local Public Sector," IDG Working Paper, 2010; Jamie Boex et al., "Urban Service Delivery Assessment Framework" (Washington, DC, 2014).

2.2 Responsibilities and functions across different government levels

The different shares of responsibilities between different levels of government are largely reflected in their distribution of resources, and therefore also in their expenditure. An analysis of subnational expenditure by government function shows that, globally speaking, education, social protection, general public services and health are the main areas of subnational govern-ment spending, followed by economic affairs, transport, housing and community amenities. Differences between federal and unitary countries are significant, with subnational expenditure corresponding to 4.2% of gross domestic product (GDP), and 20.8% of overall government expenditure, in federal countries, but only 1.2% and 18.1%, respectively, in unitary states.

Diverse processes of decentralization have also trans-lated into a variety of different territorial organizations and governance structures. According to an analysis by the SNG-WOFI, involving 122 countries, 30% of them have only one subnational level of government (i.e. municipal), 48% have two (municipal and regional), and 22% have an intermediary level of government between the municipal and regional tiers. In federal states, state governments (also called "provinces", "*Länder*", "regions", etc.) usually have wide-ranging responsibilities and their local govern-ment responsibilities are defined by state constitutions and laws. In unitary countries, it is general practice for national laws to define the allocation of responsibilities, sometimes referring to the principle of subsidiarity. Figure 3.2 summarizes the range and scope of responsibilities at different subnational government levels.

Table 3.1

Average percentage of LRGs' public expenditure, revenue and public investment in 2022, broken down by world region

Region	LRGs average % of public expenditure	LRGs average % of revenue	LRGs average % of public investment
Africa	15%	17%	15.5%
Asia-Pacific	33%	34.6%	37%
Europe and North America	25.7%	26.4%	39.3%
Eurasia	27.4%	30.6%	41.9%
Latin America	19.3%	22.7%	39.5%
Middle East and West Asia	9.6%	8.6%	18.2%
World	24.1%	25.7%	36.6%

Source: SNG-WOFI, "SNG-WOFI Database".[17]

17 SNG-WOFI, "SNG-WOFI Database," 2022, https://bit.ly/3vBMkQy.

However, **beyond these apparently neat distinctions between levels, the reality of territorial organization and governance is often much more complex**. In federal systems, for example, although intermediate levels of government tend to dominate, there are variations in the relationships between state/province and local governments, which range from subordination to having the same constitutional recognition. In some countries, deconcentrated administrations that represent the national government coexist with elected autonomous self-governing structures (e.g. in Turkey, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and the regional

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Figure 3.2

General scheme of the distribution of responsibilities across subnational government levels

MUNICIPAL LEVEL (e.g. municipalities, districts, parishes, etc.)	INTERMEDIARY LEVEL (e.g. departments, counties, provinces in non-federal countries)	REGIONAL LEVEL (e.g. federated states, regions, provinces, counties, etc.)
A WIDE RANGE OF RESPONSIBILITIES: • General clause of competence • Eventually, additional allocations by the law COMMUNITY SERVICES: • Education (nursery schools, pre-elementary and primary education) • Urban planning and management • Local utility networks (water, sewerage, waste, hygiene, etc.) • Local roads and urban public transport • Social services (support for families and children, older people, people with disabilities, poverty, social benefits, etc.) • Primary and preventive healthcare • Public order and safety (municipal police, fire brigades) • Local economic development, tourism, trade fairs • Environment (green areas) • Social housing • Administrative services	SPECIALIZED AND MORE LIMITED RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPRAMUNICIPAL INTEREST AN IMPORTANT ROLE OF ASSISTANCE TOWARDS SMALL MUNICIPALITIES MAY CARRY OUT RESPONSIBILITIES DELEGATED BY REGIONAL AND/OR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES DETERMINED BY FUNCTIONAL LEVEL AND GEOGRAPHIC AREA: • Secondary or specialized education • Supramunicipal social and youth welfare • Secondary hospitals • Waste collection and treatment • Secondary roads and public transport • Environment	HETEROGENEOUS AND MORE OR LESS EXTENSIVE RESPONSIBILITIES, DEPENDING ON THE COUNTRY (IN PARTICULAR, FEDERAL VS UNITARY) SERVICES OF REGIONAL INTEREST: • Secondary/higher education and professional training • Spatial planning • Regional economic development and innovation • Health (secondary health care and hospitals) • Social affairs, e.g. employment services, training, inclusion, support for special groups, etc. • Regional roads and public transport • Culture, heritage and tourism • Environmental protection • Social housing • Public order and safety (e.g. regional police, civil protection) • Local government supervision (in federal countries)

Source: OECD and UCLG, "2019 Report of the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment – Key Findings".[18]

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18 OECD and UCLG, "2019 Report of the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment – Key Findings."

authorities in Chile since 2021). In some countries, there are "special areas", also called "ungoverned territories" or "unincorporated areas", which are inhabited by first nation populations and which have special status. In other countries, decentralization does not cover the full national territory. In addition, certain other types of subnational jurisdictions, such as capital regions, metropolitan governments and larger cities, may be granted more powers than other LRGs. In some cases, however, they remain subject to central or regional governments and are unable to make independent decisions, despite their managerial capacities and resource bases.

In some countries, different tiers of government may be relatively independent, in terms of their devolved functional responsibilities, while in others the relationship is often more hierarchical. In many countries, key decisions need preliminary approval from higher levels of government, particularly concerning issues such as planning, budgeting, procurement and civil service management. **Even in relatively decentralized countries, not all functions can be devolved, and subnational levels of government need to work with higher level actors to coordinate certain deconcentrated functions.** Certain functions, such as transport, school districts and water districts, can also be managed by special, or parastatal, entities. These may, or may not, be related to regular elected subnational jurisdictions, and are even sometimes contracted out to private firms or community groups. The execution of public functions must therefore be understood in terms of the institutional framework of each particular country and the relationships that exist not only among differently empowered levels of government, but also with special entities and even nongovernmental actors.

2.3 Reforms of subnational governance

Subnational governance structures are not static and are often subject to reforms and restructuring, driven by territorial and political transformations. Such actions may involve the creation of new local

governments, territorial divisions, amalgamations and/or regionalization. The creation of new local governments is widely extended and often occurs with the aim of bringing local administrations closer to their citizens. On other occasions, countries may foster the emergence of new regional governments, the amalgamation of municipalities, or the setup of new horizontal collaboration mechanisms. These might be seen as responses to promote greater intermunicipal cooperation with the aim of improving the delivery of public services, rationalizing the management of territories, or reducing financial constraints. Many of these reforms come in response to trends in urbanization, or in answer to crises and unbalanced territorial development processes of the types highlighted in Chapter 2. Such processes affect territorial inequalities and differences between metropolitan areas, urban regions and corridors, intermediary cities, peripheral cities, and cities that are shrinking. They also have an impact on rural territories in different regions that may be suffering from the effects of problems like desertification.

Changes to governance in large cities are a clear example of these challenges. The governance of large cities is often fragmented by power-sharing schemes, which may include the engagement of different levels of government, and public or private agencies and utilities. These different entities might have also varying levels of legitimacy and transparency, and often involve competing for resources. This growing complexity has been met by an increase in the number of bodies of metropolitan-level governance. In fact, two thirds of OECD countries have metropolitan-level bodies responsible for governance. In the past decade, metropolitan reform has also been on the rise in the Asia-Pacific region, Latin America and Africa, in countries such as China, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil and South Africa. Similar reforms are also underway in Georgia, Togo, Zimbabwe and Morocco.

It is often difficult to establish new arrangements for governance and this requires giving special attention to those who are involved and affected by the process in each context. For instance, governance arrangements involving neighbouring LRGs seem to work best when they are voluntary (i.e. when the jurisdictions involved want to work together). Likewise, they seem to be more effective when they are encouraged and incentivized by national government action, instead of being imposed in a top-down manner. To redress inefficiencies and inequalities through horizontal collaboration and metropolitan governance, governments need to

take sensibly designed action. Centrally, this entails designing systems of governance that operate fairly and accountably, as well as providing financial and/or other incentives to encourage subnational actors to work together, whether vertically or horizontally.

In this regard, there is a critical mismatch, in almost all regions, between the increase in transferred responsibilities and the revenue that LRGs receive and administer and with which they must carry out their responsibilities. Annual city budgets can range from more than 10,000 USD per capita in developed countries to less than 10 USD in less developed ones. While cities are acknowledged as the main engines for economic growth and increasingly concentrate most of the national wealth that is produced, many local government bodies do not have the fiscal powers or capacity to mobilize the potential capital generated within their territories in order to finance their sustainable development. **In other words, while many systems are legally well-defined and based on normatively desirable principles, they do not necessarily operate in a way that is consistent with those legal norms.**

Reforms require fiscal systems that foster an incremental approach to change. This must be done with the support of fair, dynamic and buoyant local tax systems in order to ensure that a fairer share of national fiscal revenues is received through regular, transparent intergovernmental transfers and also through access to responsible borrowing. Similarly, improving the redistribution of resources for territorial equalization requires large-scale schemes to balance tensions between national mandates and subnational autonomy.

The implementation of governance-related reforms is always a challenge. In recent years, there has been growing interest in how best to implement and sequence decentralization. Often, reforms are implemented either too quickly or too slowly, or in fragmented ways, facing challenges to adjust to existing political and institutional constraints. A negotiated and reflexive approach to implementing reforms is crucial, understanding that, as certain initial governance-related reforms are successfully implemented, more advanced steps can also be taken.

Table 3.2 summarizes the key concepts, elements and considerations of what could be called "the landscape of decentralization and intergovernmental institutions".

Source: Owen Cannon, Unsplash.
Shanghai, China.

Table 3.2

The landscape of decentralization and intergovernmental institutions

FEATURES	ELEMENTS	COMMENTS
Government structure	**Federal**: central government shares sovereignty with an intermediate tier **Unitary**: authority rests fully with central government	This Executive Summary inlcudes the abstract and key information about Chapter 4. A full version of this chapter is available at
Intergovernmental structure	**Intermediate**: states, regions, provinces **Local**: cities, towns, counties, districts, and further subdivisions **Special**: entities with specific functions that may cover multiple general-purpose government functions	**These can vary in relative size and empowerment**; in many countries, intermediate tiers are very powerful, but in others, lower tiers have more functions. This applies to certain types of government, e.g. cities may have greater authority, particularly when they are capitals or large cities
Forms of decen-tralization	**Deconcentration**: primarily upward accountability **Delegation**: the delegated entity is accountable to the delegating entity **Devolution**: greater accountability to elected LRGs	**It is common to find a mixture of these three formulas**; multiple variations may be found, including across levels of government and/or government functions
Dimensions of decentralization	**Administrative**: managerial functions, including financial and human resources **Fiscal**: expenditure and revenue (including borrowing) functions **Political**: mechanisms for electoral and non-electoral accountability	Some dimensions are closely related to specific forms (e.g. political elections in devolved systems), but the **strength and mix of these dimensions can vary greatly in any decentralized system**
Vertical intergov-ernmental relations	**Independent**: individual levels have autonomy over specific functions **Hierarchical**: lower tiers must seek approval from higher tiers **Collaborative**: mechanisms for sharing functions and decision making	**Degrees of independence and hierarchy can vary considerably** in any system and may differ with functions; many different types of collaborative arrangements are used between government levels
Horizontal intergov-ernmental relations	**Mandatory**: collaborative entities for neighbouring LRGs, with compulsory participation **Voluntary**: participation is decided by eligible LRGs that choose to work together	Collaboration mechanisms, e.g. metropolitan development authorities, may be **mandated and supported (incentivized) by the central authorities or optional, and funded by members through voluntary contributions**
Partnerships/ non-governmental actors	**Quasi-governmental**: government entities with broader involvement **Private**: the contacting of private actors to perform minor or major public functions **Other nongovernmental**: partnerships with community/civil society actors	**Arrangements for many purposes with varied contractual and accountability relationships**; these may be at one level of government or intergovernmental; they can involve multiple nongovernmental actors

Source: developed by Paul Smoke and Jamie Boex for GOLD VI.

3 Why pathways? A response to governance challenges

Despite this diversity of governance realities, most LRGs face common challenges when pursuing an agenda of urban and territorial equality. Global phenomena, such as the climate emergency, the COVID-19 pandemic, increased housing insecurity, the crisis of care, or the precarization of working conditions, have deepened existing inequalities and created new ones. This has brought new challenges, which may be experienced in a wide variety of ways at the local scale. While recognizing the centrality of national political, legal, administrative and financial dynamics in addressing these inequalities, local action is crucial for articulating meaningful and effective responses that can enable LRGs to advance in the quest for urban and territorial equality.

In response to the complexities of current challenges, LRGs face the need to renew governance approaches, promoting a relational conception of governance.[19] To address urban and territorial inequalities while **acknowledging these complexities, GOLD VI argues for robust decentralization within a networked approach to governance that goes hand in hand with a number of established conditions:**

1. **Effective distribution of powers and responsibilities within government and between government, civil society and the private sector, guided by the principle of subsidiarity.** Such subsidiarity implies the mutual construction of equitable partnerships between diverse actors participating in the governance relationship, recognizing their different capacities and responsibilities. It also requires clear legal (contractual and regulatory) and financial instruments, adequate human and technical resources and capacities, and the coordination of support systems at different scales, which are able to take into account the non-static nature of subnational governance structures.

2. **Procedures and practices that ensure and enhance democratic participation, transparency and accountability in a sustained way.** This calls for the inclusion of diverse, and often previously unrecognized voices in local political process. It also requires a sufficient degree of autonomy for LRGs, without obstacles, and working within a national political framework that is committed to addressing inequalities between and within cities and regions.

19 Mark Swilling, *The Age of Sustainability. Just Transitions in a Complex World* (London: Routledge, 2020).

3. Policies that aim to construct balanced and collaborative formulation, implementation and management systems within urban territories, and between urban and rural territories, providing mechanisms for specific responses, at different levels and by multiple actors.[20]

These conditions remain the key challenges, or bottlenecks, that have hitherto restricted the unleashing of the transformative potential of local and regional governance to help us advance in the quest for equality. In practice, they require multilevel coordination to organize decision-making systems, both vertically and horizontally, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. In this way, it will be possible to respect local autonomy and ensure that substantial, sustained, coordinated, and concrete responses to governance challenges are adequately mobilized. This calls for policy and planning mechanisms that are adequate and responsive to local realities, needs and aspirations.

Such governance processes may fail – particularly because of entrenched antagonism between different interest groups or due to structural imbalances between powerful groups that undermine the direction of public policy. When this happens, there may be a need to introduce some degree of "governance of governance" or meta-governance strategies.[21] One key meta-governance strategy is what has been termed "collibration". This refers to "an intervention by government to use the social energy created by the tension between two or more social groupings habitually locked in opposition to one another to achieve a policy objective by altering the conditions of engagement".[22] As explained later, in Chapter 7,[23] the notion of collibration has made a useful contribution to approaches to governance when dealing with complex challenges, such as the current environmental crisis. This is a practice that aims to coordinate different modes of governance and strategies as a way to overcome potential failures of governance. As such, it runs contrary to the neoliberal conceptions of

governance that emerged in the 1970–80s and which promoted the weakening of state mechanisms by giving preference to corporate interests. Collibration encompasses facilitating dialogue and partnering, and creating a set of meta-rules for a mode of governance[24] that goes beyond neoliberal minimalism, while challenging traditional, vertically integrated, top-down bureaucracy. Within the framework of the principle of urban and territorial equality, collibratory urban governance could offer a new generation of capabilities to facilitate mission-oriented policy and planning. These include mobilizing partnering for change that aims to instigate, catalyze and sustain real and incremental change over time.

In this sense, collibration does the "creating, maintaining and disrupting" of institutions that recent literature on "institutional work" has brought to the fore.[25] Approaches to bring about change through strategic processes that go beyond specific sectorial policies have also been embraced by other key international initiatives on equality. The recent publication of the *World Resources Report: Towards a More Equal City*, for example, focuses on "Seven Transformations for more Equitable and Sustainable Cities", understanding that each of the transformations proposed involves making a series of changes to policies, procedures, finances and management, as a way of creating "a new dynamic for durable, cross-sectoral, city-wide change".[26]

Acknowledging these trends in the conception of governance and in practices that focus on the merits of a more strategic approach to collective action, GOLD VI proposes different pathways that LRGs, working in collaboration with other actors, can take to promote equality. These can serve as collective vehicles for transformative action and help to navigate the complexities of governance. This focus on pathways also seeks to emphasize the need for a reframed approach to planning as a lever to challenge socio-spatial inequalities. However, the ways in which planning systems

20 These challenges mainly draw on work submitted by Paul Smoke and Jamie Boex for the development of this chapter.

21 Jessop makes the distinction between first-order governance (in his terms, that which promotes exchange command, dialogue and solidarity in governance), second-order governance (in which the underlying conditions of operation change when these modes fail) and third-order governance, or "meta-governance". Bob Jessop, *The State: Past, Present, and Future* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), 169.

22 Andrew Dunsire, "Manipulating Social Tensions: Collibration as an Alternative Mode of Government Intervention," *MPIfG Discussion Paper* 93, no. 7 (1993).

23 This discussion draws mainly on the work developed by the curators of Chapter 7 of this Report and, in particular, on the work of Mark Swilling.

24 These strategies reflect what Dunsire respectively refers to as "formalizing", "biasing" and "canalizing". Dunsire, "Manipulating Social Tensions: Collibration as an Alternative Mode of Government Intervention."

25 Thomas Lawrence and Roy Suddaby, "Institutions and Institutional Work," in *Handbook of Organization Studies*, ed. Stewart R. Clegg et al. (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 215–54, https://bit.ly/3LqWWbh.

26 Anjali Mahendra et al., "Seven Transformations for More Equitable and Sustainable Cities" (Washington, DC, 2021), https://bit.ly/36zLr2F. The seven transformations highlighted by this report concern: infrastructure design and delivery; service provision models; data collection practices; informal urban employment; financing and subsidies; urban land management; and governance and institutions.
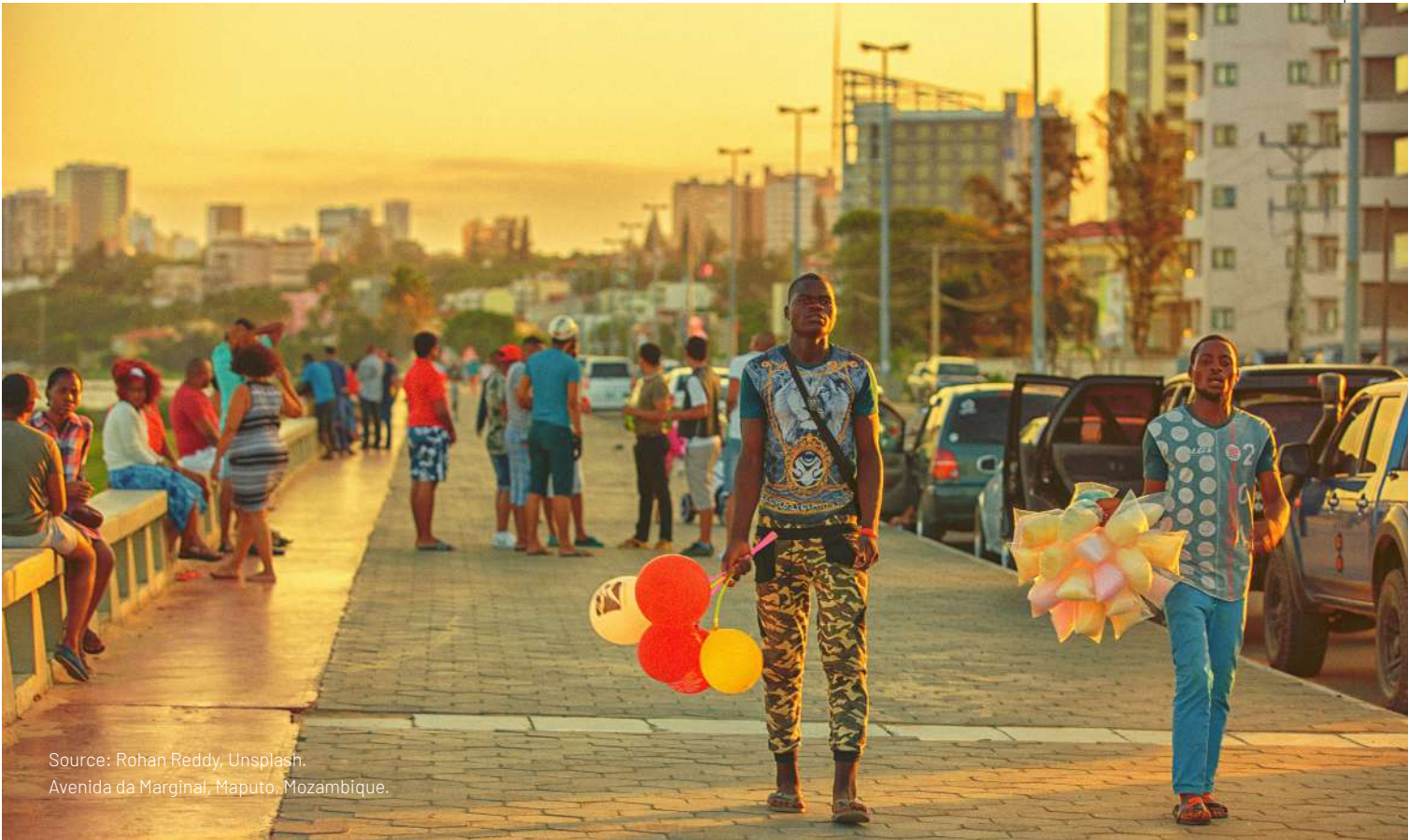
Source: Rohan Reddy, Unsplash.
Avenida da Marginal, Maputo, Mozambique.

can play this role changes significantly from country to country. While pivotal in ensuring balanced urban development in many cities, rigid, purely technocratic and fragmented approaches to planning and master planning have failed to address many of the challenges posed by dynamic inequalities. Furthermore, in several countries in the Global South, planning systems have been inherited from earlier colonial times without the necessary adaptations to meet local conditions. As a result, on many occasions, they have failed to respond to local needs and experiences and to the changing nature of inequalities. Indeed, they have often failed to address the role of planning and its unintended consequences in the reproduction of urban inequalities. Using pathways as an open, future-oriented notion of governance promotes an approach to planning that questions assumptions and planning instruments inherited from other times and contexts, and focuses on the importance of grounded partnerships, combined with responsive and strategic action.

Pathways are trajectories for change, or "alternative directions of intervention and change".[27] Pathways are made up of intersecting systems and institutional structures. They are driven by dynamic social, political, economic, ecological and technological processes that may take different forms at particular places and times. These intersecting systems are embedded in power relations of class, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and ability, which (re)produce systemic processes that underpin inequalities. Shaping pathways towards more equal futures involves strategic engagement with both material issues (e.g. finance, delivery of housing and services) and discursive practices (e.g. reframing narratives) at different scales.[28] Using the notion of pathways is therefore about reframing questions relating to governance in ways that open up alternative trajectories.

The notion of pathways has previously been present in many debates about environmental adaptation and tipping points within the context of the climate emergency. What has been termed a "pathways approach" has emerged as a response to the growing recognition that linear and managerial responses to current complex and dynamic societal challenges are unable to bring about meaningful change. While there are different pathway approaches, there are a number of common,

27 Melissa Leach, Lyla Mehta, and Preetha Prabhakaran, "Gender Equality and Sustainable Development: A Pathways Approach," UN Women Discussion Papers, 2016, 4, https://bit.ly/36VB1Kq.

28 Caren Levy, Christopher Yap, and Y. Padan, "Glossary of Terms," Development Workshop, Part II: COVID-19 and Post-Pandemic Responses: Laying the Foundations for Pathways to Urban Equality, 2020.

key components that are particularly relevant to policy and planning responses to the issue of urban and territorial inequalities:

°   **Systemic**: A pathways perspective approaches the issue of inequality as it being a product of multiple and complex dynamics, generated by inter-coupled systems and their interlinkages, and seeing it as operating at different scales and being embedded in power relationships. A pathways approach therefore has the objective of bringing about systemic change so as to address the root causes of inequality, rather than only tackling its symptoms.

°   **Reflexive**: The development of a pathways approach is directly related to how the notion of equality is defined. There are multiple ways of defining and framing equality, and these will determine the types of responses needed to address it. A pathways approach implies revealing existing framings by facilitating collective reflections upon their implications and, where necessary, reframing contextual notions of equality in order to develop more transformative pathways towards equality. In this sense, pathways are nonlinear and may include frequent feed-back loops.

°   **Future-oriented**: While recognizing historical trajectories, experiences and understandings of equality, a pathways approach aims to build alliances in order to tackle what is yet to come. Imagining different scenarios and deliberating on potential future realities unlocks the potential for the politics of change to be negotiated and acted upon.

°   **Agency-oriented**: The systemic character of the pathways perspective is combined with the recognition that change can come about through the contextual and situated sequencing of the actions of a diverse range of actors involved in governance. A pathways approach therefore highlights the agency and navigational capacities of individuals, collectives and institutions, as well as the conditions that allow change to take place.

°   **Governance of possibilities**: Pathways-based thinking recognizes that governance may sometimes imply "locking-in" certain trajectories, which could, in turn, compromise and restrict the possibilities of change. A pathways approach is therefore about recognizing different ways of advancing towards equality and challenging existing constraints, while opening up a range of new possibilities through which to bring about change, such as through self-balancing processes of collibration.

°   **Institutional change**: Pathways-based thinking is particularly concerned with how a sequence of actions can change "ways of doing things". Making such changes to routines and current practices is challenging, as this affects the existing culture, status quo, and a constellation of interests that are often firmly embedded within institutions. The future-oriented character of pathways should help to galvanize efforts to reconfigure norms, policies and procedures, as well as to challenge asymmetries of power.

The notion of pathways offers possibilities for defining criteria for decision making in future-oriented sequences of action, managing uncertainties and risks, and envisioning trajectories of change towards equality, while also acknowledging issues of power and scale. It is important to add that, in practice, these pathways need to be used carefully to deal with the complexities and constraints present in each country, which will ultimately shape the limits to, and possibilities of, implementing reforms. Pathways are cross-sectorial and multiscalar in nature, which is key for addressing the challenges posed when tackling inequalities. As such, they offer LRGs a tool with which to act beyond sectorial silos, making it possible to engage with the multidimensional experiences of inequality experienced by people, whether individually, or as part of larger collectives, on a day-to-day basis. GOLD VI seeks to capture how LRGs are taking action to advance towards achieving greater equality. **The Report groups these initiatives into six different pathways that, even if interconnected and multisectoral, represent different trajectories and means of action.**

In order to introduce these different trajectories, these pathways should be understood as being embedded within the governance structures that shape the systems in which LRGs operate. They should also be seen as offering a reflexive approach that can help to negotiate and reframe those same systems. In what follows, and as a way of advancing the construction of these pathways to equality, this chapter provides a reflection on how governance might be reframed within the context of rights-based commitments.

4 Reframing urban and territorial governance to promote equality: Towards the realization of rights

Pathways for change are always conditioned by the way change is framed. **In other words, advancing particular trajectories for change depends on the way change itself is defined. It is therefore important to understand why current ways of framing "good" governance have not been able to generate substantial, sustained, coordinated and concrete responses to growing urban and territorial inequalities.** This is particularly relevant as there is now a common global agenda that calls for the promotion of equality, outlined by frameworks like the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda.

Notions of "good governance" have tended to be dominated by a purely procedural emphasis, driven by the principle of efficiency and associated with elements such as privatization and changing responsibilities for public service delivery, alongside the principles of transparency, accountability, participation and respon-

siveness. **Important as these principles may be, solely focusing on procedures has proven insufficient to address the complexities and asymmetries of power embedded in diverse and multilayered systems of governance.** These reforms have not been enough to achieve greater equality. To date, progress has been constrained by governance structures that have been responsible for a series of bottlenecks, related to the different, and often conflicting, agendas of powerful actors within cities. Other obstacles have included the lack of balance between different levels of government; the need for coordination in the fiscal, administrative and political aspects of decentralization; and the different challenges and obstacles discussed in the previous section.

Advancing along pathways to urban and territorial equality demands bringing to the forefront the framing

of procedures, but also the reframing of the *ideals* and explicit goals of governance. When we acknowledge that, by changing the ideals that drive governance, the procedures themselves become spaces for dispute, new pathways emerge through the resulting collective discussions and transformative action. One way to promote these ideals for equality is **to root urban and territorial governance in human rights-based approaches**. If this change of ideals is effective, there will be a greater probability that relationships between actors and procedures involved in governance will be reexamined and also changed. This particularly relates to the framework for promoting urban equality, as a rights-based approach specifically would address the problem of existing structural barriers to equality and the inclusion of residents and other collectives.

The connection between governance and human rights is explicitly recognized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.[29] It is clearly outlined in its definition of "good governance":

"Human rights standards and principles provide a set of values to guide the work of governments and other political and social actors. They also provide a set of performance standards against which these actors can be held accountable. Moreover, human rights principles inform the content of good governance efforts: they may inform the development of legislative frameworks, policies, programmes, budgetary allocations and other measures".[30]

In relation to LRGs, various efforts by multilateral and international civil society, and also by many local government-led initiatives, have emphasized that a framework that guarantees human rights is critical for ensuring that new opportunities presented by local environments are inclusive and accessible to everyone (see Box 3.4). This strategic approach to human rights frameworks is coupled with recognizing the role of LRGs in the integration of a new generation of essential citizens' rights and entitlements that have been expanded by communities and their practices. These efforts have led to the production of several subject-specific reports by UN human rights bodies on the role of LRGs in the promotion and protection of human rights.[31] These reports and statements summarize various existing initiatives and specifically address the added value of local government action in advancing the implementation of human rights. Additionally, LRGs themselves have produced significant frameworks for understanding and advancing the implementation of human rights at the local level. Relevant collective frameworks in this regard include: the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City*, the *European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City*, and the *Gwangju Declaration on Human Rights Cities*. Local declarations include the *Mexico City Charter for the Right to the City*, the *Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities* and the *Barcelona Methodological Guide on Human Rights Cities*.

Source: Perry Grone, Unsplash.
Guatemala.

29 United Nations General Assembly, "Resolution Adopted by the Human Rights Council on 22 March 2018. The Role of Good Governance in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights" (2018), https://bit.ly/3IUASEa.

30 UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, "About Good Governance," 2022, https://bit.ly/3tU9GI0.

31 UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, "Cities, Local and Regional Governments and Human Rights," 2022, https://bit.ly/3xF9Kaj.

GOLD VI proposes three reasons why rights-based frameworks provide a significant and effective driving force in favour of improved governance and promoting greater urban and territorial equality:

The first reason relates to the possibility of synchronizing mechanisms of accountability between local and regional policy, planning and programmes, and human rights obligations and commitments. Framing governance for equality from a rights perspective therefore offers a mechanism through which to ensure accountability and the alignment with national and international obligations and commitments to respect, protect and fulfil rights. Specific institutions and programmes put in place by local governments (ranging from human rights plans to the appointment of local ombudspersons and human rights committees) are practical ways of upholding this idea of accountability and of providing monitoring based on local standards, capacities and priorities.

The second reason is that human rights provide LRGs with guiding principles for action and with mecha-nisms for addressing inequality. Indeed, a rights-based approach is mainly built on a significant policy shift from needs-based ideas of inclusion to universal notions of dignity and welfare. Accordingly, rights-based policies consider inequalities and exclusion as specific forms of human rights violations, proposing practical ways to address them at their root: by tackling inequality, its causes and its consequences. Concrete actions have been implemented by LRGs in at least four different ways:

(a) Through their responsibilities laid out in their international commitments and obligations.

(b) By guaranteeing rights through the application of sectorial policies or programmes that fall within LRG competences and/or aim to address the immediate social challenges faced by local residents. Even though they may not explicitly refer to human rights, such policies can be used to promote respect for, and the protection and fulfilment of, specific aspects of a rights-based agenda.

Box 3.4

The human rights and cities landscape

Over more than twenty years, combined efforts by local governments and relevant actors working at the regional and international levels have produced an advance in the understanding and practice of human rights at the local level. This has made it possible to move beyond the concept of "localization" and on to the notion of "**human rights in the city**". To this end, local government initiatives have opened the way to propose new pathways to the implementation of human rights in the city. This has expanded the focus of their thematic priorities and approaches related to this agenda, with this often going beyond the explicit recognition of international human rights law. This has been due to the specific nature of local human rights practice, which is particularly responsive to emerging needs and the social challenges experienced at the local level. The concept of the "**Human Rights City**" has been enshrined by several local governments across the world as part of an integral vision of the role that human rights should play in their own government and administration, and also their relationships with their own residents and communities. After regional initiatives spearheaded in the late 1990s, the 2010s saw the emergence of a **global human rights cities movement**, which enshrined cooperation in the field of global human rights in spaces such as the World Human Rights Cities Forum and through global organizations such as UCLG. The concept of the "**Right to the City**" is closely intertwined with these notions and has been particularly embraced by social movements. At the core, they seek alternative pathways through which to access rights in the city and to define new rights based on the urban environment and local communities. LRGs have also played an important role in the Right to the City movement and produced numerous relevant documents over recent years.[32]

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32 UCLG-CSIPDHR, "Right to the City and Participatory Democracy," 2022, https://bit.ly/3IOWmSZ.

(c) By putting into place a series of specific policies or programmes that engage with a human rights framework. These could include establishing human rights departments and action plans, offices for non-discrimination, mechanisms for protecting the social function of property and addressing gender-based violence, and also participatory bodies and social initiatives that engage with human rights-related goals.

(d) Through actions that take a more affirmative role and which mainstream a human rights-based approach in local policymaking, not only through specific portfolios of policies, but also as part of an overarching approach to local government functions and to the whole government agenda.

Finally, and probably more significant than either of the others, the third reason relates to the overlap between a multidimensional understanding of equality and its articulation through addressing human rights (see Figure 3.3). This includes the principles of equitable distribution, reciprocal recognition, parity political participation, and solidarity and mutual care defined in GOLD VI. These human rights and principles of equality also overlap with those promoted by existing global frameworks, such as the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. The UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights has, for instance, identified a series of "shared ambitions" that form part of a human rights agenda as constituting "a meaningful framework to ensure that new opportunities brought about by urban environments are inclusive and accessible to all."[33] A rights-based approach allows LRGs to focus on people's rights within a territorial perspective, catering for their diverse needs and aspirations and advancing towards the 2030 Agenda's aim of making sure that no one and nowhere is left behind.

Ahead of emerging crises and disruptive political, social and economic transformations at the whole world level (climate change, political conflict and wars, crises of inequality, financialization, a lack of political legitimacy, exacerbated discrimination and poverty), global actors such as UCLG are also calling for a new generation of human rights as key standards for a renewed social contract that safeguards basic notions of human dignity, caring and solidarity. This new generation of rights is built upon the recognition that everyday and collective practices can play a key role in the production and promotion of rights, and particularly so for structurally

discriminated communities. This people-led expansion of entitlements will, no doubt, overlap with a multidimensional equality agenda, given the central position of everyday and collective practices in the distribution, recognition, participation and solidarity and care aspects of equality.

Local government rules and regulations, policies and programmes can have an immediate impact on particular groups which are at risk of discrimination.[34] Another key area in which human rights and equality principles overlap relates to the recognition of the need for meaningful participation to be regarded as a right and a key aspect of equality. This implies building partnerships between government, civil society and the private sector in order to advance in the pursuit of a democratizing agenda and in recognizing "the right and the opportunity […] to take part in the conduct of public affairs", which is expressed in article 25 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*.[35]

These overlaps can also be observed in the experiences of certain specific cities. For example, the report *Human Rights Cities in the EU: a framework for reinforcing rights locally* identifies key elements for ensuring compliance with human rights in areas such as the provision of social services, healthcare, public utilities, education, culture and procurement, as well as a commitment to the SDGs.[36] Likewise, Barcelona has developed the methodology and guide *City of human rights. The Barcelona model*, which calls for a move from a "needs approach" to a "city of human rights model". This not only seeks to comply with existing standards for human rights, but also: (a) to engage with the structural causes of the problems encountered; (b) to empower people and engage with diverse participation as a right; (c) to work at different scales and challenge existing power relationships; (d) to focus on both results and processes; and (e) to adopt a comprehensive vision and to work in an intersectoral way.[37]

These coincidences between the principles of human rights and equality lead us to an understanding of the reproduction of inequalities as a violation of human rights.

33 UCLG-CSIPDHR, "Local Governments and Human Rights," 2022, https://bit.ly/3rFeBo4.

34 United Nations General Assembly, "Local Government and Human Rights. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights" (New York, 2019), https://bit.ly/3qQtpQC.

35 United Nations General Assembly, "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" (1966), https://bit.ly/3qOUwLD.

36 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, "Human Rights Cities in the EU: A Framework for Reinforcing Rights Locally" (Vienna, 2021), https://bit.ly/3qNN97v.

37 Barcelona City Council, "Methodology Guide: City of Human Rights. The Barcelona Model" (Barcelona, 2018), 19.

Figure 3.3

Overlaps between the principles of equality and human rights

PARTICIPATION

People-led expansion of
rights and entitlements

Expanding citizenship and agency through collective action

New generation
of rights

Local citizenship

Commons

Right to the city

Human rights
obligations and
commitments

Adequate housing

Water and sanitation

Education

Health and wellbeing

Clean, healthy and sustainable environment

Decent work

Participation in public life

Non-discrimination

SOLIDARITY AND CARE

Collective practices fostering bonds of solidarity and mutual care

Safety and security

Welcoming cities

Access to care

RECOGNITION

Collective understanding of expanded and diverse needs and aspirations

Accessibility

Gender equality

Diverse cultural
practices

Diverse livelihoods

Digital rights

Accessibility and sustainable mobility

Spatial justice

City-making practices enhancing access to resources

DISTRIBUTION

Source: authors

This reinforces the argument that equality and rights should be the driving objectives of any governance reform promoted through the construction of pathways for action. As noted at the beginning of this section, the reframing of the aims of governance will inevitably have an impact on governance procedures, such as the principles of transparency, responsibility, accountability, participation and responsiveness. These may need to be reconciled with demands for them to be expanded, which would have implications for the ways in which partnerships are built and how conflicts tend to be addressed.

GOLD VI proposes strengthening four converging spheres of governance through which LRGs can shape pathways to greater urban and territorial equality and their intersection with a rights-based agenda.

° The sphere of **local democracy** does not only lie at the base of the legitimacy of local governments and their mandates, but it also opens up opportunities to improve responsiveness, accountability, representation and parity of participation. This sphere involves coproducing and engaging with initiatives led by civil society groups, thereby recognizing diverse voices and interests that are essential for more equitable cities and territories.

° LRGs can mobilize and transform **policies** that galvanize political commitment to the ideals of equality and human rights. These include policies related to spatial and land planning, economic prosperity and social welfare, amongst others. This should be done in conjunction with modifying key fiscal instruments that can make certain policies more possible in practice. As already noted in this chapter, this brings LRGs face to face with a range of institutional challenges because of the various ways in which policy-making processes are embedded in multilevel governance.

° LRGs can also shape **organizational** and **administrative** environments by introducing institutional changes to responsibilities, transparency, accountability and accessibility in procedures. This includes strengthening capacities and raising awareness in order to promote transformative changes. In these environments LRGs also have the possibility to make changes in partnerships with other actors involved in governance.

° Ultimately, the capacity of LRGs to meet the principles of equality and human rights will be judged on the actual **delivery** of programmes and projects. It will depend on the effective implementation of the methodologies that they wish to promote and on how research, and innovative tools, can be applied and put into practice.

In the following chapters, these different intersecting spheres of governance are brought to life in the exploration of the six pathways mentioned above: **Commoning**, **Caring**, **Connecting**, **Renaturing**, **Prospering**, and **Democratizing**. These have been selected as critical routes towards achieving greater equality and guaranteeing human rights in cities and territories. It is in the active combination and coordination of these different pathways that LRGs, with the support of relevant financing, regulatory and management mechanisms, can expand transformative change at different scales. In this way, they can reframe their role in promoting equality, placing themselves in the vanguard of those tackling local challenges and working to build a more equal and just future.

Source: Pascal Bernardon, Unsplash.
Boulevard René-Lévesque Ouest, Montréal, QC, Canada.

04↓ Commoning

Source: Gabriel Boieras.
Housing social movements' demonstration in São Paulo, Brazil.

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This chapter has been produced based on the following valuable contributions, which are available as part of the *GOLD VI Working Paper Series* and the *Pathways to Equality Cases Repository*:

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Access to quality local public services for all: a precondition to beat inequality	Daria Cibrario (Public Services International)
	Vera Weghmann (Greenwich University)
Upgrading basic service provision in informal settlements: city led, community led and commoning	David Satterthwaite (International Institute for Environment and Development)
Housing systems and urban and territorial inequalities - Bottom-up pathways to more equality-driven housing systems	Eduard Cabré Sophia Torres
Participatory neighbourhood improvement programs: a way par excellence to promote greater urban and territorial equity from the bottom. Zooming onto Latin-American inspirational experience	Catherine Paquette Vassalli (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement)
Experiences in informal settlement upgrading: Zimbabwe & Namibia	Ariana Karamallis Anna Muller Patience Mudimu (Slum Dwellers International)
Slum Upgrading in Latin America	Kelly Agopyan Rodrigo Iacovini (Global Platform for the Right to the City)

Source: Evan Krause, Unsplash.
Khaosan Road, Thailand.

Abstract

The terms "commons" and "commoning" are dynamic, with long and plural histories alongside contemporary reworkings and expansions. The most pervasive understandings of commons relate to property rights and social relationships outside state control and private ownership; many refer to trans-scalar and transnational resources. This chapter explores commoning and commons that are critical to the urban themes of land, housing and services. These areas are key mandates of local and regional governments (LRGs). They are also areas where commons and commoning offer the potential to respond to, and disrupt, trajectories of growing urban inequalities in ways that forefront distributional redress and city-making as emancipatory processes. As such, commons and commoning practices represent a significant opportunity to promote greater urban equity whilst also helping to promote a reinvigorated urban governance under a new (or renewed) social contract.

Commoning implies finding means of producing, using, managing, protecting and governing resources that can resist dynamic and locally-articulated threats of commodification, exclusion and/or enclosure. Enclosure, in this chapter, refers as much to politically or identity-based forms of exclusion as to dispossession through capital accumulation or the privatization of public assets. Commoning practices seek to expand use and access to resources through equity, and then to protect and sustain this access against exclusion over time. At times, these are alternatives to both state and market structures. At others, they are responses to state abandonment and neglect. In both cases, they are practiced and championed those populations whose intersecting identities are structurally marginalised, and at the borders of citizenship (e.g. workers in the informal economy, residents of informal settlements, refugee and migrant communities as well as women and/or queer and minority citizens who are trying to find ways to survive and thrive, often despite states and markets).

The chapter explores eight broad categories of commons and commoning pertaining to land, housing and services. These include: collective land arrangements, slum upgrading, neighbourhood improvement, land (re) appropriations and economic commons, universal public services, collective finance, knowledge and data commons, and what we call building publics. Each of these cases, drawing from practices from across Global North and South contexts, responds to diverse drivers of inequality at the urban scale, including the commodification and financialization of land and housing markets; the uneven landscape of tenure security at the city scale; the fragmentation and splintering of basic infrastructure provision; and the social geographies of discrimination, exclusion and segregation that fracture residents' right to being in, and making, the city. Taken together, these cases illustrate the rich repertoire of commoning practices and the potential synergies with LRGs as pathways to urban equality.

The chapter closes with a series of proposals, through which LRGs can act in support of commoning, including a call for recognizing, protecting, regulating, investing, remunicipalizing, scaling and advocating in favour of commons, commoners and commoning. Ensuring LRGs harness the full equity and democracy-enhancing potential of commoning will require careful calibration between state involvement and autonomy; in turn, this will demand engagement, dialogue and partnerships with commoners themselves.

Why commoning?

Unequal access to adequate housing and land

1.8bn people worldwide lack adequate housing and are living in conditions of uncertainty and instability.[a]

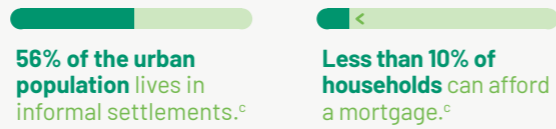**1bn people globally lived in informal settlements in 2020.**

Since 2015, the world's population living in informal settlements has increased, reversing the downward trend of the 1990s.[b]

306m in Central and South Asia[b]

359m in East and South-East Asia[b]

230m in Sub-Saharan Africa.[b]

Sub-Saharan Africa

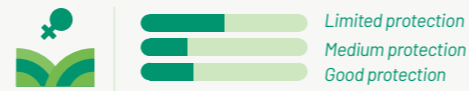**56% of the urban population** lives in informal settlements.[c]

Less than 10% of households can afford a mortgage.[c]

OECD region

Rent averages more than ⅓ of incomes in this region; housing prices have grown three times faster than incomes for the past 20 years.[d]

Women's land rights

Limited protection
Medium protection
Good protection

Data available from 52 countries for 2019–2021 reveal that about 46% of legal frameworks offer limited protection of women's land rights, nearly 25% offer medium levels of protection and only 29% offer good protection.[e]

21% of African respondents experienced racially discriminated against in access to housing, as polled by the 2018 EU-28.[f]

45% of African respondents lived in overcrowded housing compared to 17% of the general population in the EU-28.[f]

Financialization and precarization of tenure security

Global real estate

is valued at more than double global GDP. Global real estate represents nearly 60% of the value of all global assets (217tn USD), with residential real estate comprising 75% (163tn USD) of the market.[g]

60% Global real state

75% Residential real estate

Between 2008 and 2013: ■ In the USA ■ In Spain

13m foreclosures → **9m evictions**[h]

led to

500,000 foreclosures → **300,000 evictions**[h]

In Europe (2021): **6.7m** households were in arrears with mortgage or rent payments.[i]

2m people are forcibly evicted each year, as estimated by UN agencies in the 2000s. However, no global data on forced evictions are systematically collected.[j]

30–50% of the population faces tenure insecurity in the Global South.[k]

Unequal access to basic services and public space

In 2020:

Global population
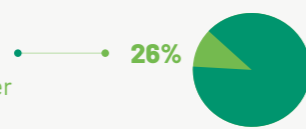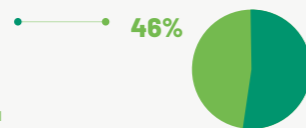
2bn people lacked safely managed water services.[l] — 26%
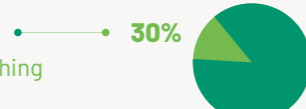
3.6bn people lacked safely managed sanitation (494m people practised open defecation).[l] — 46%

2.3bn people still lacked a basic handwashing facility.[l] — 30%

70% of Sub-Saharan Africa lacks safely managed drinking water services, compared to 38% in Central and South Asia, and 25% in Latin America and the Caribbean.[m]

733m people across the globe did not have access to electricity in 2019; this was down from 1.2bn in 2010.[n]

3 out of 4 live in Sub-Saharan Africa

Average household energy expenditure:

Global South — **14%–22%** of household income[o]

London — **4.2%** of household income[o]

Waste collection rates

High-income countries — **100%**

Middle-income countries — **51%**

Low-income countries — **39%**
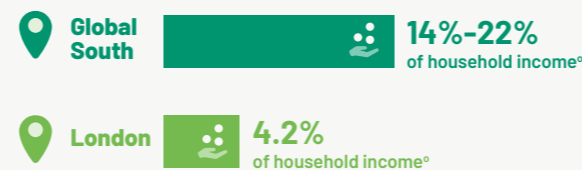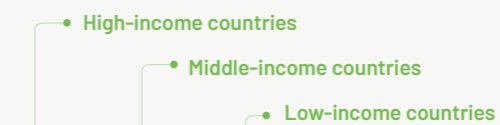
Informal waste collection accounts for **50% to 100%** of total waste collection in the urban areas of economically developing countries.[p]

In 2020, **only about 38%** of urban areas were located within 400 metres of walking distance to an open public space.[q]

400 m

This means only about 45% of the global urban population has convenient access to these spaces.[q]

45%

Commoning pathway

Collective forms of access to housing, land and services

Towards urban and territorial equality

- Expanded and sustained access to and use of land, housing and services, protected from enclosure in the long run
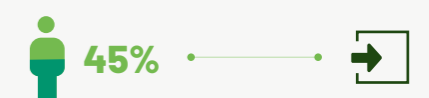
- Strengthened and institutionalized mechanisms enabling and promoting cooperation between LRGs and communities for the cogovernance of public resources

- Clear allocation of rights and responsibilities between public institutions and communities in the management of urban development, resources and space

- Empowered communities and public institutions that approach rights collectively, in addition to understanding them as collective, and that are capable of coproducing a new social pact

Ensuring public responsibility in the delivery of public services for all through accountable management models, including remunicipalization when appropriate.

Facilitating access to and use of land, adequate housing and public services through diverse mechanisms that advance equality to sustain this access and protect against exclusion over time. This includes a wide range of mechanisms such as alternative tenure systems, community land trusts or support for in-situ upgrading.

Recognizing the role of urban commons and commoners in cities and territories, as well as their importance in advancing a rights-based approach to deepen partnerships, solidarity and mutual support. This involves recognizing social diversity and the intersecting nature of inequalities across gender, class, race, ability, ethnicity, age, amongst others.

Strengthening institutional capabilities to support collaborative forms of city-making that provide feasible alternatives to expand access to public services and adequate housing.

Strengthening cooperation and partnerships between local governments, local stakeholders (public-private-people partnerships) and public institutions (public-people partnerships) to deliver public services, ensure access to land and adequate housing and protect the commons.

How can democratic forms of city-making, spaces for collective action and more equal forms of producing and belonging to the city be enabled and supported?

How can new ways to cogovern and share the responsibility for managing urban development, resources and spaces be found, as part of a renewed social pact?

How can collective practices be employed to find, use, manage, protect and govern resources in ways that resist commodification, exclusion and enclosure? How can they be used to increase access to markets that have become highly speculative and unequal?

Recognizing, protecting, supporting, coproducing and scaling up commoning practices that are taking place in cities and territories, in addition to regulating markets and advocating for such practices.

Monitoring land and housing markets to limit speculative investments and better regulate urban development. Monitoring is an essential aspect of cogoverning and sharing responsibilities for managing urban development, resources and space.

1 Introduction

This chapter explores **commoning and commons as diverse sets of practices that both respond and attempt to disrupt trajectories of growing urban inequalities**. These practices seek to repair a patch-worked and unequal urban fabric in ways that forefront distributional redress and city-making as emancipatory processes. Commoning is undertaken by a range of actors from settlement-based communities to more diffused (or even virtual) publics; from civil society institutions to local and regional governments (LRGs); and from workers' organizations to universities. Indeed, it is this plurality of institutional forms acting across different scales that give commoning its potential to respond to contemporary forms of inequality.

The Report looks at *Commoning* within a particular thematic focus: access to land, housing, and services. In doing so, **it recognizes four key drivers of existing inequities at the urban and territorial scales that commoning seeks to respond to**. These are: (a) the commodification and financialization of land and housing markets; (b) the uneven landscape of tenure security at the city scale; (c) the fragmentation and splintering of basic infrastructure provision; and (d) the social geographies of discrimination, exclusion and segregation that fracture residents' rights to being in, and making, the city.

Two key questions are addressed in this chapter. The first is: **How can commoning respond to these drivers of inequality?** The second is: **What is the role of LRGs in relation to harnessing the potential that commoning offers as a driver of equality?**

The chapter is organized as follows. The first section lays out a framework for what is meant by "commoning" and how it relates to multiple dimensions of urban equality and inequality. This section shows that **commoning practices share many of the goals of LRGs and offer them a significant opportunity to redefine the urban social contract so as to promote greater equity whilst redefining the urban social contract**. The second section describes various forms of urban commons as they exist within land, housing and services – themes that are key mandates of LRGs around the world. Using existing practices as examples, the section outlines different kinds of commons ranging from community land trusts (CLT) to cultural occupations and from community financing to forms of providing public services. The third and final section outlines **seven key practices for LRGs: recognize, protect, regulate, invest, remunicipalize, scale and advocate**, which could enable them to productively engage with commoning to promote more equal cities.

Source: Asian Coalition for Housing Rights.
Womens' savings and community network meeting in Yangon, Myanmar.

2 Commons, commoning and urban equality

The terms "commons" and "commoning" have long and plural histories along with contemporary reworkings and expansions. The notion of the commons that is perhaps best-known stems from an empirical rooting in property rights and social relationships outside both state control and private ownership. This idea sits beside others that emphasize the autonomous management of pooled resources by self-organized groups and institutions, as well as more recent articulations that speak of coproduction and partnerships for promoting the common good. Discussions about the global commons and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with their focus on air, water, peace and food security, remind us that the commons are not just about local resources but also pertain to resources that are trans-scalar and transnational. This requires careful thinking across boundaries.

It is, however, beyond the scope of this chapter to delve fully into these different articulations of the commons. Instead, we highlight features of commoning that are critical to the urban themes of land, housing and services. This focus enables an exploration of commoning as a way to respond to, and help break down, urban inequalities. This is also a focus that is particularly relevant to the local and regional urban scales, where LRGs primarily operate. As such, while

the chapter refers to global and regional frameworks that are engaging with these ideas, **the main focus is on commoning at the local scale**. The chapter hopes to show that such commoning is already part of existing urban policy and practice. Indeed, commoning practices share many of the same goals as LRGs, and it is in their mutual interest to articulate ways in which they can best engage with each other. Below, key characteristics of commons and commoning are laid out.[1]

First of all, **commoning implies finding means of using, managing, protecting and governing resources that can resist commodification, exclusion, and/or enclosure**. This resistance is both internal to those within commons as well as external via threats we often describe as cooption, eviction, enclosure, and/or gentrification. Such threats may come from the state or from the market; they are diverse and dynamic and shaped by context, history, geopolitics and location. The diversity of threats creates the conditions for an equal diversity of responses which makes commoning a rich archive

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1 This articulation is in conversation with what are key contributions to the GOLD VI report by Alessio Koliulis and Giuseppe Micciarelli. See Giuseppe Micciarelli, "Urban Commons and Urban Commoning: Political-Legal Practices from Naples, Bologna, and Torino," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022); and also Alessio Koliulis, "Defining and Discussing the Notion of Commoning," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

of practices. Looking at commoning implies seeing contemporary strategies for responding to new forms of enclosure, including politically and/or identity-based forms of exclusion and enclosure, capital accumulation through dispossession, and/or the privatization of public assets. These are, in other words, responses to processes that have become widespread and which are increasingly associated with the dynamics of urbanization and growing urban inequalities.

As commoning responds to the threats posed by enclosure, relating to land, housing and services, **it shares many of the goals held by LRGs: to expand use and access through equity, and then to protect and sustain this access against exclusion over time**. Discussions about universal and quality public services, for instance, lie at the heart of the mandates of many LRGs and are core concerns of both the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda.[2] Access to decent housing is also central to the vision of the New Urban Agenda, which also speaks explicitly of the social function of land and housing. This is an outcome that this chapter argues requires both commoning practices as well as the engagement of LRGs.[3] Perhaps most directly related, however, is UCLG's *Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration* through which LRGs have affirmed the importance of thinking of the common good and the social function of housing and resisting its financialization and commodification.[4]

Secondly, across its diversity, commoning remains attuned to the needs of the community, whether this is territorially defined or more diffuse, relational or even virtual. Commoning is not an individual exercise. **It therefore enables people to think about rights as collective (and *as* a collective) which is essential when speaking of third and fourth generation rights** to socio-economic entitlements, cultural goods and environmental outcomes. Such rights require a focus that reaches beyond the individual.

Thirdly, **commoning is about finding new ways of cogoverning and sharing responsibility for managing urban resources and urban spaces**. This search is internal to the commons but, and as we explore in the examples given below, often involves LRGs, especially when it relates to land, housing and public services. In

Source: Georgina Rodriguez, Fundasal's Page on Facebook (@fundasalsv)
Fundasal's staff in a meeting with the Comunidad Villa Venecia, El Salvador, 2021.

fact, it is the *terms* of such involvement that are the focus of this chapter. One articulation is **Turin** (Italy) City Council's Regulation on Governing the Urban Commons, which speaks of "shared governance" between citizens, as well as LRGs, and working towards "the care, regeneration and maintenance of urban commons".[5]

Fourthly, commoning is often, though not always, a set of practices undertaken by those who find themselves at the intersections between multiple exclusions: communities at the interstices of state mis-recognition and market failure; at the intersections of vulnerable and intersectional identities; and/or at the limits of jurisdictions and borders of citizenship. It is not coincidental that the commoners detailed in the cases below are workers in the informal economy, residents of informal settlements, refugee and migrant communities as well as women and/or queer and minority citizens who are trying to find ways to survive and thrive, often despite states and markets. Commoning is not exclusive to such social and spatial locations but when it does colocate with particular vulnerabilities, it is important to recognize who commoners are as much as the commoning practices that they undertake. In this, the goals of commoning align with commitments made by national governments and LRGs to pursue agendas of social equality and inclusion, such as SDGs 5, 10 and 16 and the overriding SDG principle of "leaving no one behind", as well as the *Durban Declaration*, which was adopted in 2019 by the local and regional representatives who

2 Articles 55, 88, 96. UN-Habitat, "The New Urban Agenda" (United Nations, 2017), https://bit.ly/3MBVeEt See also, in particular, SDGs 6 and 11.

3 Article 13(a). UN-Habitat.

4 UCLG-CSIPDHR, "Cities for the Right to Housing: The Role of Rights-Inspired Local Action in Addressing the Housing Crisis in the COVID-19 Era," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022); Cities for Adequate Housing, "Cities," 2021, https://bit.ly/3MCX9sr.
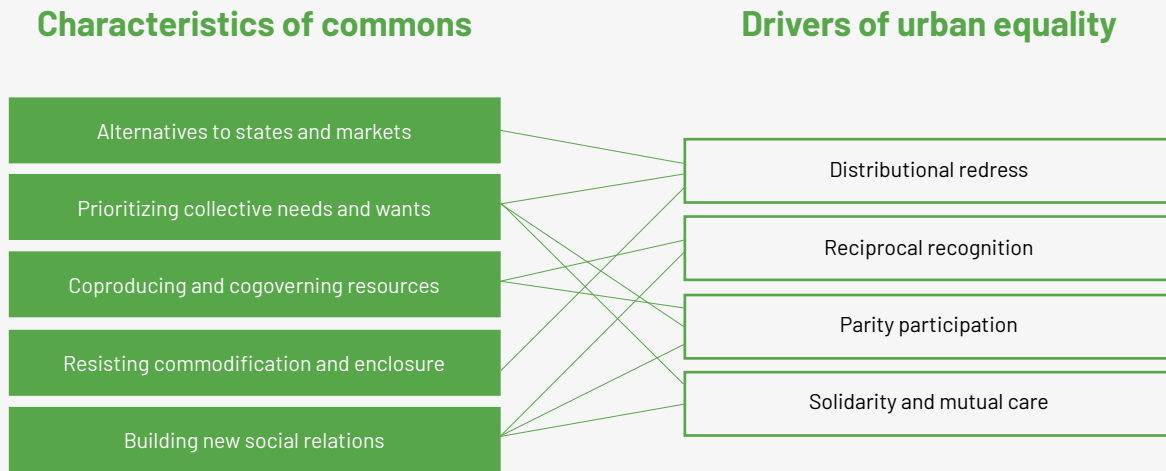
5 See the full text of the declaration here: Torino City Council, "Regulation on Governing the Urban Commons in the City of Torino," Beni Comuni, 2020, https://bit.ly/3Lsi29O.

Figure 4.1
Commoning and the drivers of urban equality

Characteristics of commons

- Alternatives to states and markets
- Prioritizing collective needs and wants
- Coproducing and cogoverning resources
- Resisting commodification and enclosure
- Building new social relations

Drivers of urban equality

- Distributional redress
- Reciprocal recognition
- Parity participation
- Solidarity and mutual care

Source: authors

gathered together at the *World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders* held in Durban, South Africa.

It is the above characteristics that make commoning a set of practices and arrangements that have the possibility of furthering equality, and of doing so at the local and regional scales. This chapter draws upon an equality framework that is central to the GOLD VI Report and that outlines four drivers of urban equality: distributional redress, reciprocal recognition, parity participation, and solidarity and mutual care (see Figure 4.1).[6] As shown through case studies, commons hold elements of each of these drivers in the ways that they create material and economic arrangements for land, housing and services; the ways that they bring people together in new collective social relations; the ways in which they are attuned to collective needs that are coproduced through new forms of participation; and the ways in which they are intrinsically rooted in an ethic of mutual care and solidarity. It is for these reasons that **LRGs would be well served by recognizing, supporting and engaging with *Commoning* as a pathway, not just towards improving urban equity, but also towards promoting reinvigorated urban governance under a new social contract**.

2.1 What do commons and commoning look like?

The practices described in this chapter provide examples of plural forms of commoning, the commons they seek to create, the diverse nature of commoners, and how these elements, when put together, can respond to diverse drivers of inequality and also promote the drivers of equality. These particular commons have been chosen as examples based on two key principles. The first is that they engage with one of the four key drivers of inequality identified in this chapter and summarized in Figure 4.2. The second is that these commons have a particular resonance with the concerns and jurisdictions of LRGs in their mandates relating to land, housing and services. In each case, the chapter highlights the aspects which are most relevant to LRGs, underlining the recommended practices that form the core of this chapter's final
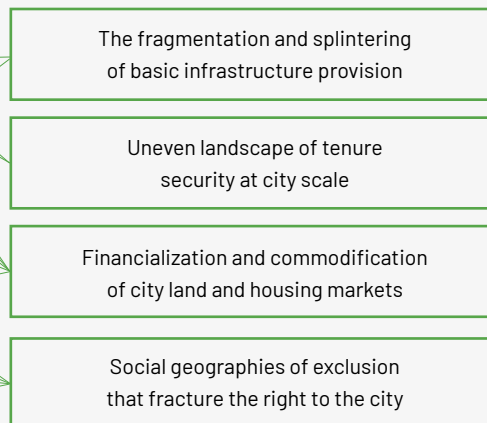
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6 Christopher Yap, Camila Cociña, and Caren Levy, "The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

Figure 4.2

Commons and the drivers of urban inequalities

Commons in land, housing and services

| Collective land arrangements |
| Slum upgrading |
| Land (re)appropriation for economic commons |
| Collective finance |
| Universal public services |
| Neighbourhood improvement |
| Building publics |
| Knowledge and data commons |

Drivers of urban inequalities

| The fragmentation and splintering of basic infrastructure provision |
| Uneven landscape of tenure security at city scale |
| Financialization and commodification of city land and housing markets |
| Social geographies of exclusion that fracture the right to the city |

Source: authors

section. Eight kinds of commons are described: (a) collective land arrangements; (b) slum upgrading; (c) neighbourhood improvement; (d) land (re)appropriations and economic commons; (e) universal public services; (f) collective finance; (g) knowledge and data commons; and (h) building publics.

How do these commons relate to the drivers of urban inequalities previously outlined? As Figure 4.2 indicates, there are multiple overlaps, but some significant patterns stand out. The first such pattern highlights the **commons as attempts to find alternatives to the currently dominant forms of the production of (and access to) land, housing and services, by building alternatives to the formal and private market**. This could, for example, take the form of collective land arrangements, land (re)appropriation for economic commons, and the provision of collective finance. Here, **commoning seeks to create resources that, by dint of their collective nature, can resist certain kinds of cooption or capture, whilst allowing easier entry into highly speculated and unequal markets**. This is the case, for example, of community land trusts or cooperative housing as commoning practices. Such practices are imperative in a global context in which "the impact of real estate and rental markets on the affordability and availability of land and housing for the poor" has

been described as no less than "urban warfare".[7] The 2020 edition of the *World Cities Report* warns that cities will no longer be able to provide opportunities if the wages of workers cannot ensure adequate housing. It also underlines that "currently, 1.6 billion people, or 20% of the world's population live in inadequate, crowded and unsafe housing".[8] As this chapter explains, this is as true for access to land and spaces for work (and especially informal work, unrecognized by mainstream urban planning), food, leisure and culture, as it is for housing, services and infrastructure.

A second pattern identifies **commons that can be understood as responses to state neglect, abandonment or violence, where communities build commons that require them to pool resources and also affective and physical labour**. Here, we see the auto-construction of housing, the self-provision of basic services, and the appropriation of public space for livelihood practices like street vending or cultural occupations. In these cases, commoning is also, effectively, a mode of survival, a means of accessing the basic elements of a dignified urban life, and a way of fighting for the right

7 Raquel Rolnik, *Urban Warfare. Housing Under the Empire of Finance* (London: Verso, 2019).

8 UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization" (Nairobi, 2020).

to remain in place. To take just one example, statistics on access to services illustrate the size of the global challenge which such commoning practices are trying to respond to. As mentioned in Chapter 2, "in 2020, 2 billion people (26% of the global population) lacked safely managed water services, while 3.6 billion (46%) lacked safely managed sanitation services. Regional inequalities are considerable. In Sub-Saharan Africa, as much as 70% of the population lacks safely managed drinking water services, compared to 38% in Central and South Asia, and 25% in Latin America and the Caribbean". Such inadequate access also comes at a higher cost for the poor; low-income groups are often "forced to pay up to 52 times as much as residents with a piped water supply to purchase clean water from private tanker trucks".[9] This pattern is repeated for the provision of waste management, water, sewage treatment, electricity and energy services, amongst others (see Chapter 2 for more details). For instance, the World Resources Institute's Ross Center for Sustainable Cities found that, in 15 cities in the Global South, "62% of faecal sludge is unsafely managed, and 49% households rely on on-site collection, 46% on sewer systems, and 5% on open defecation".[10] When speaking about upgrading informal settlements, neighbourhood improvement, land (re)appropriation and providing universal public services, the chapter shows how **commoning practices have made both survival, and even thriving, possible despite structural exclusion and deep-set vulnerabilities**.

A third pattern identifies commons that are not just about creating direct access to land, housing and services but about **enabling and supporting democratic public participation, spaces for collective action, and the possibility of belonging and providing everyday citizenship for urban residents**. When we look at data commons, cultural occupation and commons that we broadly group as "building publics," we recognize that **commoning is as much about the process of coming together; about who commoners are, and can become, as it is about the outcomes or resources that are to be secured**.

In fact, across all the cases in the chapter, one of our goals is to assert that commoning, as an attempt to initiate, build and sustain different types of commons, is also an end in itself. Even if certain commons cannot

resist enclosure, exclusion and commodification, either immediately or within a certain period of time, the attempt to create, or to manage, commons creates forms of social, political and affective citizenship that are not reducible to the "success" or "failure" of a particular commons itself. Indeed, **commoning offers the possibility of combating inequality precisely because it holds within it an ethic of coming together and attempting to create alternative material, social and spatial lives outside the known relations of domination, exclusion and/or adverse inclusion that typically characterize ways of interacting with the state and the market**. In this process, commoning therefore builds new forms of social relations and institutions and also strengthens existing ones. In doing so, it improves the possibility of not just creating more commoning, but also of promoting the right to the city, encouraging participation in everyday life, deepening democratic practice, and helping people to become, rather than just formally be, citizens. Beyond the material commons produced through commoning practices and that support the right of inhabitants to lead decent lives, this is what needs to be recognized, protected and amplified. Commoning has the ability to foster more equitable and fulfilling lives for commoners, and this is a vital ingredient for a renewed social pact with LRGs.

Source: The International Tribunal on Evictions Website, International Alliance of Inhabitants, 7th Session of the International Tribunal on Evictions in Salvador, Brazil.

9 Diana Mitlin et al., "Unaffordable and Undrinkable: Rethinking Urban Water Access in the Global South," *World Resources Institute*, World Resources Institute Working Paper, 2019, https://bit.ly/3D7cK07.

10 David Satterthwaite et al., "Untreated and Unsafe: Solving the Urban Sanitation Crisis in the Global South," World Resources Institute Working Paper (Washington, DC, 2019).

3 Diverse urban commons

This section describes different forms of what is understood as "commons". For each kind, the chapter uses examples from across the world, and identifies what the commoning practices are, what motivates them, how they relate to drivers of inequality, and, finally, who commoners are.

3.1 Collective land arrangements

The first kind of land and housing commons described involves the collective ownership and management of land itself as the core pool resource shared by a community of residents. Through this form of commoning, collective access to land seeks to address two of the foremost drivers of urban inequality: the commodification of land within deeply speculated and financialized land markets and the uneven landscape of tenure security at the city scale. The extent to which the financialization of land and housing markets underlies inequality in urban areas has already been mentioned. Here, it is important to note that tenure insecurity goes hand in hand with such commodified markets. This particularly holds true in the cities of the Global South where a significant part of the housing stock is characterized by tenure insecurity. UN-Habitat global data indicates that 30-50% of the population in the Global South face tenure insecurity, a figure which rises

when only urban areas are considered. This section details three examples of commoning arrangements that offer alternative models of land ownership to resist commodification and financialization. These are the Caño Martin Peña Community Land Trust, in **San Juan** (Puerto Rico); the Community-Led Housing (CLH) model, in **Yangon** (Myanmar); and multiple instantiations of community land trusts across European cities. These are framed as collective land arrangements.

Collective land arrangements protect access to land for households in multiple ways, across the stages of settling, building and buying housing. In **Yangon**, as the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) details, the process of commoning for land and housing emerged in 2009 when thirty women from one of the city's largest townships organized themselves into a savings group and then "collectively scouted for land and using their savings, accessed grants, negotiated loans and collectively purchased suitable plots of land and construction materials. They subdivided the land and collectively built extremely low-cost houses, with basic infrastructure. This process has come to be known in the country as the Community-Led Housing model".[11] The CLH model puts the emphasis on self-provision and the incremental building of housing, services and infrastructure. This is a mark of much of the built environment in cities in the Global South but, here, these practices occur within the ambit of secure tenure and land ownership. While the plots are subdivided, tenure arrangements and agreements on how to use land are collective. This implies that "the land purchased for housing is divided

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11 Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, "Commoning for Land and Housing in Yangon," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

up into small plots, for individual members to build their houses on, but ownership of the land remains collective. Reselling, renting, pawning or profiting from the house is not allowed". This is pivotal, they argue, to reaching one of the key goals of commoning: "A powerful protection against market enclosures" that "strengthens the community's ability to ensure everyone keeps their housing and can pass it on to their children".

Commoning access to land is thus both about creating the possibility of entering a deeply unequal land and housing market but also about protecting the resultant land and housing commons from market enclosure, both now and in the future. Writing about the community land trust in **San Juan**, the CoHabitat Network describes a different, but related, model.[12] Here, new land was not accessed, as in Yangon, but public land that had already been occupied and incrementally built on since the 1930s was made available (notably, in partnership with the LRG) for a new form of regularization and development. The need to widen a channel, or *caño*, led to a partnership between residents, the Road and Transport Authority, lawyers, researchers and students, who avoided a familiar narrative of displacement to instead use existing property law to establish a CLT. These legal arrangements are detailed in Table 4.1 and are an illustration of what it means for LRGs to participate in commoning practices.

As in Yangon, continued affordability is a key goal of this type of land and housing commons. A CLT establishes a shared governance model (discussed later, in Section 4) that, as the CoHabitat Network describes, aims to "to regularise the land situation of approximately 1,500 families to ensure tenure security and pay property taxes; to guarantee that families, especially the most vulnerable, will not be displaced; to ensure permanently affordable housing in the area". Here again, access and affordability need to be protected (made "permanently affordable") against what the authors describe as the threats of "gentrification or touristification". As commons create secure, legal and formal land and housing arrangements, these gains also expose newly regularized residents to the threats of market-driven displacement that were not so critical when they remained outside tenure and formal markets. This points at an important challenge related to commoning practices, i.e. the maintenance, over time, of key commoning principles and values, and

of different ways of producing and enjoying the city (for a detailed discussion on renaturing by avoiding displacement and CLTs, see Chapter 7, Section 4.2).

In San Juan, as in Yangon, there are collective agreements to ensure this. The trust that is established under law to run the CLT "cannot sell this land: it must keep it on behalf of the families residing on it, to whom it grants Surface Right Deeds, registered in the Puerto Rico Real Estate Registry. This status allows residents to live in and transform the buildings on their land as they wish. Residents can also mortgage and inherit their Surface Right Deeds". In a similar way to in Yangon, rights to use, modify and inherit are protected, but rights to exchange and amalgamate are collectively taken off the table. It is also important to note that in Yangon, these were *de facto* collective arrangements since there was no equivalent mechanism to the legal framework in Puerto Rico that specifically allowed collective tenure. Legal arrangements and *de jure/de facto* governance structures for land and housing commons are discussed in Section 3, arguing that innovations within them offer key ways for LRGs to support existing commons as well as to encourage the establishment of new ones.

In both Yangon and San Juan, these new commons have seen the transition from informal tenure arrangements to formal ones. **Yet CLTs can also occur within largely formalized but unequal land and housing markets, becoming important for middle, as well as low-income, communities. This is the case of European cities.** An analysis of CLTs in Europe describes a range of models for "non-profit organizations that develop and manage housing for low- and middle- income households" based on what can be described as a "dissociation between the land and building ownership".[13] The goals remain the same as in San Juan and Yangon: "to tackle land speculation, provide affordable housing and common assets (cooperative-held supermarkets, common areas, etc.) and enable tenure security in cities across Europe". Successful models of such CLTs are able to offer affordable housing that is at 20-50% of open market prices thereby alleviating, through commoning, the inability of many households to enter the land and housing market. Here, as well, **to counter speculation, land can be placed in a trust, in perpetuity, with this acting as a form of "collective ownership of land". As has been seen in the other two cases, this can then be supported by governance arrangements that**

12 CoHabitat Network, "Formalising Land Tenure without Displacement: The Community Land Trust in Informal Urban Contexts," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

13 Juliana Devis, Emilie Maehara, and Diane Pialucha, "The Community Land Trusts Movement in Europe: Implementing Public-Civic Partnerships in the Production of Affordable Housing," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

Table 4.1

Three examples of collective land arrangements

	Community-led housing, Yangon	Community land trust, Puerto Rico	CLTs in Europe
LAND ARRANGEMENTS	Purchased and subdivided into plots	Land made available by partnership with LRGs, subdivided into plots	Purchased and held by trust, turned into units
TENURE ARRANGEMENTS	Collective, restrictions on exchange and sale	Collective, restrictions on exchange and sale	Collective, restrictions on exchange and sale
HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS	Self-built and incremental	Self-built and incremental	Formally built and complete at time of occupation
LEGAL ARRANGEMENTS	*De facto* practices without an existing legal framework	Surface rights deeds under existing law that can register collective tenure	Long-term leaseholds and contracts to building ownership but collective ownership of land held in trust

Source: authors

mirror this collective ownership. As in the case of San Juan, arrangements here are more formal and codified through long-term lease agreements and contracts enforceable in law.

This analysis also shows the variations that exist within CLTs in Europe, with some focusing on particular communities and targeting social as well as economic exclusion (e.g. a CLT in **Brussels**, Belgium, that targets migrants and households eligible for unemployment benefits), and others that address the "squeezed middle" (as in the case of CLTs in **London**, UK). Some CLTs are built as alternatives and remain outside partnerships with state and market actors by choice, whereas others are established with deep engagement, particularly with LRGs, transnational solidarity groups, and even financial actors. The diversity of the models allows for contextualization and reflects different motivations for commoning, but they all share the goals of increasing access, protecting against enclosure, and creating arrangements centred around a collective, or community, that allow them to do collectively what would not be possible individually.

3.2 Informal settlement upgrading

The second kind of commons that the chapter addresses relates to forms of insecure housing that lie at the core of the land-housing-infrastructure nexus. No fewer than one in every five of the planet's urban residents either currently lives, or has lived at one time or another, in inadequate housing that lacks tenure security, material adequacy and/or access to services. This housing is often self-built and often "in tension" with the "official logics of property, planning and labour".[14] These neighbourhoods are described

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14 Teresa Caldeira, "Peripheral Urbanization: Autoconstruction, Transversal Logics, and Politics in Cities of the Global South," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35, no. 1 (2017): 3–20.

as "informal settlements" or "slums", but more accurate and rooted descriptions for them exist in all languages, showing the widespread presence of such housing: *favelas* (Brazil), *colonias populares* (Mexico), *musseques* (Angola), *amchi wastis* (India), *ashwa'iyyat* (Egypt), *sukumbhashi bastis* (Bangladesh), *katchi abadis* (Pakistan), *kampung liars or hak miliks* (Malaysia), and *sahakhums* (Cambodia). This process of self-provision is replicated in countless cities across the world and is a mode of urbanization in and of itself that, at times, produces the built form that houses the majority of the urban population, especially in the cities of the Global South.[15]

Processes of accessing and consolidating secure housing, services and infrastructure transversally to both the state and the market represent collective responses to some of the most entrenched drivers of inequality in cities. These include the financialization of land and housing markets, the uneven landscape of tenure security, and the fragmentation and splintering of basic infrastructure provision at the city scale. **What further makes these housing practices a form of commoning is their focus on the collective dimensions of individual upliftment and self-provision, the collective act of addressing "urban deficiencies"**, and the collective attempt to secure a foothold within the city.[16] **Auto-construction represents, critically, a way of making a collective claim on the city that does not rely on property ownership.** It is, however, precisely these facets of informal settlements that also make them precarious, prone to forced evictions, and materially inadequate.

How can LRGs engage with such commons? In this section, the chapter follows a useful distinction that establishes a time and scale differentiation between two practices: informal settlement-upgrading and what is alternatively called "neighbourhood improvement", "consolidation" or "regeneration".[17] This differentiation allows us to examine improvements at different stages of housing vulnerability and to move beyond "just" ensuring minimum access and try to create dignified neighbourhoods. However, it also emphasizes the fact

that both practices share a common understanding of urban space and human settlements, which are seen as "a common good to ensure a just distribution of material resources and good living conditions for all",[18] with housing constituting a central empirical reference for achieving this goal. The chapter starts by speaking about the upgrading of informal settlements.

Informal settlement upgrading implies prior practices of auto-construction or self-built housing in contexts marked by the absence of formal state provision as a result of state neglect or abandonment. The Yangon case, cited above, describes the land occupation and incremental housing, services and basic infrastructure-building processes involved in the production of such housing. **Upgrading is then the process of land and tenure regularization, as well as of the collective provision of secure housing, infrastructure and basic services.** How this upgrading occurs, however, has an important bearing on the possibilities for upgrading to further material equity and also, and perhaps more critically, on its chances of becoming a vehicle for collective action and for achieving recognition for groups hitherto excluded from the city. While communities can self-build to an extent, achieving tenure security and securing and scaling up infrastructure requires the involvement of other actors in the city. This is where LRGs have a pivotal role to play in protecting land and housing commons and the commoners involved.[19]

The first support self-built neighbourhoods require for upgrading is protection from eviction. In most cases, this protection must come from the state itself. **Taking a stand against forced evictions is therefore the first practice required of states when they engage with commoning.** In most cases, such protection is only obtained through struggle and by residents getting well organized. Over the past few decades, several communities have organized, led and accelerated such resistance, often supported by networks of informal dwellers at the national (e.g. Abahlali Base Monjodolo, in South Africa, and Sem Teto, in Brazil), regional (e.g. the ACHR, in Asia, and the Habitat International Coalition

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15 David Satterthwaite, "Upgrading Basic Service Provision in Informal Settlements: City Led, Community Led and Commoning," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

16 Catherine Paquette Vassalli, "Participatory Neighborhood Improvement Programs: A Way Par Excellence to Promote Greater Urban and Territorial Equity from the Bottom. Zooming onto Latin-American Inspirational Experience," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

17 Paquette Vassalli.

18 Global Platform for the Right to the City, "The Right to Remain in Place," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

19 In his contribution to the GOLD VI Report, David Satterthwaite details a typology of practices for upgrading informal settlement that range from "upgrading that is actually eviction" to "transformative upgrading". This chapter focuses on upgrading and neighbourhood improvement practices that meet commoning principles. Satterthwaite, "Upgrading Basic Service Provision in Informal Settlements: City Led, Community Led and Commoning."

or HIC, in Latin America) and international (e.g. Slum/Shack Dwellers International or SDI) scales.

Whilst many LRGs have adopted the shift from eviction and resettlement to regularization and *in-situ* upgrading of their own accord (for example as signatories of UCLG's *Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration*), or in response to shifts in national legislation (as in South Africa), **many of the most successful examples of regularization have depended on mobilization by, and active collaboration with, federations of the urban poor**. In **Harare** (Zimbabwe), for example, the *Harare Slum Upgrading Project* was developed on the back of the extensive documenting, profiling, mapping and enumeration of all 63 informal settlements in the city by the Zimbabwe SDI Alliance (the Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation and Dialogue on Shelter for the Homeless Trust), in partnership with the City of Harare.[20] This partnership between the city and commoners was critical for overcoming the frequent data and information gaps obstructing upgrading that are faced by LRGs with only limited resources. More than that, arguably, the partnership highlighted the recognition of what were previously "invisible" urban dwellers, and their capacity to cocreate the city.

The need for such struggle diminishes as LRGs begin to recognize and regularize tenure, whether directly, such as through the granting of individual or collective ownership or long-term leases, through the recognition of diverse property rights; or indirectly, through mediation processes, when LRG mandates exclude authority over land (as in the case of Thailand). **Land and tenure regularization actualize the recognition of the social value of land for urban residents. They both recognize the collective building of housing and create new forms of commons. They are, in themselves, ways of "commoning the city"[21] that LRGs can adopt and apply.**

The second part of upgrading is much more directly an LRG mandate: **the provision of basic services and infrastructure at the neighbourhood and regional scales**. Upgrading necessarily involves, at least at some stage, LRG and private actor involvement in order to link community-developed and/or auto-constructed infrastructure to the main piped water systems, or to the main sewers, storm/surface drainage, electricity and road infrastructure. There are now several well-known global examples of such upgrading at scale. These range from *Baan Mankong*, in Thailand, and India's *JAGA mission* in the eastern state of **Odisha**, to programmes run across Brazil, Mexico and Colombia, which have made upgrading one of their central policies. The upgrading of the Freedom Square settlement, north of **Gobabis** (Namibia), described in Box 4.1 (below), provides a compelling example of upgrading as commons in which organized communities were able to collectively counter relocation and shape *in-situ* upgrading, working in collaboration with the municipal and national governments and also with other local and regional actors. This process has not only secured the community's foothold in the city but it is also continuing to transform the self-esteem of residents and the relationship between residents of the settlement and their local authorities.

However, for every example of upgrading, there are just as many, if not more, of forced evictions and continued neglect. The upgrading of informal settlement is UN-Habitat's most important policy recommendation, but its uptake remains patchy and more often the result of the struggles undertaken and organization of local residents (often at great cost to themselves) than of the initiatives of LRGs or state authorities. It is imperative that this balance changes, and LRGs have a key role to play in leading such a shift.

Source: UCLG.
Mayors and representatives of the Make the Shift initiative gathered for the public launch of the "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration in 2018.

20 Slum Dwellers International, "Experiences in Informal Settlement Upgrading: Zimbabwe & Namibia," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

21 This expression was coined by Stavros Stavrides. It is interesting to note, however, that most of the Case-Based Contributions to the GOLD VI Report use variations of the term when calling for tenure security. Stavros Stavrides, *Common Space: The City as Commons* (London: Zed Books, 2016).

Box 4.1

Informal settlement upgrading as commoning in Namibia[22]

In the face of the proposed relocation of 4,173 inhabitants by the local municipality of **Gobabis**, the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN) and its supporting NGO, the Namibia Housing Action Group (NHAG), engaged with the authorities "to promote a community-led, bottom-up informal settlement upgrading approach in Freedom Square". Their hand in these negotiations was strengthened by a prior, and community-driven, enumeration and mapping process, which made possible the development of an alternative plan to relocation. Alternative plans (including the reblocking on land) were driven by community needs and developed in partnership with the local community, students and professionals, through a series of planning studios (involving site analysis and layout planning) that were jointly organized by NHAG, SDFN, the Namibia University of Science and Technology, and the Katutura Collage of the Arts. On the back of this prior commitment to coproduction, SDFN, NHAG and the Gobabis Municipality were able to successfully lobby national government (the Directorate of Lands and the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development) to include the *Freedom Square Upgrading Project* as one of three pilot projects included in the *National Flexible Land Tenure Project*.

In turn, this enabled the provision of financial support from the national government for the upgrading of water and sewer services and facilitated the granting of landhold titles, through flexible land tenures for the community. Pre-paid water meters and a sewerage processing plant were installed and the settlement's public open spaces were upgraded through a participatory design process. Whilst discussions between the municipal authorities and residents regarding the trade-offs between density and affordability are still on-going, the process is widely recognized as a success and is now being replicated in other parts of Namibia. The key to this success, according to SDI, has been "the collective voice of the organized communities of the urban poor who were given space to act as the driving force of planning and development – together with the political will of a city government willing to learn from and replicate these methods".

3.3 Neighbourhood improvement

Coined in Latin America, the concept of "neighbourhood improvement" refers to extended processes involving the integration of precarious neighbourhoods into the urban fabric, on a continent which is characterized by its long trajectory of informal settlement-upgrading policy and practice. Neighbourhood improvement programmes are largely LRG-led and, as such, represent important pointers to the ways in which commoning principles have been, and can be, embraced by government actors. Building on examples from Colombia, Argentina, Mexico, Brazil and El Salvador, the contri-

butions to this chapter paint a story of sophisticated, multifaceted processes of neighbourhood consolidation and improvement that seek to extend the boundaries of participatory governance.[23]

Compared to previous waves of government-led informal settlement upgrading, neighbourhood improvement programmes (NIPs) present several new characteristics. Firstly, they include **practices that seek to improve and sustain housing and services beyond the minimum goal of achieving tenure security and basic services**. NIPs now seek to address the need for, and consolidate, elements of social infrastructure such as health, education, the quality of public space,

22 This box builds on Slum Dwellers International, "Experiences in Informal Settlement Upgrading: Zimbabwe & Namibia."

23 This section builds on Paquette Vassalli, "Participatory Neighborhood Improvement Programs: A Way Par Excellence to Promote Greater Urban and Territorial Equity from the Bottom. Zooming onto Latin-American Inspirational Experience"; and on Global Platform for the Right to the City, "Slum Upgrading in Latin America," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

and also cultural infrastructure and economic development. Secondly, they plan to do so through a territorial approach that explores synergies that span various fields of intervention. Thirdly and most crucially, NIPs conceive resident participation as a core dimension of their programme. This ensures that the focus of commoning is that of moving towards "the construction of citizenship in marginalized territories".[24] In many Latin American cities, this implies working hand in hand with **the adoption of "right to the city" approaches and involves the elaboration of a myriad of policy and planning instruments to further promote participation in decision-making, including processes to target group-specific needs and knowledges**.[25] Fourthly, they **adopt a spatial equity dimension**: the objective here is "not only to address urban deficiencies, but also to promote a greater territorial equity in the cities, levelling out socio-territorial inequalities".[26] In the process, neighbourhood improvement as commoning improves services and infrastructure at the neighbourhood level. Importantly, it also extends the boundaries of those who can be considered commoners to the whole city.

One example of a neighbourhood improvement programme is the experience of the, now widely known, *Proyecto Urbano Integral* (*Integral Urban Project*) upgrading model of **Medellin** (Colombia), which was implemented from the mid-2000s onwards in five peripheral and informal neighbourhoods of the city.[27] This model, which was later conceptualized as "social urbanism", involves a long-term strategy that combines multiscale projects concentrated within a delimited territory (at the neighbourhood scale) and urban planning. Each of the five integral urban projects consisted of the realization of planned integrated projects combined with broader social programmes. Although one of the core interventions, the now famous cable-cars connected to the metro system, has been particularly successful in capturing the imagination of outside observers, the neighbourhood improvement programme has largely relied on the creation of public spaces where culture was given priority (e.g. the construction of nine large park-libraries in poor neighbourhoods on the periphery). As with many current

experiences of neighbourhood improvement in Latin America, art was used as an important way of enhancing urban transformation and especially mural paintings created by young residents. **Throughout the process, participation was a key concern and innovative processes included initiatives such as "workshops of the imagination".**

The **Bogota District** (Colombia) is currently undertaking a sophisticated strategy of integral neighbourhood improvement, using a complex quantitative methodology to identify and target areas for interventions. The Integral neighbourhood improvement programme is being implemented by the District Secretariat for Habitat and aims to enable the residents of informal neighbourhoods "to benefit from the same quality of life as the rest of the city". As in other experiences of neighbourhood improvement, its components are diverse, ranging from the legalization of land, to the use of art to improve neighbourhoods and facilitate appropriation by the local community (e.g. the *Connect your neighbourhood* initiative). Housing improvements, public spaces, accessibility and social integration are all areas of actions that are being implemented. Promoting active citizenship and participation, which is a pillar of local strategy, is considered by the Bogota District authorities as a necessary part of implementing adequate projects. It is also seen as essential for obtaining concrete feedback regarding the wants and needs of local residents, which can, in turn, help to improve future public policy.

In closing this section, two interrelated issues are worth emphasizing. The first is that upgrading and neighbourhood improvement have the potential to challenge some bounded notions of commoning in that they involve bringing previously excluded urban dwellers into broader urban citizenship. **In doing so, settlement consolidation/upgrading and neighbourhood improvement are synonymous with adopting a conception of the city itself as a common, to be enjoyed by all its citizens, without the requirement of entering the formal land and housing market.** This is visible in the ways in which many of the cases described above are not "just" about highly localized communities but instead function as pilots connecting "upstream" to local, regional, or even national, government resources to enable scale;, and also "downstream" through the involvement of networked federations and organizations of the urban poor, through peer-to-peer learning exchanges. This dimension makes such commoning particularly compelling for addressing problems associated with urban equality.

24 Paquette Vassalli, "Participatory Neighborhood Improvement Programs: A Way Par Excellence to Promote Greater Urban and Territorial Equity from the Bottom. Zooming onto Latin-American Inspirational Experience."

25 Global Platform for the Right to the City, "Slum Upgrading in Latin America."

26 Paquette Vassalli, "Participatory Neighborhood Improvement Programs: A Way Par Excellence to Promote Greater Urban and Territorial Equity from the Bottom. Zooming onto Latin-American Inspirational Experience."

27 The Medellin and Bogota examples are based on Paquette Vassalli.

Relatedly, it is worth reflecting on the **growing role that LRGs play in engaging with, supporting and even initiating such commoning practices**. This is a welcome and encouraging sign. It has the potential to help bridge the housing and infrastructure deficit for many urban dwellers across the globe while, at the same time, helping to reduce the burden of self-provision. However, for this to be sustained, and sustainable, **LRGs must remain committed to cogoverning, coplanning and coproducing, rather than trying to lead such initiatives**. If LRGs are to support the consolidation and scaling of commoning processes and the equity dividends that they represent – indeed if they are to enter commoning partnerships – they first need to recognize the collective, incremental and deep-rooted origins of these commoning practices and their desire for integration within the urban fabric *on their own terms*. Focusing only on improving the material conditions of residents living outside formal land and housing markets, at the expense of a developmental or political focus, runs the risk of undermining the collective agency and potential for active citizenship which lie within communities and their commoning practices. It also risks undermining the renewed social pact with citizens that experiences of cocreation and partnership represent, by undermining the ability of residents to continue cogoverning their commons over time, if the concern with upgrading the land and property values of neighbourhoods trumps the desire to improve the lives of residents. Section 4 will return to the conditions for LRG engagement with commoning practices to ensure that this produces/maintains the commons as a channel for distributional redress *and* emancipatory city-making practices.

Source: Ovidio Alberto Arenas R., Flickr. Antioquia, Colombia.

3.4 Land (re)appropriations and economic commons

The third type of land, housing and services commons that the chapter describes involve the (re)appropriation of land in order to redress livelihoods or, in some places, to sustain life itself. These are practices that reclaim access to and the use of urban land outside ownership or formal rental. They involve informal work and trading in public or private spaces, home-based economic activities, solidarity and barter-based economies, or various forms of guerrilla gardening and urban agriculture. **Such practices effectively claim the city itself as a common in response both to the financialization and commodification of urban land as well as to exclusionary planning policies that fracture the right to the city for certain inhabitants and uses.** Such commoning practices are based on an understanding of the city as a set of pooled resources that citizens can reclaim often through an articulation of the use-value or social function of urban land but also, quite directly, out of the need for everyday survival. As the chapter shows, such practices point to a strong nexus between urban economic commons and models of economic solidarity and economic democracy.

Land (re)appropriation for economic and livelihood-related activities involves practices that are often, as has been described in reference to incremental housing, "in tension with" the official logics of planning, law, property and labour.**[28]** The notion of "tension" is important since these land (re)appropriation practices normally result from negotiations with official plans and regulations and with the LRGs in charge of enforcing them. It is such negotiations that allow the possibilities of commoning, even if they may be vulnerable, time-bound and uncertain. In doing so, they also help to challenge the planning binary of legality/illegality. **The presence of such negotiations mean that LRGs always have a role in commoning practices whether that is to**

28 Caldeira, "Peripheral Urbanization: Autoconstruction, Transversal Logics, and Politics in Cities of the Global South."

suppress them, through criminalization and eviction; to recognize and tacitly support them; or to actively enable them through recognition. While examples of community-led practices follow, it is experiences that rely on collaboration with LRGs that really illustrate the importance of the latter's role in enabling, or sustaining, these vital types of commoning practices.

What do these land (re)appropriations as commons look like? One critical question relates to the structural *presence* of such practices within the informal economies of cities in both the Global South and Global North. It is important to remember that, globally, 61% of all workers (two billion people) are engaged in informal activities, albeit with considerable regional variations.[29] Within this, equitable access to public (and, to a lesser extent, to private) land is key to undertaking the myriad informal activities that form part of the livelihood strategies of many urban dwellers, and particularly those of the most marginalized groups. This is true for informal trading, street vending, waste picking and recycling, or again for light manufacturing. Each of these trades rely on access to city space and infrastructure as workplaces. These may be public streets where street venders sell their products; vacant urban land where markets are located; public infrastructure sites such as local collection centres and landfills where informal waste pickers, sorters and recyclers work; transport nodes where informal paratransit gathers; or the backstreets and alleys of informal settlements where small enterprises work, craft, sell, and store goods. **These key spaces of production and exchange are commoned through direct use and (re)appropriation rather than through formal permission or ownership precisely because they have been rendered unaffordable and inaccessible by *de facto* mechanisms of enclosure, such as the commodification of land and/or exclusionary planning regulations that fail to consider informal livelihood practices as legitimate uses of the urban public realm.** In doing so, they engage in what has been referred to as "space commoning" within "commoning the city" perspectives[30] in that they seek to (re)affirm the use value of urban space which, in some contexts, reflects long-established collective understandings of this space and the recognition of diverse property rights.

Land (re)appropriation practices tend to be claims rather than rights or entitlements. They are practices that both desire, and indeed need, certain kinds of recognition: of the right to carry out work in common public spaces, of the recognition of diverse ways of working in the city, or of the right to be in the city. In this sense, these commoning practices require their own specific tactics and struggles to sustain them. Collective organizing is therefore an ever-present within such practices; without such organization, they would probably be unsustainable. The organization of informal waste pickers, hawkers, market traders, home-based workers and paratransit workers tends to focus on two goals. Firstly, on highlighting the pivotal role that such economic practices play in contributing to the broader economic workings of the city. Secondly, on highlighting their role in sustaining large swathes of the working poor and other marginalized populations. **They claim that these commoning practices are vital for the city but also, and especially, for its most vulnerable inhabitants.** For instance, the *Asociación de Recicladores de Bogotá* (*Bogota Recyclers Association*), in Colombia, has mobilized support to get waste picking recognized as a profession and achieved official access for its members to waste and to land for carrying out their work. Its campaign focused on the contribution that waste pickers make to the recycling value chain as well as on the importance of their environmental, economic and public service role in reducing the demand for new raw materials. Importantly, the association brings together some of the most vulnerable sections of the population, often migrants and displaced people, those with low levels of education, and with few other alternatives for employment. In the early 2010s, the city of Bogota accepted many of the proposals put forward by the association as part of its revised waste management plan. These included developing a payment scheme to promote the recovery of recyclable materials and making direct payments to individual waste pickers (see Box 4.2 for more information).[31]

Across the world, there are multiple examples of LRGs negotiating similar recognition for informal workers ranging from street vendors to waste workers. At Warwick Junction in **Durban** (South Africa), street traders and transport workers were integrated into a scheme for planning a major transport junction, while one of India's new national laws recognizes street vendors and ensures spatial allocations for them within

29 Informal employment represents approximately 90% of employment in developing countries, 67% in emerging countries and 18% in developed countries, according to WIEGO, "Policy Framework," Informal Economy, 2022, https://bit.ly/3vVrCvn.

30 Stavrides, *Common Space: The City as Commons*.

31 Olga Abizaid and Federico Parra, "Waste Pickers as Public Service Providers in Bogotá, Colombia," in *Building Inclusive Cities: Highlights from the Inclusive Cities Project*, ed. Rhonda Douglas (Manchester: WIEGO, 2017), 22–25.

urban master plans.[32] There is also a growing policy and regulatory shift toward finding ways in which LRGs can more directly relate to informal work, workers and workplaces. **This is one of the many ways in which LRGs can support commoning practices and, in the same process, work towards SDG 11's commitment to leave no one behind. This is an imperative that has become all the more urgent in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis.** As LRGs recalibrate urban policies in the wake of the pandemic, it is heartening to note that they can build on good practices. They have already worked to support such uses and initiatives through new forms of recognition, coplanning and regulation involving different uses of land in the city, as the chapter details in Section 4. However, in doing this, the terms of recognition must retain the commoning roots of such practices. **As more work and workers are recognized, and as access to public and private workspace becomes more protected, it is imperative that this recognition retains a degree of flexibility, so that new forms of enclosure, ownership and limitation do not replace what were once commoning practices.** For example: the establishment of vending zones for some street vendors must not imply the creation of new enclosures that exclude new vendors migrating to the city from accessing recognized/regulated spaces.

A second set of commons related to the reappropriation of land for economic purposes involves the repurposing of unused or disused built infrastructure.[33] What makes these commons is both the social function of the land (and urban infrastructure) and the fact that they operate following an alternative logic to those of state or market control. Instead, they embody the principles of solidarity, inclusion and caring. Examples of this include the emergence of popular economies of barter and exchange and neighbourhood assemblies at the market of La Salada, in **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), which were initiated by the organized movement of unemployed workers who sought to recuperate abandoned factories.[34] Another example is the appropriation of public warehouses and other public infrastructure by solidarity projects in a number of Latin American and Southern European cities in order to address immediate needs relating to consumption and food security. As the COVID-19 pandemic spread, solidarity platforms in **Rosario** and

Santa Fe (Argentina) and mutual aid groups in **Milan** and **Naples** (Italy) and in **Athens** (Greece) repurposed neighbourhood infrastructure in order to produce and distribute food, consumables and basic healthcare services. Importantly, in Argentinian cities, this was done with the support of municipal movements and agencies. This points to the potential for promoting commoning practices in support of livelihoods which could result in coproduction initiatives involving LRGs and urban collectives.[35]

Economic commons established on reappropriated urban land may involve collective and solidarity practices that dovetail with the principles of the solidarity economy movement. They may be established through worker-owned and cooperative forms of governance. As previously commented, the rise of autonomous forms of production within communities can potentially enhance the democratic governance of common resources.[36] Examples of this include preliminary experiments in the United Kingdom which point towards public-common partnerships offering democratic models that can enable community-based and worker-led wealth building. In **Preston** (UK), municipal institutions procure goods and services locally, which are then used to generate urban circuits of community wealth and broader economic multipliers. These forms of economic democracy rethink the role of cities, viewing them as crucial sites for commoning services and urban infrastructure.[37]

Finally, another key type of commons which involves the (re)appropriation of urban land, is associated with food security and food sovereignty and relates to processes of urban agriculture or "guerrilla gardening" practices (i.e. practices of growing food, seeds and/or flowers on land that gardeners do not technically have the legal right to cultivate; see Chapter 7, Section 4 for a more detailed discussion). **Both practices, promoting the use of urban and peri-urban land for food production and gardening in general, reassert the vital role of urban land and the importance of protecting its use-value, within a context of deep speculation and financialized land markets.** In some cases, such as in **Melbourne** (Australia), these practices represent attempts to regenerate native vegetation, whereas in others, they

32 For more examples and information, see WIEGO and Asiye Etafuleni, "Public Space Trading Innovations in Delhi, India and Durban, South Africa," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

33 This section builds on Koliulis, "Defining and Discussing the Notion of Commoning."

34 Veronica Gago, "What Are Popular Economies? Some Reflections from Argentina," *Radical Philosophy* 2, no. 2 (2018): 31–38.

35 Leandro Minuchin et al., "Municipal Logistics: Popular Infrastructures and Southern Urbanisms during the Pandemic," 2020, https://bit.ly/3vrQP1g.

36 Koliulis, "Defining and Discussing the Notion of Commoning."

37 Andrew Cumbers, *The Case for Economic Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2020).

are attempts to offset increasing temperatures or losses of biodiversity through the use of nature-based solutions, as in **Paris** (France). In many cases, however, urban agriculture and guerrilla gardening represent original ways of providing access to urban land to people, including migrants, who have been traditionally excluded from it. In **Sevilla** (Spain), the role of urban farming, which was used as a commoning practice with both distributive and recognition dimensions, led the municipal coalition team to direct financial resources in its favour in the early 2000s. This was achieved through participatory budgeting mechanisms.**[38]**

Such land commoning practices have taken on particular significance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic which, like other crises, has disrupted both economic livelihoods and food distribution networks. In many contexts marked by either the absence, or the limited reach, of welfare/social protection systems, poorer communities have been particularly affected and hunger has (re)appeared. In response, community groups have expanded practices of collective food growing, food production and food distribution on vacant and other "underutilized" urban land. In some contexts, LRGs are responding by actively supporting similar initiatives. In **Quezon City** (the Philippines), the Municipal Office is expanding its food sustainability programme and is converting idle plots of land in the city into vegetable gardens to be farmed by grassroots women and grassroots organizations.**[39]** Along with providing seed starter kits, securing public land for farming purposes is a key component of supportive LRG action in favour of the urban commons.

Similarly, **urban agriculture and the commoning practices that underpin it have been increasingly recognized as an equitable and necessary response to climate-induced vulnerabilities**. In **Rosario** (Argentina), urban agriculture gained traction in the wake of the 2001 economic crisis, as a means to put food on the table and enable job creation. As this approach spread from vegetable gardens, neighbourhood plots and public spaces to peri-urban areas, urban agriculture also began to be seen as a strategic response to flooding and heat events. As explained in Chapter 7 (Section 5.3),

over time, **Rosario**'s *Urban Agriculture Programme* has extended its scope to include urban agriculture in its land-use planning. It has done this while systematically identifying vacant, or underutilized, public and private land that could be used by low-income residents, and particularly women's collectives, for growing food.**[40]** The case of Rosario illustrates the pivotal role that LRGs can play in increasing access to land, protecting it against enclosure, and supporting collective initiatives to both address vital material needs, and bolster the city's long-term climate resilience.

3.5 Universal local public services

Earlier in this chapter, it was argued that the splintering and fragmentation of the provision of public services and infrastructure was a key driver of urban inequality. Here, public services are understood as "systems that are collectively determined and developed by societies, organized through the subnational or central state, to produce or deliver common goods" and as "forms of collective provision to meet shared needs".**[41]** These definitions highlight one of the key elements within our understanding of commoning: outcomes and processes that are, out of necessity, collective at different scales. In this case, however, **the commons share a considerable overlap with many of their cognates and, in particular, with the notion of what is "public". This implies that the form and nature of service and infrastructure commons require partnerships, especially with state institutions**. This is discussed in the cases referenced below.

Public services target inequalities in many ways, from "working as a *de facto* collective income transfer" ("social wage" or "virtual income"") to being a form of "collective action to pool, share and redistribute

38 Yves Cabannes and Barbara Lipietz, "Revisiting the Democratic Promise of Participatory Budgeting in Light of Competing Political, Good Governance and Technocratic Logics," *Environment and Urbanization* 30, no. 1 (2018): 67–84.

39 Ofelia Bagotlo, "We Also Want Greens in Our Meals: Community Gardens in the Philippines," *International Institute for Environment and Development*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3717P5c.

40 Anne Maassen and Madeleine Galvin, "Rosario, Argentina Uses Urban Farming to Tackle Economic and Climate Crises," *World Resources Institute - Insights*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3wblwqT.

41 David Hall, "Definition of Public Services for the GI-ERSC Public Service Narrative Working Group," 2021; Anna Coote and Andrew Percy, *The Case for Universal Basic Services* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2020); Daria Cibrario and Vera Weghmann, "Access to Quality Local Public Services for All: A Precondition to Beat Inequality," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

Source: Center for Community Initiatives in Tanzania.
Leaders of the Network Simplified sewerage in a meeting.

resources - through progressive taxation or insurance, or via redistributive user fees - within all members of a community or society who would be otherwise unable (or less able) to access them individually".[42] Within public services, this chapter explores the provision of specific services such as: water, sewerage, electricity, waste collection and treatment, roads, bridges, railways, transport, schools, hospitals and care facilities.[43] Such services are common to everyday life. It is, quite simply, not possible to fully participate in the social, economic and material life of the city without such services, as they fulfil basic human development needs. They are therefore both ends in themselves and also pre-requisites for a meaningful and dignified life. They are also central to the mandate of LRGs, which makes this discussion particularly relevant to this Report.

What fragments the provision of public services? One of the reasons that inequalities in the provision of public services have emerged is the consistent trend for privatization.[44] Drastic cuts in public spending and borrowing and regressive tax breaks have largely defunded public services, and promoted their commercialization. This

has occurred through the involvement of for-profit private operators who have entered this area via privatizations, concessions, public-private-partnerships and outsourcing. However, many cities in the Global South have almost always been excluded from formal provisions by state and/or private market actors, whether as a result of tenure insecurity or, more simply, due to the absence of service and infrastructure networks.[45] As discussed in the earlier section on informal settlement and neighbourhood improvement, commoning often takes the form of self-provision and coproduction of services by residents out of necessity. Such necessary actions, however, often come at a great cost to communities.

Commoning within public services can therefore take two very different forms. In the first, where public services are absent, **commoning strategies advocate for more public provision, both to reduce the burden of self-provision that falls on communities, and to ensure that deficits in services are addressed**. This approach is discussed in the earlier sections on informal settlement upgrading and neighbourhood improvement. In the second, **commoning seeks to protect existing public services against privatization, to continue to ensure outcome equality and to insist that services remain decommodified and accessible and protected from fragmentation**. In both cases, there is a "diversity of public delivery models" that see public

42 Cibrario and Weghmann, "Access to Quality Local Public Services for All: A Precondition to Beat Inequality."

43 "Well-designed social protection systems contribute to reducing poverty and inequality, while enhancing social cohesion and political stability", p. vi. ILO, "World Social Protection Report 2017-19: Universal Social Protection to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals" (Geneva, 2017), https://bit.ly/3MAU78f.

44 Cibrario and Weghmann, "Access to Quality Local Public Services for All: A Precondition to Beat Inequality."

45 Satterthwaite, "Upgrading Basic Service Provision in Informal Settlements: City Led, Community Led and Commoning."

services as common goods to be universally accessed via collective and democratic processes. The goal, as with all commoning, is to resist the commodification of public services while, at the same time, generating new institutional arrangements, at different scales, that can deliver what is essential to urban residents.

In this section, the focus is placed on the second form of commoning. **One way of ensuring that services remain as commons that are ensured and provided by public institutions (and often LRGs) is through their remunicipalization or deprivatization.** Local authorities, local inhabitants and public workers are increasingly deprivatizing public services and common resources by returning them to public ownership and control. This process often includes experiments with mechanisms of democratic governance, accountability and participation. This is happening in various ways: the non-renewal of multiyear concessions/outsourcing contracts with private providers; taking over after private operator withdrawal or bankruptcy; via local government authority decisions; and/or by democratic referenda. As of February 2021, the Public Future database listed 1,451 verified examples of such cases since 2000, of which 974 were deprivatizations and 477

municipalizations. These cover a wide array of public services, ranging from water, energy, waste collection and treatment, transport, education, healthcare, social services, and telecommunications, to local government services (housing, building cleaning, the maintenance of public space and infrastructure, canteens, funeral services, municipal parking and sports infrastructure).[46]

It is important to see remunicipalization as a scalar practice that is largely being undertaken by LRGs. This trend is most noticeable in countries with a certain degree of decentralized governance and devolution that allows municipalities to deprivatize and take back control of certain services. Of the 1,451 verified cases of in-sourcing registered worldwide, 64% have been carried out at the municipal level, 23% at the inter-municipal level (with a marked increase over the past 10 years), and 13% at the regional level, but fewer than 1% at the national level. Finally, 49% of these cases are now directly owned by the government, 28% by public companies (with municipalities as the majority shareholders) and 5.5% coowned, while 4% involve community-based ownership via cooperatives.

Box 4.2

Fighting inequalities through remunicipalization

The radical neoliberal policies launched in Chile in 1973, following the military coup, resulted in the privatization of all public service sectors and the commercialization of the country's natural resources. This led to a substantial increase in the price of public services.[47] Four decades later, Chile is one of the countries with the highest levels of inequality among high-income countries, with more than an eight-fold income gap between the richest 20% and the poorest 20% of its population, with the latter being unable to afford vital public services.[48] Against the background, since 2015, the municipality of **Recoleta** has prioritized the creation of local public services in the areas in which the needs of the population – 14% of whom live in poverty – were the greatest. Following a participatory consultative process involving

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46 Launched in 2021, the Public Futures Database is the first attempt to capture the extent of the global remunicipalization process. In the absence of official data provided by authorities, this database has built upon the initial work carried out and published by the Transnational Institute: Satoko Kishimoto and Olivier Petitjean, "Reclaiming Public Services: How Cities and Citizens Are Turning Back Privatisation" (Amsterdam and Paris, 2017), https://bit.ly/39eQiqK. It has been constructed by a network of activists working under the supervision of Prof. Andrew Cumbers of the University of Glasgow. Anyone can report a case via the website and its accuracy is verified and documented by Prof. Cumbers' team.

47 Alexander Panez Pinto, "Re-Building Public Ownership in Chile: Social Practices of the Recoleta Commune and Challenges to Overcoming Neoliberalism," in *The Future Is Public: Towards Democratic Ownership of Public Services*, ed. Satoko Kishimoto, Lavinia Steinfort, and Olivier Petitjean (Amsterdam and Paris: Transnational Institute, 2020), 127–37, https://bit.ly/38Bua9F.

48 BBC News, "Chile Protests: Is Inequality Becoming Worse?," *Reality Check*, 2019, https://bbc.in/3krRklL; also "(Chile's) Gini coefficient – the most widely used measure of income inequality – fell from 0.57 in 1990 to 0.47 in 2017. Nonetheless, it still has the second highest Gini coefficient among OECD members, well above the rich country group's average of 0.32" UN-Habitat, "World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization," 23.

the local population, Recoleta opened the country's first "popular pharmacy". This made the local government a direct purchaser and provider of affordable medicines to the population. It also established an accessible social security scheme to cover low-income inhabitants. By 2020, the monthly savings on medication made by local residents were up to 70%, while 80 other municipalities across Chile had established their own popular pharmacies, which have now been united in a national association.[49]

Rwanda has introduced a public community-based health insurance scheme (*mutuelles de santé*) which now covers more than 81% of the population. It has also provided other public and private health insurance schemes. Rwanda is seen as a frontrunner amongst African countries when it comes to providing universal health coverage.[50] The result has been a two-thirds reduction in infant mortality and almost universal coverage of primary school enrolment.[51] Due to its public and universal health care system, Rwanda has been able to handle the COVID-19 pandemic very successfully. In fact, the country has one of the lowest incidence rates on the African continent.[52]

In **Bogota** (Colombia), in 2012, the then Mayor Gustavo Petro remunicipalized half of the city's waste collection services and simultaneously formalized and incorporated the informal waste workers as part of the municipal waste management service. This approximately doubled their income to 200 USD a month (for more details see the previous section).[53]

In **Dar es Salaam** (Tanzania), water services were privatized in 2003 as part of International Monetary Fund and World Bank conditions for debt relief. The World Bank spearheaded a 164.6 million USD fund to carry out the privatization. However, this privatization failed, with the private companies being unable to deliver the service in line with the contractual agreement. The city therefore remunicipalized the service only two years after privatization. A public company then managed to extend coverage and improve water service delivery in the city. However, large portions of the population of Dar es Salaam still lack access to piped water.[54]

3.6 Collective finance

The fifth type of commons that the chapter describes is not specifically related to land, housing and services, but it is an essential part of the process of creating them. This chapter refers to the financial mechanisms that enable the development, extension and consolidation of secure housing, access to services and other dimensions that make for dignified urban living. In the words of ACHR: "It's no secret that the Aladdin's cave of private-sector finance which keeps the world spinning is closed to the poor, for the most part".[55] They go on to add: "The global banking system is awash in capital, but low-income communities with proven credit-worthiness and 100% loan repayment rates are still seen as a banking risk: the informality of poor people's lives, jobs and survival systems just doesn't match with the rules and regulations of formal finance systems". With no, or only insecure, tenure as collateral, and low and irregular income, the majority of poor urban dwellers are effectively excluded from formal banking systems and all too often they have to rely on extortionate informal private forms of banking. Meanwhile, the availability of government finance to support commoning practices is often very thin on the ground. Many LRGs have only

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49 ACHIFAR, "Asociación Chilena de Farmacias Populares," 2022, https://bit.ly/3koCpZr.

50 Médard Nyandekwe, Manassé Nzayirambaho, and Jean Baptiste Kakoma, "Universal Health Insurance in Rwanda: Major Challenges and Solutions for Financial Sustainability Case Study of Rwanda Community-Based Health Insurance Part I," *The Pan African Medical Journal* 37 (2020): 55.

51 World Bank, "The World Bank in Rwanda," Where We Work, 2021, https://bit.ly/3rZe6W8; Mariana Mazzucato et al., "COVID-19 and the Need for Dynamic State Capabilities: An International Comparison," 2021, https://bit.ly/37MQQEb.

52 Naz Karim et al., "Lessons Learned from Rwanda: Innovative Strategies for Prevention and Containment of COVID-19," *Annals of Global Health* 87, no. 1 (2021): 23.

53 Vera Weghmann, "Taking Our Public Services Back in House – A Remunicipalisation Guide for Workers and Trade Unions," 2020, https://bit.ly/3MBDqcK.

54 Weghmann.

55 Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, "Low-Income Housing Finance from Commercial Banks in Nepal," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

limited resources to finance housing and infrastructure, and these may be syphoned off towards spending on the requirements of richer populations, via political pressure or the inertia of operational budgets. This situation adds to both the vulnerability of commoners and the need to common.

One of the most ubiquitous forms of collective response to this predicament can be found in the myriad iterations of collective savings and micro-credit groups that can be found in all informal settlements and precarious neighbourhoods around the globe. **Often mainly made up of and organized by women, these savings groups represent a collective financial infrastructure which has been labelled a "form of 'antipoverty' commoning".[56]** They enable the construction of a safety net for the poor and, in so doing, open up the possibility for them to prosper. Set up primarily to address daily and emergency needs, some of these collective saving funds have developed sophisticated financial mechanisms that use savings as seed capital for revolving funds. They have developed a range of financial products for their members that include community project loans to finance collective housing, sanitation and basic infrastructure.

One such example comes from Nepal, where several savings and credit groups were set up by women in 1997. The initiative started in three poor settlements in **Kathmandu** (Nepal) and received support from the NGO Lumanti. Over time, this developed into a nation-wide savings cooperative movement formed by 30 cooperatives in 18 cities: the Community Women's Forum. In time, this group was able to secure the first ever commercial bank loans to help poor women with their housing projects.[57] After experimenting in the pilot city of **Lekhnath** (Nepal), with the help and mediation of a local bank, the process has since expanded to six municipalities, working with four commercial banks (and with two more in the pipeline). The initiative has enabled the funding of community-planned and driven housing projects, which are currently growing in scale. Furthermore, while existing bank regulations in Nepal still prohibit collective loans made to communities or savings cooperatives, the process was able to innovate and develop a *de facto* within-bank revolving loan fund that permitted the funding of further collective infrastructure.[58] To date, a total of 1.94 million USD has been loaned to finance the construction of 1,109 houses, and

it is expected that this system will be scaled up and replicated in other cities across Nepal, as more and more banks become convinced of the "bankability" of communities of the urban poor.

In Nepal, the collective financial infrastructure of women's savings groups has played a key role in unlocking formal private finance to support the commoning projects of the poor. Another critical element in this process has been the support and help with mediation received from other actors, including LRGs. In the pilot city of **Lekhnath**, in particular, the municipal government, which was "committed to supporting collective, people-driven solutions to the city's serious housing problems", played a critical role in supporting the NGO Lumanti's negotiations with the bank for land and housing loans. The initiative also benefited from a guarantee fund "to help the bank feel more comfortable about lending to poor borrowers".[59] The municipality further supported the savings cooperatives by supplying basic infrastructure to newly acquired settlements. Building on this successful experience, other cash-strapped municipalities in Nepal are now finding ways of delivering on their LRG mandates. They are doing this by facilitating access to land and housing finance on acceptable terms and by signing memorandums of understanding with commercial banks. In this way, they are helping to provide concrete solutions to housing and infrastructure deficits that are key drivers of inequality.

When discussing the potential of collective savings-based finance to leverage funding for land, housing and services for the poor, it is particularly pertinent to consider the remarkable example of the national *Baan Mankong* (*Secure Housing*) programme in Thailand. Launched in 2003, under the auspices of the Community Organizations Development Institute, this government-funded programme has provided soft loans and infrastructure subsidies that have permitted the upgrading of housing stock across the country. The *Baan Mankong* programme channels finance through savings cooperatives of the urban poor within a process that builds up the planning and negotiating capacity of the residents of informal settlements. Here too, LRGs have a critical role to play in supporting negotiations

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56 Satterthwaite, "Upgrading Basic Service Provision in Informal Settlements: City Led, Community Led and Commoning."

57 Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, "Low-Income Housing Finance from Commercial Banks in Nepal."

58 Individual loan repayments are paid into a special account with the oversight of the savings cooperatives.

59 The guarantee fund came from the Community-Led Infrastructure Finance Facility, a UK-based agency which provides financing assistance to self-reliant housing projects in areas of informal settlement. Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, "Low-Income Housing Finance from Commercial Banks in Nepal."

between communities and land-owning agencies, as well as providing trunk infrastructure and services to upgraded and new settlements (see more details of the programme in Chapter 9). As in Nepal, and at an even greater scale, the *Baan Mankong* **programme illustrates how finance can become an instrument of the commons, when it includes low-income groups and is used as a catalyst for novel forms of collaborative, multiactor governance.** One of the most critical elements here is the coproductive nature of the financial mechanisms employed, or – to be more precise – the ongoing control exercized by commoners over the use of the funds. This makes it possible to protect the collective roots of the land and housing infrastructure being financed, both now and in the future. This remains particularly important, as such initiatives scale up over time. In **Nakhon Sawan** (Thailand), for instance, commoning finance has not only enabled the upgrading of large parts of the city's informal settlements, but it has also enabled an impressive and ongoing process of community empowerment. This has seen communities of the urban poor become legitimate and formal decision-making partners in housing and planning projects, and even in planning urban health and resilience at the broader city scale.

Participatory budgeting, seen as a form of decision-making that actively engages citizens to prioritize public resource spending, can also be understood as a type of commons. In practice, however, its potential for distribution, governance and indeed empowerment depends on how it is managed, both by LRGs and by the communities who engage in the process.[60] The example of **Seville** (Spain) above showed how participatory budgets have been used to include marginalized groups, such as migrants, in decision-making processes. This has made it possible to expand such commoning practices as urban agriculture. In **Belo Horizonte** (Brazil), participatory budgets have helped to "inverse" key developmental priorities in the city, thereby ensuring that the majority of the budget funding earmarked for participatory projects is spent in the poorer, spatially and socially marginalized, parts of the city. Importantly, this inversion has been the result of a process intent on broadening civic participation, especially that of those who are usually excluded from formal decision-making and distributive processes. In both cases, the use of **finance as a vehicle for commoning has served as a catalyst for establishing a renewed governance pact that involves previously excluded citizens**.

Source: The Chauthe Community, in the city of Pokhara, Nepal. Houses are being built by the community members, with some of the first-ever commercial bank loans made.

The examples of participatory budgets and the Thai and Nepalese cases are particularly striking because of the direct implications that they have for governance, beyond just fostering distributional redress, thereby responding to the two key dimensions of commoning. Box 4.3, below, provides other, more institutional, ways in which finance can be leveraged by LRGs to support redistributive measures relating to land, housing and the provision of services. As LRGs assess these alternatives in their own specific contexts, they will see evidence of the impact that they can have when they themselves explore the broader potential of commoning; and this will potentially catalyze greater urgency to exploit this.

Another type of financial commons that is gaining traction in various parts of the world is the creation of local currencies as commons. These have emerged as responses to the failure of the market, and the state, to issue money in a decentralized manner. Financial commons are seen as a means of strengthening communities, embedding money within local communities and responding to the displacement effects of increasingly financialized land markets. Community currencies have numerous characteristics of urban commons, including promoting community development and incorporating the principles of solidarity and cooperation into money. Examples of parallel currencies that circulate in well-defined urban neighbourhoods and across specific shop networks include the Brixton Pound, in **London** (UK). These constitute examples of commoning finance by treating digital currencies as commons.[61]

60 Koliulis, "Defining and Discussing the Notion of Commoning."

61 Myfanwy Taylor, "'Being Useful' after the Ivory Tower: Combining Research and Activism with the Brixton Pound," *Area* 46, no. 3 (2014): 305–12.

Box 4.3
Financial instruments for commoning

Five ways in which LRGs could use financial instruments to promote commoning would include:

Local taxes

Local taxes are often considered a quasi-user fee levied on local services. There are inherent limits to the ability of subnational levels of government to impose redistributive taxes (since higher-income residents can potentially avoid higher local taxes by exerting their influence or by "voting with their feet"). Nonetheless progressive local taxes can be applied to a degree, particularly taking advantage of the fact that higher-income residents tend to benefit from having a more inclusive, more prosperous, and safer local community. For instance, under the leadership of a reform-oriented mayor, the city of **Freetown** (Sierra Leone) has recently introduced a progressive property tax system which puts a greater tax burden on the wealthy and ultimately aims to increase the city's total tax revenue in order to support up to a five-fold increase in the provision of local services. There are also other ways of structuring property taxes in order to allow a more favourable treatment of lower-income communities and individuals.

User fees

Cost-recovering user fees for local services (e.g. water fees) are often recommended by economists, but frowned upon by politicians. For many services, user fees can be regressive (with lower-income households paying a larger portion of their income). However, in the absence of other sources of funding, cost-recovering user fees could provide access to essential services, such as access to drinking water, at lower prices than private suppliers. Local utilities could offer a progressive tariff structure for the provision of municipal services, such as water, sanitation or even electricity. In this way, low-income populations could be offered reduced tariff rates and/or free access. One of the most important barriers to service access facing lower-income households are connection costs: electrical wiring and water pipes, etc. However, by not having such access, poor households may pay more to obtain their water from other sources than they would if they were connected to the municipal system (see previous discussion). Lower rates could be funded through cross-subsidization (i.e. charging higher-income households' tariffs above at cost-recovery rates and using the surplus income to subsidize supplies to poorer residents). Many countries also rely on intergovernmental fiscal transfers to subsidize the recurrent cost of service provision to the poor (e.g. in the Philippines and South Africa).

Land value capture

In contrast to general property taxes (which apply the same tax rate to all properties in order to generate recurrent revenues), a betterment levy is a property-related charge on specific properties that benefit from targeted infrastructure improvements (such as street lighting, and housing located within a certain distance (e.g. one kilometre) of certain amenities, such as new transit stations, etc.). Capturing the increase in land value associated with a new public sector investment through a betterment levy can raise funding for such infrastructure. Such approaches can also be structured in such a way as to generate revenue to provide basic services to poorer areas. Another mechanism is a development or impact fee, which is charged to developers to offset the cost of connecting new residential and commercial developments to public infrastructure (such as roads and utilities). Charging development fees, the cost of which can be passed on to higher-income households and businesses locating in newly developed areas, creates a funding stream for such infrastructure and can potentially free up local fiscal space for redistributive purposes.

Sites and services approach

The sites and services approach emerged in the early 1970s in response to the rapid expansion of informal settlement and the failure of previous government programmes to provide affordable housing. The objective of these programmes

was to deliver incremental fee-based housing for the poor through the provision of small, serviced plots (i.e. with access to water, sanitation and electricity), sometimes with a core unit. After mixed experiences with implementation, this model was largely abandoned by the international development community in the mid-1990s. However, more recent analysis suggests that the model may, all things considered, have been more successful than was initially thought. There could therefore be some benefit in considering whether such an approach could be adapted for use again.

Public-private-partnerships, mixed income housing regulations, and tax incentives on low-cost housing

In order to increase the supply of low-income housing, developers operating in **Washington, DC** (USA) may be required to construct a certain number of low-income housing units as a condition for receiving permission to construct other high-income housing units. The cities of **Hamburg** (Germany) and **Copenhagen** (Denmark) have set up "urban wealth funds" that draw upon help from the private sector to carry out infrastructure development, planning and land-use regulations involving public assets. The funds used are similar to sovereign wealth funds, although operating on a much smaller scale, and they are independently administered by professional staff, in order to limit political influence. The advocates of urban wealth funds argue that they allow LRGs to make better use of their existing public spaces and infrastructure, enabling them to tap into their own assets in order to generate high returns for city budgets.

Source: box developed by Paul Smoke and Jamie Boex for GOLD VI

3.7 Data, archives and knowledge

In a similar way to collective finance, a sixth example of a type of commons is also not a specific outcome related to land, housing and services, but a commons that plays an important role in the processes that create them. The process of upgrading informal settlement in Namibia and Zimbabwe has already been discussed earlier in this chapter. This section emphasizes a different part of that process: the creation of transparent, community-led and community-rooted data relating to actually existing conditions of urban life.[62] In Zimbabwe, upgrading was based on a partnership between the **City of Harare** and the Zimbabwe SDI alliance which, working together, began the task of compiling documentation about all of the informal settlements in the city. In Freedom Square, **Windhoek** (Namibia), "community-driven enumeration and mapping data" again was a core component of

commoning practice. In fact, self-enumeration and community-driven data practices have long been part of commoning in land and housing. It is important to note here that these data, as well as the process of collecting, generating and using them, constitute commons *in themselves*. As the Zimbabwe case shows, they are also a process where LRGs can engage in direct and fruitful participation, that can help to scale and promote joint ownership of the upgrading process.

Data repositories and practices that specifically seek to challenge the drivers of inequality in land, housing and services are a particular focus of this chapter. In particular, and given the critical role of the uneven landscape of tenure security in driving inequality, the work of anti-eviction observatories represents a key type of knowledge commons. Such work is necessary to enable commoning practices and also to determine the optimum conditions of engagement with state and market institutions. The Global Platform for the Right to the City describes several such organized data commons that seek to map and analyze eviction and displacement processes,[63] including the Public Works Studio,[64] in Lebanon's Housing Monitor, and the MIT-Dis-

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62 Slum Dwellers International, "Experiences in Informal Settlement Upgrading: Zimbabwe & Namibia."

63 Global Platform for the Right to the City, "The Right to Remain in Place."

64 More information available in: "Public Works Studio," 2022, https://bit.ly/3OKWneT.

placement Research and Action Network.[65] **What makes these initiatives commons are both the collective processes that underpin them and their fidelity to the concept of non-commodification.** In these cases, the data produced are public, free, free from copyright or any other ownership restrictions, and intended to increase transparency through open access and sharing protocols. When, in addition, such data commons are produced in partnership with LRGs, they also have the possibility of not just empowering residents, but also allowing engagement and partnerships that could lead to commoning actions such as upgrading, facilitating the coproduction of services, and/or fostering deeper democratic participation.

Knowledge commons are another way to think about commoning, even when they are not specific to outcomes related to land, housing and services. Such commons offer platforms via which the narratives of experiments in commoning can travel and seek replication, expansion and scaling. Examples include: "Wiki-commoning" practices that build on communication networks and web tools to share and communicate commoning practices, tools and initiatives; the creation of interactive maps of unoccupied land to help community members to self-organize and acquire, or safeguard, commons for urban gardening (e.g. the 596 Acres organization in **New York**, USA); or the creation of an interactive web platform to decentralize and democratize food redistribution logistics through peer-to-peer sharing and communal fridges (for example: Foodsharing.de). As in other periods of shock, the COVID-19 pandemic has served as a catalyst for a number of initiatives aimed at facilitating the circulation (and, admittedly at times, the commercialization) of goods and services. In **Rosario** (Argentina), for instance, the pandemic saw the emergence of the *Fair Market* platform, whose aim was to make the work of local traders and cooperatives more visible, as a "radical alternative to the expansion of Amazon-like firms locally".[66] Similarly, a number of platforms were set up to facilitate knowledge about food production and distribution in the city (e.g. *Ciudad Futura*, *Pueblo a Pueblo*, and *Frente Patria Grande*) and several web platforms were enrolled in order to consolidate alternative care infrastructure to support the older people, to attend to cases of domestic violence, or to provide support for isolating families.

When the city is itself, in the broadest sense, seen as a type of commons, knowledge about how to live in, survive, produce, and inhabit it all forms part of a type of knowledge commons that can hold and root many of the commoning practices described above. **As information becomes a field of infrastructure and democratic practice, thinking about the right to access as well as to produce information by populations with diverse material conditions, and for this information to be free from commodification, becomes an integral part of what the commoning of knowledge can offer to a just city.**

3.8 Building publics

There is no commoning without commoners.[67] Indeed, the practices of commoning are not just related to the outcomes that they produce but are ends in themselves. **The non-individualistic or collective nature of commoning, and its search for alternative ways of relating to both the state and the market, are pivotal in creating solidarity, sustaining communities and producing active and engaged citizens.** We think of this as building new social relations within and through commoning. As in the case of knowledge commons, discussed in the section above, these new social relations are commons in themselves and are key to furthering the equality agenda of parity participation, as well as combating the social geographies of exclusion that have previously been identified as key drivers of inequality.

Within the focus on land, housing and service-related commons, these publics may take the form of both spatialized communities and identity-based groups, but can also occur in temporary gatherings or collections of people that take place in public places. For example, they can take the form of culturally-rooted spatial forms of occupation, such as the Occupation Block in **Sao Paulo** (Brazil). The block carries out commoning through the creation of what it calls "cultural occupations". They argue that "cultural occupations are common spaces where collectives and people who are responsible for their horizontal management develop cultural actions

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65 More information available in: MIT Program for Human Rights and Justice, "Displacement Research and Action Network," 2020, https://bit.ly/3OKltcU.

66 Minuchin et al., "Municipal Logistics: Popular Infrastructures and Southern Urbanisms during the Pandemic."

67 Koliulis, "Defining and Discussing the Notion of Commoning."

with the participation of the local community. Such actions take place in properties – mostly public buildings and/or public land – that were idle before being occupied. Besides complying with its social function, the occupying act has transformed empty spaces into places of collective and emancipatory cultural production, points of reference in their territories and cultural circuits in the city".[68]

Cultural occupations are rooted in the search for alternative ways of being, circulating, and living in the city, which resist the logic of state and market control. They have a strong connection with Brazil's history of spatial occupations for land and housing; indeed, cultural occupations explicitly build on, and relate to, these earlier historical practices. In doing so, they remind us that occupying land and building housing are a way to reclaim the city. Moving through it, inhabiting public space, expressing themselves through their presence, art and mobility, are also ways of reclaiming the right to the city. When such mobility and expression is contained, or rendered inaccessible, as often occurs in unequal cities, cultural practices are commoning practices that seek to resist enclosure, gating, and the restricting of opportunities to belong to, and experience, the city.

Indeed, much like auto-construction and the self-provision of basic services in the favelas on the periphery of **Sao Paulo**, the Occupation Block articulates cultural occupations as a response to state neglect. Occupations are therefore an example of producing spaces of belonging when they are not otherwise available. Managing 29 such occupations across the city implies a group of residents working together to arrange, perform, sustain and expand these operations. In doing so, **the Occupation Block argues that what are formed are not just spatial sites of cultural activity but rather "new experiences of organization [that] constitute subjectivities [which are] different from those marked by capitalist reproduction, guided by individualism and competitiveness".[69]**

However, even when a group of people do not engage in a cultural occupation at a specific site, communities, solidarity and publics are always being built as commoning practices proceed. The neighbourhood improvement programmes in Latin America, discussed above, have

Source: Casa Cultural Hip Hop Jaçanã.
Inauguration of the Popular Prep School Núcleo Sérgio Lapaloma in the Cultural Occupation Casa Cultural Hip Hop Jaçanã, 2019. Sao Paulo, Brazil.

enabled "the construction of citizenship in marginalized territories" so as not to "leave anyone behind both socially and politically".[70] This is not just citizenship in its formal, legal sense, but in its everyday practice: articulating a sense of membership not just in nation-states but also in cities, communities and collectives. Commoning both requires and, in turn, sustains such collective belonging. As the CLH programme in Myanmar has shown, communities had to come together to build a collective land arrangement but that form of collective ownership then also "leads to other benefits and other collective systems for community members to look after each other".[71] In all our cases showing neighbourhood improvement and the upgrading of informal settlements, there are similar echoes. These are heard in what the SDI describes as the creation of "a collective voice of organized communities of the urban poor" in Zimbabwe and Namibia, and in new forms of relations with LRGs, as they negotiate, contest and find new ways to coproduce urban spaces. It is **not just a case of thinking about basic services, but also about "the politics that made them possible," and of viewing upgrading as "a catalyst for political change that reduces inequalities in voice, engagement and governance".[72]**

68 As cited in Vanessa Mendes, "Cultural Occupations: Common Spaces. A Report on the Occupation Bloc's Construction within the Municipal Secretariat of Culture in São Paulo," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Commoning (Barcelona, 2022).

69 Mendes.

70 Caldeira, "Peripheral Urbanization: Autoconstruction, Transversal Logics, and Politics in Cities of the Global South."

71 Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, "Low-Income Housing Finance from Commercial Banks in Nepal."

72 Satterthwaite, "Upgrading Basic Service Provision in Informal Settlements: City Led, Community Led and Commoning."

4 How can LRGs engage with Commoning?

This section draws lessons from the diverse forms of urban commons relating to land, housing and services described above and goes on to suggest modes of engagement for LRGs in support of commoning. These entry points are introduced with reference to some of the key challenges involved in producing and maintaining the commons as both distributional redress and emancipatory city-making practices.

Source: Community Land Trust Bruxelles.
Visit of a project under the CLT Brussels, Belgium, 2018.

4.1 Recognize

The first thing that LRGs must do is to recognize the existence of commons, commoners and commoning. The terms on which they must do so, which may differ from case to case, are what requires our attention. We look at some examples and then suggest different forms of recognition.

Recognition of the possibility of commoning, and of governing certain resources, such as land, water and public space as commons, constitutes an important first step towards creating the conditions required for commoning practices to take root as well as for potential engagement with LRGs. The **Turin** City Council's declaration (Italy), mentioned in the opening sections of this chapter, adopts the language of "urban commons" as part of its policy. In doing so, it explicitly encourages and enables commoning practices. Recognition can alternatively take the form of tacit, or in-principle, acceptance of commoning and commoners. A good example of this is the recognition

of existing commoning practices that are in "tension"[73] with official logics for planning, property and formal labour, such as street vending. Even though supportive regulation may take time to emerge, recognition can begin with the *de facto* acceptance that streets are also places of work, and not just of transit. This first recognition, especially when articulated by LRGs, is meaningful in itself. Broadening this recognition could be, as suggested in the WIEGO *Public Space Toolkit*,[74] a first step towards acknowledging the existence of "natural" markets where buyers and sellers naturally congregate, regardless of whether this is planned and/ or designed. Such recognition needs both content and limits: recognizing the market protects it from eviction but micro-planning within the market risks curtailing its flexible nature and especially its ability to absorb new entrants.

As suggested by the example provided above, the recognition of commons by LRGs is both an essential first step, but a risk in itself: the terms and forms of recognition will determine whether it produces protection and support or, to the contrary, cooption and eviction. For LRGs, "the question is how they can support these projects and the value they produce without interfering with their autonomy".[75] As always, the context determines much of the recognition that the commoners themselves desire. Residents seeking to pressure LRGs into providing, or upgrading services, and waste pickers seeking recognition and support for their activities and livelihoods, are likely to demand a greater, rather than only a limited, LRG presence. Cultural occupations in **Sao Paulo** seek protection against eviction, but are also wary of too much recognition, knowing all too well that many of their occupations are "constantly criminalized and threatened by the State itself". **Recognition therefore requires engagement, dialogue and partnerships with the commoners themselves.**

This need for engagement fits in well with UCLG's recent work on the importance of local citizenship. This is a welcome move and one that centres the terms of such engagement and recognition with reference to the notion of rights. **It suggests that recognizing commons may form part of a larger framework for cogoverning with citizens, within an expansive notion**

of rights, rather than viewing such practices through the narrower optic of, for example, seeking alignment with the law, planning and policy. Removing the tag of "illegality", which is often associated with the initial instantiations of commoning practices, and seeking to understand the motivations of commoners, could present ideal starting points for recognition.

4.2 Protect

In some cases, recognition will build towards LRGs protecting the commons and commoners. The principal threats to land and housing commons are, almost invariably, evictions. **Protecting specific commons in different ways is thus an important step that can prevent eviction-based threats.** This role is crucial in the early stages of the establishment of any commons. The work of the Global Platform for the Right to the City shows the importance of LRGs aligning with *Zero Eviction* campaigns, and this is where all LRGs can start. Models of policy articulations, charters and positions that take a principled stand against forced evictions, are readily available and can be found, for example, in the works by the UN Special Rapporteur for Adequate Housing, the *Make the Shift* campaign, or the *Zero Eviction* campaigns of the International Alliance of Inhabitants.[76]

UCLG's own *Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration* offers a blueprint on how LRGs can move towards promoting protective forms of recognition that buy time and safety for commoning practices, to help them begin, survive and sustain, and to protect them from enclosure and forced eviction. The case of cultural occupations in **Sao Paulo**, described earlier, provides an example of protection by the municipal government, through the signing of institutional bonds and by including cultural occupations in the *Municipal Cultural Plan*. This response, providing more secure protection against eviction and going beyond simple recognition, is a useful example of what to do when LRGs are convinced of the value of commoning practices that are not yet fully recognizable within existing regulatory or governance frameworks. By innovating in line with the *Municipal Cultural Plan* in **Sao Paulo**; by introducing a surface rights deed, as

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73 To bring back Teresa Caldeira's articulation.

74 Caroline Skinner, Jenna Harvey, and Sarah Orleans Reed, "Supporting Informal Livelihoods in Public Space: A Toolkit for Local Authorities," 2018, https://bit.ly/3MllwFn.

75 Micciarelli, "Urban Commons and Urban Commoning: Political-Legal Practices from Naples, Bologna, and Torino"; as well as Koliulis, "Defining and Discussing the Notion of Commoning."

76 See The Shift, "Make The Shift," 2022, https://bit.ly/3KtSzvk; see also UCLG-CSIPDHR, "Cities for the Right to Housing: The Role of Rights-Inspired Local Action in Addressing the Housing Crisis in the COVID-19 Era."

done in **Puerto Rico**'s Caño trust; or by supporting no eviction guarantees and permissions to use land as per the *Secure Housing* programme in Thailand, **LRGs can position themselves as mediators "between communities and the legal framework",[77] enabling the development of governance and supporting legal innovations that permit the incremental protection of commoning practices.**

Another example of LRGs engaging with the need to protect not only existing, but also future, commoning comes from **Liverpool**'s Land Commission (UK) (see

Box 4.4). This emphasizes various principles that are central to commoning: an emphasis on democratic engagement; the fair and socially inclusive use of land; and the (re)assertion of the use value of land rather than "narrow financial considerations". Particularly compelling is their articulation of LRGs' stance in terms of the "responsible stewardship" of common assets (rather than as managers of diffuse real estate portfolios). This practice is very much in line with both the recognition and protection functions previously laid out.

Box 4.4

Responsible stewardship: A protective framework for common assets in Liverpool

The **Liverpool** City Region Land Commission[78] was created in September 2020, at the initiative of the regional Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram. With the support of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, the Commission brought together experts on democratic land reform, ranging from local activists and academics to national policy reformers and international campaigners for the commons.

Unlike earlier land commissions in England, which had been designed to create a *Digital Domesday Book* of "surplus public land" in order to facilitate its delivery to the private sector,[79] the Liverpool Land Commission invited its commissioners to "think imaginatively and come back […] with radical recommendations for how we can make the best use of publicly-owned land to make this the fairest and most socially inclusive city region in the country".[80]

When it reported back, in July 2021, the Commission presented 13 key recommendations aimed at moving incrementally towards a more just approach to land use and management in Liverpool. Nested within these recommendations was a call for public bodies to adopt and promote (via policy and direct action) a culture of "responsible stewardship", with this responsibility implying a "regard to the wider community, rather than narrow financial considerations".[81]

The Commission reported: "The principle should be adopted that land should not be allowed to become derelict or left vacant for an indefinite period of time, to the detriment of the local community. To drive the move towards a more responsible approach to land reuse, a framework should be developed on the model of the one produced by the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce". Alongside these recommendations, the Commission went on to suggest: "an industry charter for responsible land stewardship and a set of implementation guidance should also be produced, and a designated team should be created to work with landowners to embed these practices".[82]

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77 Koliulis, "Defining and Discussing the Notion of Commoning."

78 CLES, "Our Land: Final Report of the Liverpool City Region Land Commission" (Manchester, 2021), https://bit.ly/37TieQD.

79 Berwin Leighton Paisner LLP and London First, "Wasted Space to Living Place: Using Surplus Public Land for Housing in London" (London, 2015), https://bit.ly/3rVcLQj.

80 CLES, "Our Land: Final Report of the Liverpool City Region Land Commission," 6.

81 CLES, 49.

82 CLES, 9.

As LRGs explore ways of protecting commons, commoning and commoners, specific attention is required with regard to commoning practices that seek to increase recognition of more marginalized groups, from migrants and refugees to informal traders and dwellers. Here again, understanding the motives behind commoning, such as the need to sustain basic material needs or to secure the ability to participate in the life of the city, is essential to contextualize the kinds of protective responses that LRGs can employ when interacting with these diverse forms of commons and commoners.

4.3 Regulate

Recognition and protection eventually lead to the question of fuller engagement with LRGs through regulation. **One of the core tensions when considering how LRGs engage with commoning practices is the question of how and how much to regulate.** On the one hand, there is the threat of over-regulation, which stems from seeking to control, standardize, and fix all aspects of commoning, both in place and in form. At the other extreme, there is adopting a completely hands-off approach and effectively looking the other way, and thereby being unable to recognize, protect, invest in, or support commoning. South African urbanists articulate such regulatory debates as the tension between the developmental role of the state (for example, its role in ensuring access to housing and work for all citizens, and especially the marginalized) and its regulatory functions (e.g. controlling and fixing activities in relation to formal plans, processes and laws). They argue that the way forward is "not for LRGs to stop regulating" but rather for them to differentiate "between types of enforcement that are necessary for public well-being and those with negative outcomes". They call such an approach "**soft regulation**".[83]

Others similarly argue for "incremental regulation" or a "different regulatory framework" that considers the particularities of commoning.[84] The *Co-City* approach of **Turin** (Italy), for example, expands on the formula of public-private-partnerships, with the added idea of "pacts of collaboration": a legal tool that proposes that the collective right of use should prevail over the right of property. These regulatory tools provide principles for collaborative sublocal governance through which citizens and local administrations could jointly manage the city's urban commons: public spaces such as squares and streets, urban green spaces and parks, but also abandoned buildings and other types of infrastructure. Forms of cogovernance that are institutionalized have the advantage of being supported by a framework of support to maintain and protect the commons in the long-term.

Almuerzo Foro Oeste en B° San Cayetano

Presentación de la propuesta de Ley a los rectores de Universidades

Con funcionarios provinciales negociando la ley

Source: Madre Tierra.
Buenos Aires' Province's civil society organizations create, disseminate and own the Just Acess to Housing law. Argentina.

83 Philip Harrison et al., "Daily Practices of Informality Amidst Urban Poverty," 2018, https://bit.ly/371IGHy.

84 Micciarelli, "Urban Commons and Urban Commoning: Political-Legal Practices from Naples, Bologna, and Torino"; as well as Koliulis, "Defining and Discussing the Notion of Commoning."

Forms of urban planning that have seen planners integrate street vendors into street design and city development plans provide examples of these new forms of regulation. India's national legislation on street vending, and the current attempts in **Dhaka** (Bangladesh) to regulate these practices, are just two examples of forms of regulation that began by recognizing the presence of what we have described as land (re)appropriation for economic activity. **The regularization of housing commons, through processes such as the upgrading of informal settlement and neighbourhood improvement, could similarly facilitate the recognition and protection of existing commoning practices, as well as enabling their more widespread recognition in terms that would benefit commoning.**

Another key form of regulation that indirectly creates opportunities for commoning involves intervening in financialized housing markets. Inclusionary zoning, land reservations for affordable housing, and the capping of rental and property prices are all ways that can help create more equitable housing markets. Such measures can both help reduce the need for commoning prac-

tices and make existing commoning practices more feasible and effective. Box 4.5 draws upon work by the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights and examines what such regulatory measures towards more affordable housing could look like, based on examples from the cities that signed the *Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration*. This is an initiative, dating from 2018, which was led by UCLG and the former UN Special Rapporteur, within the framework of the *Make the Shift* campaign.[85] Similarly, interventions in, and regulation of, land and financial markets present invaluable platforms for commoning practices to thrive.

As with recognition and protection, it is again important to emphasize that the making, framing and designing of regulations governing commoning practices can only succeed if it is embedded in democratic engagement and carried out in coproduction with commoners. To achieve this, LRGs will need effective fora and forms of partnership that can support such processes.

Box 4.5

The shift in policymaking: Cities for Adequate Housing from 2018 to 2020

How did the approaches to housing ingrained in the *Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration* translate into new policies or transform existing ones in the signatory cities? What added value did they bring to local policymaking? The LRGs supporting the Declaration offered a good case to explore this issue, particularly as their agreement to sign this international roadmap showed a commitment to support rights-based housing policies. Such innovations have found further articulation in the *Make the Shift* campaign, championed by the former UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing.[86]

Back in 2018, the need to regulate urban investment and the real estate market soon emerged as one of the most relevant issues for local governments to emerge from the Declaration. In order to put an end to financialization, **Barcelona** adopted inclusionary housing measures which included setting a minimum requirement for 30% of all new homes built in the city to be affordable housing.[87] The city also implemented regulations that allowed penalties to be imposed on "vulture funds" keeping housing vacant for speculative purposes.[88] These and other measures have been developed as a follow-up to a local action plan for promoting the right to housing.[89]

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85 Jaume Puigpinós and Amanda Fléty (UCLG CSIPDHR), "Local Governments' Caring for the Youth: Protecting the Rights of the Child in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

86 Cities for Adequate Housing, "Cities."

87 See: Barcelona City Council, "El 30 % de las nuevas viviendas será protegido," *Info Barcelona*, 2018, https://bit.ly/3KqmzYL.

88 See: Barcelona City Council, "Expedient sancionador al fons inversor Azora per mantenir pisos desocupats," *Info Barcelona*, 2020, https://bit.ly/3vYosae.

89 See: Barcelona City Council, "Dret a l'habitatge," Àrea de Drets Socials, Justícia Global, Feminismes i LGTB, 2022, https://bit.ly/3OHITSi.

Montevideo promoted the *Fincas* (*Properties*) programme with a view to developing a regulatory framework that would allow the city to seize vacant properties and transform them into social housing projects.[90] *Fincas* reclaims the social function of housing in cooperation with local CSOs and seeks to enhance access to adequate and affordable housing in central parts of the city through its own land portfolio: the *Cartera de Tierras*.[91]

Promoting public housing was also seen as key by many of the cities that signed the Declaration in 2018; this was regarded as a way of reinforcing their capacity to deliver affordable housing solutions. **Montreal** gave a major boost to public housing in the city when it adopted the *Métropole mixte* (*Mixed Metropolis*) plan.[92] By combining inclusionary housing measures, major investment in public housing, and support for CLH initiatives, Montreal sought to turn social housing into a channel for promoting inclusion and diversity rather than segregation.

Through its *Housing Justice 2.0 Plan*, **Taipei** has not only built more public housing to halt rising prices, but has also raised taxes on vacant housing, provided new rental subsidies, and increased price transparency.[93] In fact, observatories that allow the public monitoring of housing prices are also becoming popular in other cities facing significant financialization (see the cases of **Barcelona** and **Paris**).

Multistakeholder cooperation has remained a key part of local action, as seen from the previous examples. **Seoul** has established an agreement with the local bar association and with defenders of human rights to prevent and monitor violence in the context of evictions.[94] Various actors in **Medellin**, including the local government, currently take part in the *COiNVITE* project, which shares alternative methodologies for the integral upgrading of informal settlements, and particularly relies upon the capacity of local residents to push for these projects.[95]

Throughout 2020, these and other signatory cities used their previous regulations and expertise to push for solutions to protect the most vulnerable. One key priority in this sense was stopping evictions and freezing housing costs at a time when many residents were experiencing a sudden drop in their income. **Barcelona**[96] and **Paris**[97] announced a moratorium on rent collection for public housing, while **Valencia**[98] opened a hotline to provide advice and mediation to households experiencing problems and at risk of eviction.

Other cities mobilized vacant hotels and private buildings to host not only people infected with COVID-19, but also those sleeping rough. **London** provided emergency accommodation to 1,300 people,[99] while **Mexico City** focused on providing sex workers, many of whom suffered sudden eviction from their accommodation (often rented hotel rooms), with food vouchers and emergency shelter.[100]

90 See: Intendencia Montevideo, "Se presentó el proyecto Fincas," Vivienda, 2019, https://bit.ly/3rYUpOu.

91 See: Intendencia Montevideo, "25 años de la cartera de tierras para vivienda," Noticias, 2016, https://bit.ly/3koWq27.

92 See: City of Montreal, "Métropole Mixte : les grandes lignes du règlement," 2022, https://bit.ly/39eTUZQ.

93 See: Lee I-chia, "Ko Introduces New Housing Policy," *Taipei Times*, 2019, https://bit.ly/3vruYXH.

94 See: UCLG-CSIPDHR, "Seoul's Quest to Bring Human Rights Closer to Citizens' Lives: Interview with the Human Rights Department of Seoul's Metropolitan Government," News, 2019, https://bit.ly/3Myrdp2.

95 See: UCLG-CSIPDHR, "Strengthening Inhabitants' Participation in Slum Upgrading Processes through Urban Story-Telling (Medellín)," News, 2019, https://bit.ly/3F1B5VL.

96 See: Barcelona City Council, "L'Ajuntament atura el cobrament dels lloguers del parc públic i crea una partida de 3,5 M€ per rebaixar les quotes de les persones que ho necessitin," Servei de Premsa, 2020,
https://bit.ly/39dO9vt.

97 See: Paris City Council, "Covid-19 : les informations utiles sur le logement," Actualité, 2021, https://bit.ly/3kpYzdL.

98 See: Valencia City Council, "Vivenda," 2022, https://bit.ly/38FiP8U.

99 See: Greater London Authority, "End Homelessness," Housing and Land, 2022, https://bit.ly/3s1tJfL.

100 See: UCLG-CSIPDHR, "Challenges and Responses to COVID-19: A Local Perspective from Mexico City," News, 2020, https://bit.ly/3MAYNuP.

4.4 Invest

One clear area of action from LRGs is the investment of resources into building, sustaining and scaling land, housing and services commons. **There are at least five types of direct investment that can be undertaken by LRGs.** Firstly, investment can take the form of giving, or leasing, public land, as in the case of the Caño Martín Peña Community Land Trust, in **San Juan** (Puerto Rico). This type of investment also involves making land available for economic, social and cultural commoning practices. These may range from urban farming, in **Quezon City** (the Philippines) and **Rosario** (Argentina), to vending, as in **Dhaka** (Bangladesh) and Indian cities, or involve making unused land available for cultural occupations, as in **Sao Paulo** (Brazil). The Land Commission of **Liverpool** (UK) has also engaged in such rethinking about the use of public land beyond its financial and exchange value. The examples cited in this chapter show how this can be done using the commoning principles of collective use and ownership and the importance of ensuring "permanent affordability".

The second form of investment extends beyond making space available (an option which may not be open to all LRGs, and especially not those with limited landholdings or limited mandates on land ownership). It relates to **investment in the form of technical assistance**, as in the example of the European CLTs. This dovetails with the **assistance provided by LRGs to those negotiating** with commercial banks in Nepal, and with landowners in Thailand.

Thirdly, and closely related, is investment in infrastructure that supports commoning activities. For street vending, for example, this involves upgrading natural markets, building storage facilities and providing logistical infrastructure for traders, developing waste management infrastructure, and seeing public toilets as part of the economic infrastructure required by informal workers. Similar infrastructure investment in other informal workplaces can also support economic commoning as long as LRGs remain committed to both what the International Labour Organization calls "employment intensive investments" and to retaining commoning practices, rather than replacing them in the name of technological innovation or modernization.[101] Put simply, the aim is to upgrade and sustain natural markets and the work that waste pickers do at landfill waste sites, not to replace them.

The fourth form of investment that draws upon our examples of commons is the large-scale provision of universal local public services, which is a key mandate of LRGs. Here, investment in the upgrading of informal settlements and neighbourhood improvements can take multiple forms, including: providing basic services, establishing links to trunk infrastructure, building social infrastructure and collective facilities, and targeting financing mechanisms. Upgrading and providing neighbourhood improvements are key dimensions of LRG investment. However, beyond just helping vulnerable neighbourhoods, the provision of services is better seen as ensuring and protecting access for all residents. In this sense, investment can be seen as a more significant shift towards remunicipalization. This fifth form of investment shall now be examined in more detail.

4.5 Remunicipalize

One specific form of investment that LRGs can undertake is to expand and protect the provision of public services by public institutions at the city-scale. As explained earlier in this chapter, remunicipalization, or deprivatization, can be viewed as both a means to and an end of commoning.

As of February 2021, the *Public Future* database listed 1,451 verified cases registered since 2000. Of these, 974 were deprivatizations and 477 were remunicipalizations. They covered a wide array of public services, ranging from water, energy, waste, transport, education, healthcare and social services, and telecommunications, to local government services (housing, building cleaning, public space and infrastructure maintenance, canteens, funeral services, municipal parking and sport infrastructures, etc.). The remunicipalization of services is also, in a sense, an argument in support of certain public goods,

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101 See the ILO's formulation on decent work and "employment intensive investments" here: ILO, "Decent Work," Topics, 2022, https://bit.ly/3Kqo2yf.

Source: Taula de l'Aigua.
Campaign for the remunicipalization of water and sanitation services, Terrasa, Catalonia, Spain. 6 March 2018.

such as access to basic services, having to be universal, and ensured by the state. **In other words, there should not be any need to provide the commoning practices discussed that are currently compensating for gaps in the provision of public services.**

This, however, requires LRGs to have greater financial, institutional and political capacity. **Remunicipalization is a mechanism that can specifically bring together the goals of commoning and the mandates of LRGs.** During the transition period between now and when such universal access is possible, however, LRGs must continue to recognize and protect existing commoning practices that seek to create access to services where they do not exist. Furthermore, doing this in partnership and through cocreation with commoners may act as a powerful lever for the recalibration of LRG powers, resources and mandates. It may also, at the very least, help to promote multilevel governance in favour of urban equality.

4.6 Scale

One clear finding from the case studies of urban commons is **the vital role that LRGs can play in scaling commons-related practices from individual, or idiosyncratic, cases, to their application at the city and regional scales**. This scaling can occur in several different ways. **The first is through adoption and translation, where local governments partner commoners to try to promote successful models of commoning.** This is seen in upgrading and neighbourhood improvement schemes that become regional, or even national, in scope after starting with the work of an initial set of "precedent setting" commoners. Such movements can also be aided by scaling up the provision of additional resources, including land. This was the case of the Community-Led Housing model employed at Yangon

Source: Pierre Arnold.
Visit of the Caño Martín Peña with community leaders and grassroot organizations from 17 countries in a workshop hosted by the CLT and ENLACE in May 2019. San Juan, Puerto Rico.

where the local government provided free land to encourage further CLH housing projects. It can also be seen in the creation of pooled funds that communities can draw upon, as in large-scale upgrading programmes, such as *Baan Mankong*, in Thailand.

Scaling within upgrading and neighbourhood improvement can mean a movement from smaller, more local, infrastructure to network connections with city-wide infrastructural systems; this is something that LRGs are ideally positioned to enable. The *Orangi Pilot Project* in **Karachi** (Pakistan) provides an excellent example of this. Over time, household and neighbourhood level services have been connected to the city's main grid to ensure sustenance and lower costs, and also to enable residents to entrust operations, maintenance and repair work to local authorities, like other residents in their city.[102]

Scaling can also occur through the creation of structural conditions that enable new commons to emerge. The clearest example of this is the emergence of new legal and regulatory frameworks to recognize commons-related arrangements. As an analysis by FMDV suggests, it has, in part, been "legal recognition, the definition of common practices and better access to resources" that have enabled "CLTs to develop and diversify" across Europe.

Finally, and related to this last point, **scaling can imply the deepening of LRGs' social contracts with**

102 See: World Habitat, "Orangi Low-Cost Housing and Sanitation Programme," World Habitat Awards, 2017, https://bit.ly/3vrdued.

commoners. Every type of commons has its own, individual, trajectory, even though there are certain characteristics that they share between them. This implies that LRGs will continue to need to scale the extent of their engagement and the different forms that it may take at different moments: they must learn, along the way, which kinds of engagement work for which ends. This is part of the shared governance and reciprocal recognition that can be offered as part of a new social contract. This will not come easily, nor through models or best practices, but rather as a result of repeated engagement. This is therefore **a scaling of a different, but perhaps more meaningful, kind: it will come through greater engagement, coproduction and mutual learning**.

4.7 Advocate

In conclusion, perhaps the most important symbolic action that LRGs can take is to go beyond just engaging with existing commons, and instead to help create the conditions that enable commoning to thrive, expand and scale. One of the key roles that LRGs can play is therefore to advocate for commoning. In doing so, **LRGs would be aligning themselves with many of their own political and ethical mandates: (a) helping to promote equality in access to land, housing and services; (b) reemphasizing the need for partnerships and for a new state-citizen social contract; (c) committing to coproduction and meaningful engagement in governance; (d) seeking to produce cities in which key resources are not only seen through the narrow lens of financial and monetary value; and (e) building universal access to basic services, housing and livelihoods**.

Advocating for commoning would mean reaffirming both the principles and a set of practices that have the potential to challenge contemporary drivers of inequality and to offer new forms of urban practice that can move communities towards equality. Networks of LRGs uniting around declarations such as UCLG's *Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration* articulated within the *Make the Shift* initiative, as well as UCLG's *Pact for the Future*, have a critical role to play in catalyzing the adoption and replication of rights-based and commoning-friendly approaches within land and housing. This is an opportunity that LRGs must take, both for themselves and for the populations they serve.

05 ↓ Caring

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Disability, Care, and the City

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Urban Health: Cities can care for people and enable them to care for others, making urban health possible

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"Sanctuary Cities": How Do Cities Care for Newcomers? An Overview of Inclusive Local Responses to Migration

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Socio-spatial inequality and local educational action in the construction of caring cities

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Construyendo ciudades feministas: experiencias y acciones por el Derecho de las mujeres a la Ciudad y a territorios libres de violencias

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Community-led Housing: a driver of social inclusion for vulnerable urban populations

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Abstract

Care, which contributes to the physical and emotional well-being of the population, is essential work for supporting life and the reproduction of societies. *Caring* "does not only consist of doing things, but also of anticipating and preventing certain negative outcomes, which could have bad consequences for the person in question". It also constitutes a fundamental contribution to urban and territorial development.

Feminist movements and authors, the incorporation of women into public life and the labour market, an ageing population, and the shrinking size of households have all contributed to a growing consciousness of the need for care as a public issue. Social protection, and educational and health systems have contributed to its public coverage, as also have improvements in urban infrastructure and services, as well as other factors that affect urban and territorial equality. Indeed, these are key issues for local governments.

The global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has reaffirmed the fundamental importance of care, revealing deficiencies and demands that require transversal responses and a long-term vision. Within a context of multiple challenges, the relevance of the functions performed by local and regional governments (LRGs) has been clearly shown. People have turned to their most local government agencies in search of answers and support when faced with threats to their health and ways of life. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and academic centres have also piloted innovative solutions, working hand-in-hand with LRGs, which have contributed commitment and innovation.

This chapter, which recognizes the principles and objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), examines *Caring* in the following sections:

a. "Theoretical approaches to the debate". This revises care-related concepts in order to raise awareness of its various functions, identifying the main demands and rights in this area, from an intersectional perspective, and presenting the critical nodes for the sustainability of care, understanding them as a public problem.

b. "Challenges and opportunities facing urban and territorial governance in the construction of a care response". This presents the main challenges facing LRGs in care management, underlining their geographic and demographic aspects. It underlines the need to integrate both productive and reproductive contexts in urban and regional planning, and examines the subject of policies and public services, commenting on the challenges and opportunities presented to urban governance. It focuses on the key themes of: education, health, and other social policies and measures for protecting rights.

c. "Towards cities and territories that care: Recognizing, redistributing and reducing the burden of care work". This section starts from a vision that supports the need to *recognize and democratize*, to *redistribute and decommodify*, and to *reduce the burden of and defeminize* care. It contributes the learning experiences of various LRGs and CSOs for which the interaction between care and the local territory is a central issue.

The chapter finishes by emphasizing proposals and recommendations for LRGs to use in conjunction with various public organizations and CSOs.
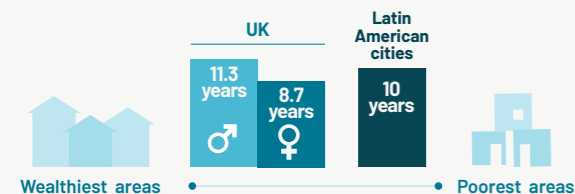
Inequalities in access to social services

Unequal access to COVID-19 vaccines and pace of vaccination:

By the end of November 2021:

2.6% of the population of low-income countries
60.18% of the population of high-income countries

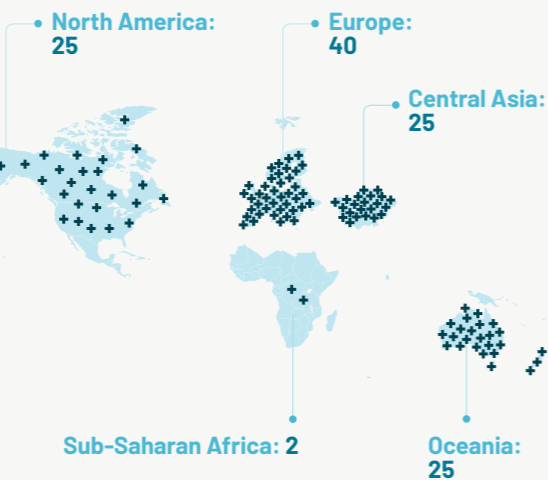had received at least one vaccine dose. Vaccine equality for all countries is essential.[a]

Life expectancy gap at birth

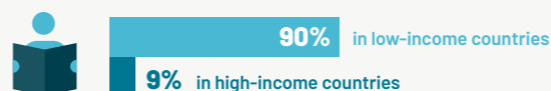continues to climb across regions, although significant differences are still observed across socio-economic levels.[b]

UK
11.3 years ♂
8.7 years ♀

Latin American cities
10 years

Wealthiest areas •   • Poorest areas

Medical doctors per 10,000 people:[c]

North America: **25**
Europe: **40**
Central Asia: **25**
Sub-Saharan Africa: **2**
Oceania: **25**

Learning poverty rate*:[d]

90% in low-income countries
9% in high-income countries

* Inability to read and understand a simple text by age 10

147m children worldwide

missed more than half of their in-class instruction over the past two years.[f]

Children in early childhood education or their first years of schooling, especially from low- and middle-income countries, are the most affected by educational disruptions.[f]
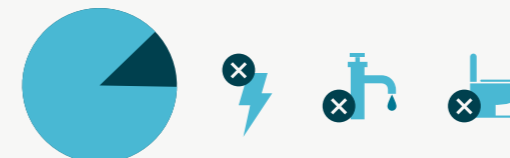
25% of primary schools
lacked access to electricity, drinking water and basic sanitation facilities in 2020.[e]

50%
did not have ICT facilities and disability inclusive infrastructure.[e]

4.1bn people
lack effective social protection.
In 2020, only 47% of the global population was effectively covered by at least one social protection cash benefit.[g]

The proportion of the world's youth not in education, employment or training remained unchanged from 2015 to 2019 at 21.8%, but increased to 23.3% in 2020.[h]
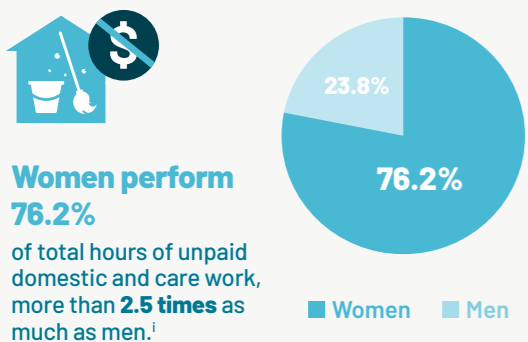
↑ **1.5%**

30%
20%

2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020

Why caring?

Unequal distribution of care work: gender inequalities

23.8%
76.2%

Women perform 76.2%

of total hours of unpaid domestic and care work, more than **2.5 times** as much as men.[i]

Most remunerated care workers are women, frequently migrant women, who work in the informal economy under poor conditions and with low pay. Asia – particularly South Asia – is the primary source of migrant workers.[j]
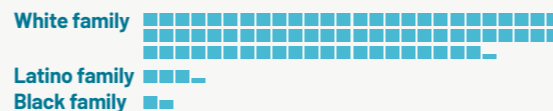
■ Women   ■ Men

Uneven exposure to violence and discrimination

60% of all homicide victims
between 2015-2020 were women and girls.[k]

736m women (1 in 3)
have been subject to physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime since the age of 15 (2000-2018).[l]

Median family wealth (USA)[m]
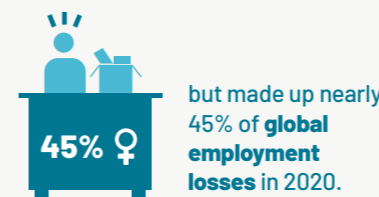
White family
Latino family
Black family

Mortality rates (USA)[m]

As of March 2021, mortality rates (per 100,000 people living in the USA) during the COVID-19 pandemic were significantly higher for racialized populations:

Indigenous people	256
Black people	179
Pacific Islanders	176
White people	150
Latino people	147
Asian people	96

Need for adequate and rights-based care

Women have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic:[n]

39.4%

They accounted for 39.4% of total employment before the pandemic in 2019

45% ♀ but made up nearly 45% of **global employment losses** in 2020.
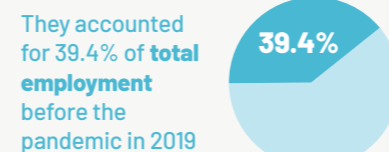
Age discrimination and age-related stigma
are a barrier to health care. Rates of dependency will increase given the expected rise in the proportion of older people:[o]

2019 •——• 1 in 11
2050 •——• 1 in 6

over **65** years old[p]

20% of the world's poorest people have some kind of disability[q]

They tend to be regarded in their own communities as the most disadvantaged.

281m international migrants in 2020[r]

representing **3.6%** of the global population
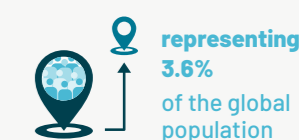
Caring Pathway

Cities and territories that care

Towards urban and territorial equality

- Recognized and valued care work, caregivers and people in need of care
- Defeminized care work through the deconstruction of gender roles and the even redistribution of care work between men and women
- Democratized care with redistributed responsibilities between the state, the market, the community and families
- Local care systems with strengthened public management and capacities for social protection and care for all
- Local care services that reduce the burden of unpaid care work that women assume in the home
- Decommodified care that ensures everyone's access to adequate and quality care and social services

Defining clear roles for LRGs, in relation to those of national governments, the private sector, local communities and families, establishing shared parameters, means and obligations for providing care.

Promoting a new social contract based on more integrated care systems, services and public policies to support the right to care and be cared for. This involves overcoming the fragmentation of care and of social services and expanding coverage.

Recognizing, redistributing and reducing the burden of unpaid care and social work, applying a gender and rights-based perspective and following the principles of equality, universality and solidarity. Value and support must be given to social reproduction activities and relations in order to respond to the challenges brought about by today's profound demographic, socio-economic and technological transformations.

Promoting proximity to meet care needs within short distances. This involves identifying prioritized locations within the territory and programmes which are organized to make time spent at home with family and time spent at work compatible.

Coproducing care and social policies aimed at specific groups, considering their different experiences, needs and aspirations, as well as intersecting discrimination and inequalities. Caring for those with a specific and/or urgent need for and right to care is essential: women, children, older people, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ people and migrant populations, amongst other marginalized groups.

Promoting cities and territories that care for all citizens through the provision of universal education, health, social services and housing, as well as quality public spaces , to face structural inequalities, mitigate social divides and ensure equal opportunities for all.

Women, racialized individuals, people living in poverty and migrants are more likely to be caregivers. They are often rendered invisible and poorly paid, with limited representation in decision-making spaces. How can LRGs and public policies support an equitable redistribution and recognition of care work?

How can inclusive and universally accessible local care systems be built and strengthened, and how can they respond to increasing demographic, socio-economic and technological transformations?

Advancing democratic practices that involve both caregivers and people who receive care in decision-making for local public policies.

1 Introduction

Care, which contributes to the physical and emotional well-being of the population, is essential work for supporting life and the reproduction of societies, besides making a fundamental contribution to urban and territorial development. Its recognition has been pushed forward by the incorporation of women into political life and the labour market, by demographic ageing, and a fall in the size of the typical household. This has also, and perhaps more critically, been advanced by feminist movements and authors, who have contributed to raising consciousness of the need for care as a public issue.

Caring "does not only consist of doing things, but also of anticipating and preventing certain negative outcomes, which could have bad consequences for the person in question".[1] Its public provision involves contributions from systems of social protection, education and healthcare, and requires improvements in infrastructure and urban services, all of which are key concerns for the most local levels of government.

This chapter builds upon the 2030 Agenda which, amongst their 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), proposes: guaranteeing a healthy life; promoting the well-being of everyone, to all ages (SDG 3); providing inclusive and equitable education of good quality and promoting opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone (SDG 4); achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls (SDG 5); reducing inequality both within countries and between them (SDG 10); and creating cities and human settlements that are inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11).

The global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has reaffirmed the fundamental importance of care, revealing deficiencies and demands that require transversal responses and a long-term vision. This crisis has destabilized the economy and adversely affected equality of access and opportunity in many cities and territories. It has had a particularly negative impact on the most vulnerable sectors of the population and has revealed serious inequalities. With an estimated 90% of all registered cases of COVID-19 occurring in urban areas, these have become the epicentre of the pandemic.[2] Furthermore, in 2021, there was evidence of a serious worsening of international inequalities with regard to access to vaccines and education: while 70% of the European Union's population had already received the full programme of vaccination, in Africa only 3.5% of the population had access to it.[3] Furthermore, approximately 214 million students lost at least three terms of in-class education.[4]

This situation has exacerbated existing problems and created a structural care crisis. Families, and particularly women, have suffered an overload of care commitments and have had difficulties combining their paid employment with work carried out in the home. Young children and adolescents have been exposed to physical and emotional risks due to the loss of spaces for their socialization.

Within a context of multiple challenges, the relevance of the functions performed by local and regional governments (LRGs) has been clearly shown. This has been particularly relevant with respect to the provision of services and reactivation of the economy. People have

1 María Angeles Durán, *La riqueza invisible del cuidado* (València: Universitat de València, 2018).

2 Mami Mizutori and Maimunah Mohd Sharif, "COVID-19 Demonstrates Urgent Need for Cities to Prepare for Pandemics," *UN-Habitat*, 2020, https://bit.ly/3xaSPfs.

3 Agencia EFE, "La OMS alerta de que la pandemia no ha acabado y tampoco sus secuelas económicas," 2022, https://bit.ly/3j6selg.

4 UNICEF, "COVID-19 and School Closures. One Year of Education Disruption," 2021, https://bit.ly/35JbF2g.

turned to their most local level of government in search of answers and help when faced with the threats posed to their health and way of life.[5]

Some of the most innovative solutions have been piloted by civil society organizations (CSOs) and academic centres in conjunction with LRGs. They have contributed commitment, innovation, adaptability and resources, and have sometimes reached places that national governments are unable to reach.

The UCLG *Decalogue for the post-Covid-19 era*[6] proposes a way to combat inequality. It seeks to do this by protecting common resources and basic needs, such as housing, water and energy, and to ensure that they are free from speculation, so that all citizens have access to them under equality of conditions. Cities such as **Bogota** (Colombia) and **Mexico City** (Mexico) have extended their care programmes as a central pilar of their policies for fighting against the pandemic.[7]

Considering focuses outlined, this chapter has been organized in three parts:

1. **Theoretical approaches to the debate.** The central position occupied by care in the current public debate makes it necessary to revisit concepts in order to understand its various functions. The section identifies the main demands and rights in this area, highlighting a gender-based approach while also integrating both the monetized and non-monetized economies. It then presents the main critical points relating to the sustainability of care: the redistribution of wealth; inequality, viewed from an intersectional perspective; and the governance of care, which is understood as a public problem that should form part of the LRG agenda.

2. **Challenges and opportunities facing urban and territorial governance in the construction of a care response.** This presents the main challenges facing LRGs in the management of care, emphasizing its geographic and demographic aspects, the possible relationship between caregivers (all of those who have providing care as their main occupation) and

local policies: care proposals and indicators at different periods. It also emphasizes the importance of integrating the productive and reproductive contexts within urban and territorial planning. It then examines public policies and services, discussing the challenges and opportunities facing urban and territorial governance in the construction of a care response. It focuses on themes that, historically speaking, have been key to local-level government: education, health and other social policies; policies for the protection of people's rights, especially those of people with disabilities and older people; and the theme of violence and discrimination against women, LGBTQIA+ people, children and migrants.

3. **Towards cities and territories that care: Recognizing, redistributing and reducing the burden of care work.** Care requires sustainable measures and policies that are able to meet current and future needs, based on a new model for the social and political organization of care which incorporates a gender-related and intersectional perspective. This section emphasizes the need *to recognize and democratize, to redistribute and decommodify* and *to reduce the burden of and defeminize* care. In doing this, it contributes the various experiences of LRGs and CSOs and emphasizes the centrality of the intersection between care and territory. These are solidarity-based initiatives of different types and scales which are aimed at approaching the subject of care from a focus based on rights, inclusion and sustainability.

The chapter finishes by bringing together the main critical points relating to care in the present context and emphasizes proposals and recommendations for LRGs, which need to be structured in collaboration with various public organizations and CSOs.

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5 UCLG and PSI, "Strong Local Public Services for a Safe World," UCLG-PSI Joint Statement in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2020, https://bit.ly/3LEFr7t.

6 UCLG, "Decalogue for the Post COVID-19 Era" (Barcelona, 2020), https://bit.ly/3uW330C.

7 The Mayor's Office of Bogota has implemented the *Sistema Integral de Cuidados* (*Integrated Care System*); and Mexico City has modified its Political Constitution in a way that recognizes the right to care.

2 Theoretical guidelines for debate

2.1 The theoretical dimensions of care

2.1.1 A concept without consensus

The fight to recognize "care" as a subject of public interest has, for decades, been driven by feminist movements and authors. Caring has been considered a central function for the reproduction of life, yet one that has, historically speaking, been almost invisible. **Given the sexual division of labour and its socio-economic conditioning facts, care work, the majority of which has been either unpaid or badly paid, has mainly been performed by women and marginalized or racialized groups.** Measured in units of time, this work slightly exceeds the total amount of paid work done by men and women. From a quality perspective, care work has characteristics that are fundamental for the sustainability of the whole social system and can be shared, at different scales, with public actors, under coresponsibility.[8]

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8 Antonella Picchio, "Un enfoque macroeconómico 'ampliado' de las condiciones de vida," in *Tiempos, trabajos y género* (Barcelona, 2001).

One of the difficulties inherent to the analysis of care is its transversality: if the term is employed in a very broad sense, almost any activity could be considered "care". It is quite a slippery, multipurpose, notion and one whose nuances have important implications for research and public policy, which are supposed be discussed within a common framework. Caring for people within the family is so deep-rooted that the International Labour Organization (ILO) took decades to recognize that, although it was not a form of employment, it was also work and that unpaid carers were also workers. The non-institutional care that takes place in the home includes not only the help provided in day-to-day activities, but also accompanying people, providing physical protection, and maintaining good living conditions for companions and members of the wider family.

The institutionalization of social services is a relatively recent phenomenon. Its expansion has been very rapid and is still in course. In many public administrations, at both the local and national levels, care services are provided in multiple institutional contexts, which requires a considerable effort of cooperation and harmonization. At present, institutional care is a function that is being extended into new areas of action (attention to deal with loneliness, violence, margination, dependency, cultural integration, the risk of suffering discrimination, etc.). It may also help fill some of the gaps in the education (out of school activities) and public health (chronification, ageing, healthy habits) systems. Due to the influence of the healthcare sector, within the context of the social services, it is common to use the term "care" with reference to help with activ-

Source: Kota Kita Foundation.
Participatory Data for Disability-Inclusive Banjarmasin, Indonesia.

ities in daily life provided to people who cannot perform them by themselves. However, as meeting existing shortcomings and preventing harm, the term "care" is also being used to refer to promoting the qualities and potential resources of a given person or group.

Caring refers to a vast range of circumstances that include: taking care of the home, caring for dependent people, self-care, people who provide care, and taking care of society as a whole. Although not all of the activities of sectors of the monetarized economy can be included under the umbrella definition of "care", there are a range of activities, carried out by different sectors of society – including by public administrations at the local level – which can be linked to care in the wider sense of the term. These tasks include work in the healthcare and education sectors. They also include social policies and the protection of rights, in particular those of groups affected by discrimination and structural inequalities such as people with disabilities (PWD), LGBTQIA+ people, migrants and racialized groups, etc., in areas such as housing, access to food and security. This very broad interpretation means that in order to avoid the current confusion of its use, it is necessary to discuss and come to a consensus over a definition of "caring" and to create indicators that can help advances in this direction.

2.1.2 Demands for and rights to care

Various social conditions can make a person dependent on external care. This creates a situation in which their social, economic and emotional survival may be subject to the continuity of the support that they receive. In the demand to make the right to care effective, it is possible to highlight three broad, socially recognized and explicit categories, which are determined by parameters relating to age and health: children and adolescents, older people, and the sick and dependent. It is also important to recognize that everyone needs care at some point in their life. It is therefore possible to add to these groups other people who require special public attention for structural reasons, such as poverty and marginality, gender violence, racial hatred, discrimination, and their migratory or asylum-seeking situation.

There is no limit to the demand for care: it is infinitely elastic. The total demand is established by the number of people in need of support; the type of their needs; the intensity and quality of the corresponding care services; and the length of time for which these services are required. On the other hand, the limit to coverage and the satisfaction of such demand is determined by the supply of care, which is inelastic in terms of both monetary resources and personnel, available time,

agility of reaction and management. Sometimes this limit is very low indeed: when the supply of care does not cover the demand, there is an unsatisfied demand which is absorbed in an unequal way by certain groups that have historically "provided care". The demand for care has no other limit than the capacity to cover and satisfy it. This is extremely dynamic and depends on the power relations between the different parts involved.

2.1.3 Who provides care? Intersectionality in the provision of care

The empirical evidence shows that the majority of care contributions are made by women (many of whom are immigrants, racialized, or in a position of vulnerability) and either unpaid or badly paid. Within the context of the feminization of migration, the creation of global care chains is one of the most paradigmatic phenomena. Migration carries with it transfers of reproductive and care work from rich countries to other poorer ones and this creates new links in these chains. For example, European countries transfer domestic and care work to foreign women from countries with lower levels of income in which, in turn, the migration of women implies the transfer of their domestic responsibilities to other women in the family, or migrants, who cover their absence.[9]

In the absence of shared responsibility, the difference between the time that women and men dedicate to domestic work and unpaid care work is maintained.[10] Time use surveys have shown that the time dedicated to unpaid work in the home, which could generally be understood as time dedicated to care, is subject to a stark division of labour, based on gender and age. Time dedicated to providing care clearly exceeds the annual number of hours dedicated to work in the labour market. Young women, and especially those studying, or in paid employment, sometimes share the condition of being freed from care responsibilities, although it is more frequent for them to combine the two activities: unpaid care duties and studying or paid work.

Traditional gender-based norms constitute an important motor for maintaining inequalities in the provision of care and are often indirectly reinforced by government and labour market policies, such as via maternity and paternity leave. In the care sector, much of the work is informal and the working conditions are worse than in other sectors. Only 10% of workers in domestic service, throughout the world, are protected by general employment legislation to the same extent as other professionals, and almost half do not enjoy the same protection in terms of a minimum salary.[11]

Within a context of change, it is necessary to revise the present social contract and to incorporate care policies as a pillar of the welfare. In line with calls for more just and sustainable societies, it is necessary to create material, institutional and symbolic conditions that permit a break from the traditional sexual division of labour. It is essential to implement approaches and strategies to defeminize the provision of care. Unlike other types of economic analysis, the concept of the *economy of care*, which is closely related to the *ethics of care*, is highly critical, as it seeks to contribute to deep-seated changes in the social contract.[12] To fight against socio-economic inequalities in the access to care, it is also necessary to regulate the privatization of care. This requires a return to shared public responsibility for care work and the resulting transformation of the material, institutional and symbolic conditions with which public institutions are related, both in terms of who provides and who receives care.

2.1.4 The economy and financing of care

In order to understand the *economy of care*, it is first necessary to distinguish two major components: the monetarized economy and that which is not monetarized. The monetarized economy is that of companies, the state and workers who sell their labour in the market. The non-monetarized economy, on the other hand, includes the production of the immense majority of direct and indirect care, and is mainly carried out

9 Amaia Orozco, "Global Care Chains," Gender, Migration and Development Series (Santo Domingo, 2009), https://bit.ly/3yObleK.

10 María Ángeles Sallé and Laura Molpeceres, "Recognition, Redistribution and Reduction of Care Work. Inspiring Practices in Latin America and the Caribbean," 2018, https://bit.ly/3u61ga2.

11 ILO, "Domestic Workers across the World: Global and Regional Statistics and the Extent of Legal Protection" (Geneva, 2013).

12 With respect to the ethics of care, some authors, like Gilligan, maintain that while men defend more abstract values, like justice in general, women tend to take into account each circumstance, or particular necessity, in a logic which is as valid in ethical terms as the masculine approach. Other authors, like Tronto, want to not only make of this ethics an objective universal, applicable to the women, but to all the population (Batthyány). Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice. Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); Joan C. Tronto, *Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality, and Justice* (New York: New York University Press, 2013); Karina Batthyány, *Miradas latinoamericanas a los cuidados* (Buenos Aires and Mexico DF: CLACSO Siglo XXI, 2020).

in homes and by non-profit organizations. **Adopting political measures requires first being fully aware of this distinction, although, in practice, there are numerous interactions between the monetarized and non-monetarized economies of care.**

In contrast to how things work in the monetarized economy, which has good instruments of observation, measurement (periodic statistics) and analysis, the productive activities of the non-monetarized economy do not have any systematic instruments of observation, because they are not recognized as productive and reproductive activities. One of the great successes of the United Nations World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, in 1995, was the approval of a proposal for action to measure unpaid work, particularly through the use of surveys about how people use their time. Such information had previously been extremely scarce.

Financing is one of touchstones of care services. The market can meet only part of the demand for care, with a relatively small sector of society, which is economically comfortable, benefitting from this. The rest of the demand for care must be satisfied in other ways; for example, through the direct delivery of certain services by public administration, such as LRGs, or through agreements between public administrations and private companies for the latter to take part in the management and delivery of programmes, even though the former remains officially responsible for providing such services. Box 5.1 shows different financing mechanisms for social and care services.

Box 5.1

Financing social services and other forms of caring

Financing social services and other forms of caring is a great challenge in many countries and cities. There are limits to how much revenue can be raised at the subnational level for services such as education and health, and there have long been debates about the efficiency and equity of doing this and about the desirability and effects of charging for such services. In some cases, it may be possible to use local revenues to cross-subsidize citizens of different income levels and living in different neighbourhoods, but this creates challenges of its own. This is most viable in wealthier countries that, for example, substantially finance primary and secondary education from property taxes. More commonly, there is a dominant role for the use of national – and in the case of some larger countries, intermediate tier – resources to improve equity in the provision of health and education services. Some common approaches include:

Universal access to education

Over the past quarter of a century, many developing economies have shifted from charging school fees to promoting universal primary (and often, secondary) level education, whereby the funding previously provided by school fees has been offset (either in part or totally) by the provision of capitation grants (intergovernmental fiscal transfers) from national government to subnational levels of government. Although these grants can be important, they are rarely adequately tailored to the often-unequal needs of specific communities and thus, all too often, they do not sufficiently address inequality.

Universal access to basic health services

Many developing countries have also shifted from fee-for-service access to basic health services to universal access, with this typically applying to a predefined set of basic health services. In many cases, the lost income previously generated by health service fees has been offset (either in part or totally) by the provision of health sector grants from the national government to local governments. At the same time, many countries have moved away from top-down funding of the health sector and to more client-driven approaches, including the promotion of national and local health insurance which, in some cases, implies community-based health insurance schemes.

Progressive fee structures

Where health facility fees or hospital fees (and in some cases, school fees) remain in place, it is not unusual for reduced fees or free services to be provided to low-income or indigent households. In such cases, the cost of the services is typically covered by intergovernmental fiscal transfer mechanisms or through subsidies from national health insurance funding schemes. It is not uncommon to find instances in which some basic services are provided free of charge while others require the payment of fees. In other cases, there may be some loose form of means testing, so that people from certain neighbourhoods, or with less than a certain presumed level of income (e.g. based on their employment status) are not charged for either all, or some specific, services.

Free access to drinking water (public water sources or emergency provision in crisis situations)

For example, in 2020, the Government of Kenya introduced a policy that prevented county water utilities from disconnecting water users as a result of non-payment of their water bills. In many cases this led to a considerable decline in water revenue. In order to prevent the financial collapse of the water providers, the Ministry of Water subsequently provided a sectoral grant. Similar experiences associated with the COVID-19 pandemic could provide a basis for more permanent policies to ensure broader regular access to water and other services.

Source: box developed by Paul Smoke and Jamie Boex for GOLD VI

In Latin America, for example, there are few sustainable, structured regimes of public care policy offering broad coverage, although some important legal changes and programmes have recently been introduced. Some of the main policies consist of money transfers and belong to the traditional division of labour based on gender. In countries with a high level of economic development, schematically speaking, care is mainly provided according to one of three models: the liberal model, in which the main provider is the market; the family-based model, where it is the family; and the Nordic model, where it is the state, usually via local entities, that takes responsibility for the majority of care, both for infants and for the sick and older people. However, in practice, these three modalities are often combined.

Subjecting care to economic analysis requires measurement of the effort dedicated to the tasks that it involves. In other words, it requires the creation of care statistics and indicators, at both the local and national levels, and also their integration into national and regional accounts. It is also important that international migration is reflected as a component. Many immigrants enter the labour market through employment in this area. At the same time, however, they lack formal rights to care of their own, or for members of their families, who may have remained in their country of origin and to whom they send monetary remittances, which constitute an important component in their countries' local economies.

2.2 Critical issues in the sustainability of care: Inequalities and governance

The sustainability of care is linked to two major challenges: structural inequalities and the governance of care.

2.2.1 Inequalities and intersectionality in care

An analysis undertaken from an intersectional perspective helps to identify the key issues and factors that have deepened the "care crisis" and its impact on vulnerable populations, as both the receivers and providers of care. Throughout the world, women and girls deliver the majority of unpaid or poorly paid care work and have a greater probability of finding themselves in precarious employment. This is particularly true of those who

suffer various types of discrimination. Women carry out more than three-quarters of unpaid care work and also constitute two-thirds of the labour force dedicated to paid care work.[13] Being almost exclusively responsible for unpaid care work constitutes the main obstacle to them being economically autonomous. At the same time, despite these limitations, from a rights-based approach, women have built up their rights by taking risks and transgressing mandates. Based on their individual and collective resistance, they have become agents of change and used crises as spaces for transforming existing power relations.[14]

Gender inequalities are exacerbated in low-income homes, in which there are fewer resources with which to deal with the extra burden of demands for care. In rural areas and the poorest urban peripheries, there is only very limited access to basic services. In Latin America and the Caribbean, women who live in homes without access to drinkable water dedicate between 5 and 12 hours a week more to domestic work and unpaid care work than those who live in homes without these types of shortcomings.[15]

As previously noted, migrant populations occupy a great number of employment positions related to caring. In Lebanon, for example, around 250,000 migrants who work in domestic service are effectively trapped in the *kafala* system, which is a situation of semi-slavery which effectively ties them to the homes of their employers.

In the UK, as in other countries, Black, Asian and minority ethnic women have a greater probability of being the heads of single-parent families, of having dependent children in their homes, of living in poverty, of having less access to decent services, and of facing discrimination in their workplaces. For this reason, they have to dedicate more hours to unpaid care work than white women.[16]

The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened existing inequalities and created new ones. Rapid evaluation surveys conducted in Bangladesh, the Philippines, the Maldives

and Pakistan[17] have shown that, faced with an increase in work in the home and care work, women normally dedicate more time to it than men.

People in situations of vulnerability are affected by crises in different ways: by their loss of income, if they work in the informal economy; due to the increase in the burden of care work; and as a result of the material conditions of their homes, neighbourhoods and communities.[18] **Income-related poverty and time-related poverty are due, amongst other factors, to the insufficient provision of urban services.**[19] This is therefore a key area for action for LRGs.

2.2.2 Care on the public agenda of local and regional governments

The growing interest of care within the public agenda has made decisive contributions to movements in favour of equality for women and their access to education, employment, as have demographic changes, which have created groups with special needs for attention, especially amongst the elderly population. Care is increasingly approached from a rights-based perspective, both for those who provide it and who receive it, and it poses important challenges for governance. **Care begins to be interpreted as a type of work that should carry with it social rights, and whose deficit is a short-coming that must be remedied, in a similar way to poverty or hunger.**

In many cases, social services (whether provided by the state, country or local administration) suffer vertical (power) and horizontal (function) fragmentation between agencies or public organisms, profit-making private organizations, and voluntary or not-for-profit bodies. The international diversity in the ways LRGs manage and share care activities is large, heterogenous, and without a common pattern. Although this will depend on the country in question, the health department will generally be responsible for healthcare; the education department, for attention to students; and the employment and social policy department, for services related to poverty and social exclusion, amongst others.

13 Laura Addati et al., "Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work" (Geneva, 2018), https://bit.ly/3J7Ukxm.

14 Ana María Falú, "El derecho de las mujeres a la ciudad. Espacios públicos sin discriminaciones y violencias," *Vivienda y ciudad* 1 (2014): 10–28, https://bit.ly/3r3C95T.

15 CEPAL-ECLAC, "The COVID-19 Pandemic Is Exacerbating the Care Crisis in Latin America and the Caribbean," 2020, https://bit.ly/3r0P3BH.

16 Parvez Butt, Dutta Savani, and L. Rost, "Unpaid Care, Intersectionality and the Power of Public Services" (Oxford, n.d.).

17 UN-Women, "COVID-19: Emerging Gender Data and Why It Matters," Women Count, 2020, https://bit.ly/3LDnTbV.

18 UNDP, "The Economic Impacts of COVID-19 and Gender Inequality: Recommendations for Policymaking" (Panama, 2020), https://bit.ly/3J2xhnD.

19 UN-Habitat, "Gender and Prosperity of Cities, State of Women in Cities 2012/2013" (Nairobi, 2013), https://bit.ly/36RVUX6.

Source: Ruben Martinez Barricarte, Shutterstock.
Streets in Pamplona, Navarra, Spain.

It is common to encounter obstacles in how these services actually work due to asymmetries, discontinuities, duplications and/or large gaps between different types of programmes. Initiatives tend to be managed by separate departments or even via different independent organisms, in which LRGs may be regarded as deliverers, or mediators, with different administrative and political faculties and levels of financial power.

Even in countries that have developed a welfare state and which seek integration between their services, there are sometimes important tensions. These tensions might happen between those services dedicated to promoting social and labour intersection and those interested in the social protection of the most vulnerable sectors of society – who tend to have the greatest need for care services.[20] One example of an outstandingly successful programme focusing on such people, which has had wide social coverage, is that developed by the region of **Navarra** (Spain), which has reinforced institutional cooperation between its social services and employment services and, at the same time, created a wide margin for municipal action.[21]

Whatever the case, some critics have pointed out that certain Western models of the welfare state have tended to strengthen the historical sexual division of labour by assigning responsibilities for caring for the home and for children to women.[22]

20 Miguel Laparra Navarro and Laureano Martinez, "La integración de servicios sociales y de empleo en el debate entre protección y activación," *Papers. Revista de Sociología* 106, no. 3 (2021): 467–94.

21 Vicente Marbán Gallego and Gregorio Rodríguez Cabrero, "Estudio comparado sobre estrategias de inclusión activa en los países de la Unión Europea" (Madrid, 2011), https://bit.ly/3LUEDeP.

22 Silvia Federici, *El patriarcado del salario: críticas feministas al marxismo* (Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños, 2018).

3 Challenges and opportunities facing urban and territorial governance in the construction of a care response

3.1 Challenges facing care management from the perspective of local and regional governments

3.1.1 Geographic and demographic factors that condition care

The entities responsible for territorial management are so heterogeneous that they range from megacities, whose populations may be greater than many countries, to small villages with only a few hundred inhabitants.[23] **This diversity gives an idea of the difficulty involved in managing care policies, which typically require frequent, close contact.**

The management of care by governments requires establishing: (a) to whom there is an obligation to provide care; (b) to what level and extent; (c) how to finance it; (d) which institutions and instruments will put the proposals into practice; (e) what the implementation

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23 UNDESA, "Population Division," n.d., https://bit.ly/3JIFSfT.

time should be for the measures proposed; (f) which criteria will guarantee the sustainability, transparency and accountability of the programmes; and (g) what treatment should be given to those excluded from the right to care.[24]

The age structure of a population is the main conditioning factor for determining the type of care that a population requires. As the UN *World Population Prospects* reports periodically highlight, the age structure of the population varies between continents, countries, regions, cities and even neighbourhoods. In demographically young societies, it is children and adolescents who absorb most of the resources destined for care, in terms of both time and money. In this respect, it is also relevant to highlight education services due to their importance as managers of non-family care.

In ageing societies, caring for older people is more important and can become an everyday task for households and also have an important influence on public policy. For example, the increase in life expectancy has changed the organization of the family, traffic and transport. Urban design has had to be adapted to the presence of a large number of people with reduced or modified faculties for seeing, hearing and moving about.

In some cities, the increase in longevity and advances in measures of social protection, and especially those related to retirement pensions, has produced a drastic change in the type of potential care providers. There has been an increase in the proportion of older people who have more time available to provide care and, at the same time, who also need more care. The middle-aged population must therefore bear a higher work load, as it must simultaneously attend to the needs of the infant population and to that of advanced age.

3.1.2 The "*cuidatoriado*" and local and regional governments

New phenomena cannot be clearly identified while there are no words to define them. For this reason, the term "*cuidatoriado*" was coined in Spanish (which could be translated as "*caregiver group*" or "*cuidatoriat*") to designate people whose main role in the socio-economic structure is to provide care, embedded in a series of relationships amongst themselves and with other members of society. This caregiver group

forms a collective, which is sometimes defined as a "social class", which is growing in size and is becoming conscious of its position all over the world. It is mainly composed of people who provide care without receiving payment for this, but it also includes those who provide care in return for a salary. The majority of this collective are women, many of whom are old or relatively old. Their working days are frequently longer than those of paid workers. The carer plays a crucial role within the social and economic structure: without their contribution of great quantities of work, it would not be possible to maintain the dependent population, whose quality of life would fall to below acceptable limits. Until now, there have been few studies about caregivers, other than information obtained indirectly via surveys on how people use their time.

People who provide care should have representation in the decision-making spaces that concern them, related to both public policy and the private sector. Actors from civil society must campaign for the inclusion of various groups of caregivers in public dialogue and in the taking of decisions related to planning and formulating budgets.[25]

3.1.3 Care programmes and measures: From emergencies to short-, medium- and long-term plans

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that there are demands for care that arise without the possibility of any previous planning. To respond to them, it is necessary to provide urgent and immediate responses, both at the level of the home and at that of public institutions. In the post-pandemic future, the central formula seems to be to return to a stronger state with more intersectional investment in social inclusion. Transforming the social organization of care, making this work more visible, and giving it greater importance is key to reducing the gender gap.[26]

One of the main problems facing LRGs is the mismatch between the temporal horizons of care programmes and the duration of their electoral mandates. Programmes for innovation in the care sector entail investments in infrastructure that take several years to make effective,

24 María Ángeles Durán, "Ciudades que cuidan," in *¿Quién cuida en la ciudad? Aportes para políticas urbanas de igualdad*, ed. María Nieves Rico and Olga Segovia (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 2017), 91–116, https://bit.ly/37CbgPA.

25 Mara Bolis et al., "Care in the Time of Coronavirus. Why Care Work Needs to Be at the Centre of a Post-COVID-19 Feminist Future" (Oxford, 2020), https://bit.ly/38vnBWb.

26 Ana Falú, "Argentina – CISCSA: la pandemia: incertidumbres, violencias, cuidados, y género," HIC-AL, 2020, https://bit.ly/3joWrTa.

Source: verbaska_studio, www.istockphoto.com.
Elderly woman decides to overcome depression from isolation during COVID19 pandemic.

and the same is true of administrative reorganization and the training of qualified and specialized staff. For this reason, programmes that offer care must have sufficient civic and political support to guarantee their sustainability if there are changes in the political groups in power.

The construction of local care systems requires many willing parties, and the coordination of various actors and different levels of management. Briefly stated, some of the general recommendations[27] that can help to organize this process are:

(a) carrying out awareness-raising campaigns relating to the right to receive care and the shared social and gender-based responsibilities, aimed at local actors engaged in the sectors directly involved in care policies;

(b) drawing up diagnoses of the needs and possible solutions to the existing care deficits (relating to

both those who care and those who receive care), taking into consideration their characteristics and different starting points;

(c) creating spaces for the institutional structuring of care responses, working in conjunction with local actors, which will make it possible to implement policy agreements (the institutional structure will be determined by the level of decentralization and scale of each territory);

(d) creating instruments to promote and empower CSOs by transferring resources and the capacity to take initiatives to resolve care deficits at the community level;

(e) promoting agreements with the academic sector, at the territorial level, in order to create knowledge about care and to place this subject on the public agenda; and

(f) establishing a dialogue with the state, which will bring greater sustainability to local care action and policies.

27 Julio Bango and Patricia Cossani, "Towards the Construction of Comprehensive Care Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. Elements for Implementation," 2021.

3.1.4 Care indicators

The care indicators that are readily available do not tend to guarantee sufficient information; they are many and varied and have often been created for other purposes. If the aim is to improve the care system, the indicators used in the planning phase must collect information about the needs for, and potential deliverers of, care – whether institutional or individual. They should also use demographic and social projections to predict the evolution of the demand for care in both the short and medium term.

For the delivery phase, it is necessary to use indicators relating to the institutional and domestic production of care. It is necessary to quantify the potential and effective familiar caregivers, as well as the institutions that can participate in implementing care policies: public organisms, foundations, associations, individual volunteers, and companies that can be subcontracted to provide these services.

The indicators of compliance, evaluation and social support for care policies belong to the third phase. They measure the degree of implementation of the care policies that have been initiated, and also the conversion of care needs into legal obligations and guarantees; for example, legal changes relating to parental leave, the distribution of leave based on gender, the shortening or flexibilization of the working day, the introduction or organization of care services at the workplace, etc. Economic indicators are very diverse. They quantify the provisions assigned in public budgets: urban infrastructure, the construction or conditioning of buildings, amenities, training, salaries, support to households and non-profit organizations, caregiver salaries, economic capacity of the person who receives care or that of their family, etc.

3.1.5 Urban and territorial planning: Integrating the productive and reproductive spheres

The zoning of functions (commerce, residential areas, and offices and industries) has arisen, to a large extent, as a result of thinking about a society divided into different spheres: productive and reproductive. From a feminist perspective, it is vital to overcome the dichotomy and hierarchy between production and reproduction. **One of the challenges when trying to construct more inclusive cities and territories involves valuing the sphere of reproduction and connecting private space to public space.** This is crucial to overcome the schematic division between "city, public space, production" and "home, private space, reproduction". This calls for an urban fabric able to integrate different sectors with services, amenities, infrastructure and means of transport.[28]

Long distances affect the use of time. The availability of coverage and the compatibility of the operating hours of urban services affect the organization of the work cycle of care provision. Looking at the provision of care services from an equality perspective requires identifying location priorities within a territory and also arranging programmes in such a way as to make time spent at home, with the family, compatible with time at work.[29] The model of the compact city, with short distances and proximity, is the one that best responds to care needs.[30]

From the perspective of feminist urbanism and women's right to the city, it is necessary to think about how territories condition the ways in which women and people with diverse identities live. In this way, **feminist urbanism seeks to give meaning to the day-to-day life of people through urban planning.**[31]

One interesting experience is the *Sistema Distrital del Cuidado* (*District Care System*) of **Bogota** (Colombia),[32] connected to the city's *Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial* (*Territorial Management Plan*). This plan structures existing and new programmes and services for attending to demands for care in a way that involves shared responsibilities between the district, state, private sector, communities and homes. It is aimed at people who care for others and those who require care, such as children under five years old, PWD and older people. Its objective is to extend the offer of care services, adjusting them to the geographic peculiarities of the city, and also to generate dynamics within the community aimed at recognizing, redistributing and reducing the burden of unpaid care work. It promotes the recognition of care work and those who provide it;

28 Josep Maria Montaner Martorell and Zaida Muxi Martínez, "Usos del tiempo y la ciudad" (Barcelona, 2011), https://bit.ly/37aTUcL.

29 María Nieves Rico and Olga Segovia, *¿Quién cuida en la ciudad? Aportes para políticas urbanas de igualdad* (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 2017).

30 Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, "Vivienda, movilidad y urbanismo para la igualdad en la diversidad: ciudades, género y dependencia," *Ciudad y territorio. Estudios territoriales* 41, no. 161–162 (2009): 581–97.

31 Julieta Pollo, Ana Falú, and Virginia Franganillo, "Transformar los cuidados, ampliar la autonomía feminista," CISCSA Ciudades Feministas, 2021, https://bit.ly/3Kv5Rsf.

32 Council of Bogotá, "Bogotá mi ciudad," 2021, https://bit.ly/3v4oHjo.

3.2 Policies and social services linked to care

Source: Julian Walker.
An AT user being fitted with a prosthetic at the Jamkesus in Yogyakarta by the NGO Yakkum which provides Prosthetics and Orthotics and associated services. Indonesia.

it seeks to redistribute care work between men and women; and it looks to reduce the time that unpaid caregivers dedicate to care work. The new *Manzanas del Cuidado* (*Care Blocks*) are areas that concentrate existing and new services and which are based on the criterion of being close to people's homes. The *Unidades Móviles* (*Mobile Units*) provide itinerant care services in rural and urban areas of difficult access.

In the case of health systems and their spatial structure, the interaction between the economic geography and the institutional and technological infrastructure varies.[33] The countries that are most urbanized and most densely populated tend to have more spatially concentrated health systems, while those with lower population densities and which are less urbanized tend to have more spatially diffuse health systems. In many countries, citizens who live in rural areas face an increasingly greater risk of being left behind in their capacity to access adequate healthcare services.

Advancing towards greater equality in cities and territories requires approaches and policies aimed at specific sectors and groups. Education, health, social services, housing and work to promote coexistence and security constitute key areas for *Caring* for citizens. It is particularly important that they focus on people with disabilities, children, older people, LGBTQIA+ people, the marginalized, and the migrant population.

3.2.1 Education and its contribution to equality

The socio-spatial segregation of cities causes segregation in education and the distancing of different socio-economic groups. These differences are projected and incorporated into childhood and adult experiences, producing different educational opportunities and exclusion from the knowledge and competences required for social and employment-related inclusion. All of this is projected in experiences both in and outside school. Education is more and more necessary for ensuring equality, but increasingly insufficient. To advance in this area, it is necessary to design reforms that will make it possible to extend the right to education from a perspective of providing lifelong care.[34]

Faced with the challenges posed by structural inequality in education, it is at the local scale that it is best to structure collective responses capable of helping to mitigate these social divides relating to care. In this line, LRGs, grouped together in movements like the International Association of Educating Cities, have identified five areas in which local education policy has generated (and can still generate more) pathways to promote care, values and priorities that contribute to equality:

33 Philip McCann, "Access to Technology and Services across the EU Regional Divide," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

34 Xavier Bonal et al., "Socio-Spatial Inequality and Local Educational Action in the Construction of Caring Cities," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

(a) policies that reduce educational segregation;

(b) education based on and for care;

(c) the integration of educational policy in community social action;

(d) education for the development of critical citizenship; and

(e) the extension of educational opportunities that go beyond formal education.[35]

These challenges are expressed in various governance challenges. Firstly, education requires the participation of various community actors working together in a coordinated way. Secondly, conditions of material deprivation, violence and social stigmatization require an intervention that goes beyond the possibilities of what is strictly the scope of education. The neighbourhood is therefore the best space in which to "territorialize" social action.

The role of the school within the community demands more participative governance of schools as institutions; they must also be more receptive to local needs. It is essential to identify and encourage activities that contribute to learning in childhood and in other groups outside the classroom. In 2013, in **Flanders** (Belgium), the policy of access to infant schools, primary and first cycle secondary education changed from a system involving free choice to one based on reserved places. The new system, which seeks to combat segregation, is based on proportional representation that reflects the social composition of the territory. In this system, each school centre must reserve places for people from socio-economically disfavoured backgrounds. It basically seeks a more equitable distribution between schools, without altering the preferences expressed by families.

It is also necessary to ensure that access to educational opportunities is extended throughout people's lives and that this goes beyond the framework of the school institution. This is to be achieved through non-formal education and social experiences of learning. In **Catalonia** (Spain), there are many examples of multilevel and multi-actor coordination. The *Pacto contra la Segregación Escolar y Red de Innovación Educativa* (Pact against School Segregation and Network for Educational Innovation) of 2019

allows coordination between public administrations and actors in civil society. Its starting point is that community-based education strategies should reach beyond the school and be effective at eliminating social prejudices, increasing intercultural contact and establishing mechanisms for consensus between different communities.[36] Other examples are the *Red de Innovación Educativa* (*Educational Innovation Network*) of **Viladecans** (Spain), which includes public administrations, schools, companies and families, and *Alianza Educación 360* (*360 Education Alliance*), which brings together municipalities, educational centres, social networks, professionals, sports and research centres, and non-profit-making organizations and puts education at the centre of their policies.[37]

Various experiences look to provide learning. These include the *Buen comienzo* (Good Start) programme of the Mayor's Office of **Medellin** (Colombia). Since 2006, this initiative has taken a holistic approach to taking care of the needs of vulnerable young children in the city, aged up to five years old. The children receive attention from an interdisciplinary team of nutritionists, psychologists, social workers, pedagogues and experts in physical education, as well as having access to food, sports and leisure services. The *Programa de educación antirracista para la inclusión y valorización de la diversidad étnica y cultural* (*Anti-racist education programme to promote inclusion and value ethnic and cultural diversity*) of **Santos** (Brazil), which has been promoted by the Secretariat for Education since 2004, has as its main objective the task of giving a voice, and protagonism, to groups that have historically been marginalized and valuing their tangible and intangible heritage. It also provides training in anti-racist education and gives visibility to the contributions of different communities to the history and culture of Brazil.

Measures to meet the training needs of adults have also multiplied. One interesting example is the *Programme to support urban health and food security* of **Praia** (Cape Verde), which carries out capacity building to guarantee food and nutritional security. The municipality has its own capacity-building and support centre, where the local population can learn how to create and maintain micro vegetable gardens in their homes in a sustainable way.

One challenge that needs to be considered is the generation gap for access to knowledge. The older population

35 International Association of Educating Cities, "Charter of Educating Cities," 2020, https://bit.ly/3v6WMiR.

36 See: International Association of Educating Cities, "Experiences," Educating Cities International Documents Databank, 2018, https://bit.ly/3KzCvZF.

37 See: International Association of Educating Cities.

Source: Secretaría de Inclusión Social de la Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá D.C.
Bogotá's Manzanas del Cuidado (Caring Blocks), Colombia.

are effectively excluded by lacking the digital skills that are essential for operating in a productive way in modern society, as shown and discussed in Chapter 6, on **Connecting**.

3.2.2 Urban health and care

Access to nearby, quality health services is one of the central demands for care at the local level. **Accelerated and unsustainable urbanization has an important negative impact on health.** In 2010, a World Health Organization (WHO) report already reiterated that the unplanned urbanization of many settlements and failure to provide them with appropriate services was associated with an increased risk of exposure to atmospheric pollution.[38] It added that a lack of basic urban services, sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy eating habits and low levels of physical activity had their greatest impact on old and poor people. Inequalities in health are known and referred to in literature on public health as "systematic differences in the opportunities groups have to achieve optimal health, leading to unfair and avoidable differences in health outcomes".[39] As in other sectors, inequalities in health have different effects upon the population according to race, nationality, socio-economic resources, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, migratory situation

and geographic location, amongst other factors (see Box 5.2 for a perspective of rural health). These factors present challenges to consolidating healthy cities and territories and condition the formulation of policies and the provision of healthcare services.[40]

LRGs can provide welfare for the population and contribute to a healthy lifestyle. **Amongst strategies for improving urban health, it is necessary to highlight providing primary care and innovative means of prevention**, looking to providing different groups within the urban population with better access to these local systems.

Progressing towards a healthy city also implies promoting care and the responsibility of citizens to look after nature (see Chapter 7, **Renaturing**), in the belief that "constantly creating and improving their physical and social environments, as well as expanding community resources so that people can support and help each other to carry out all the functions of life and develop to their maximum potential".[41] Amongst other forms of care, this includes:

(a) guaranteeing health through water, sanitation and hygiene, which are public health services and measures that are fundamental for preventing illness and death, which are threatened by climate change and environmental degradation;

(b) urban planning and design, which must guarantee proximity and equitable access to health services (for prevention, primary care and other services) and can contribute to physical and mental health by promoting physical activity, leisure and social action in public spaces; and

(c) promoting non-motorized transport, under safe and non-polluting conditions.[42]

Some recent trends in urban planning have added new care objectives in cities, such as being able to walk in safety, enjoying clean air, silence and lighting, and having the guarantee of a good night's rest.

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38 WHO, "Hidden Cities: Unmasking and Overcoming Health Inequities in Urban Settings" (Geneva, 2010), https://bit.ly/3O2MGYT.

39 Engineering and Medicine National Academies of Sciences, *Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2017), https://bit.ly/3E1EFid.

40 Pan American Health Organization, "Roundtable on Urbanism and Healthy Living," in *50th Directing Council. CD50/19, Add. II* (Eng.) (Washington, DC, 2010).

41 Leonard J. Duhl and A. K. Sánchez, "Healthy Cities and the City Planning Process: A Background Document on Links between Health and Urban Planning," 1999, https://bit.ly/38wDpZr.

42 Francisco Obando and Michael Keith, "Urban Health: Cities Can Care for People and Enable Them to Care for Others, Making Urban Health Possible," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

Box 5.2

Rural territories that care: An integrated and inclusive vision of health

Rural territories and areas have traditionally been conceived as merely providers of resources and services for the main urban centres. This has often brought with it the omission of the specific care needs of the peri-urban and rural populations, which do not always coincide with those of the urban population. One of the areas that presents the greatest challenges is that of health and healthcare, which has seen the redirecting of the majority of its resources, assets and people towards urban centres, in the search to generate economies of scale.[43] This, to a large extent, has left **villages and remote areas, which face important inequalities in the provision of health services, without coverage.**[44] Amongst other circumstances, rural populations have a greater incidence of chronic illnesses, unhealthy habits (sedentary lifestyles, obesity, tobacco, alcohol) and a high index of ageing. This is exacerbated by other structural determinants: high levels of poverty, a lack of employment, a lack of water and sanitation, a limited offer of public transport, and a deficit in roads, which is an obstacle to the delivery of medical services and makes them more expensive.

Accessing healthcare services online or via telemedicine from home is one of the proposals that has most been promoted in recent times. Looking beyond infrastructure and the necessary connectivity (see Chapter 6, **Connecting**), this requires confronting the digital divide, which can particularly affect the poorest homes and older people. Similarly, to reduce inequalities and generate and promote healthy territories, it is important to invest in primary care with a greater presence of specialized professionals. **Healthcare providers must develop patient-centred approaches and treat them not only from a clinical perspective, but also from a holistic perspective that encompasses the emotional, mental, social and financial dimensions.**[45] Closely related to this, it is important to encourage the participation of the population in health policy and the management of care in both rural areas and cities[46], to empower the population, to improve the provision of health services and their acceptance[47], and to sensibilize people as to the need to prevent illnesses. The prefecture of **Pichincha** (Ecuador) has worked to do this through its *Unidades Móviles de la Mujer* (*Mobile Women's Units*), which tours the territory on the request of its citizens to raise awareness of, and prevent, breast cancer, which is one of the most frequent illnesses affecting Ecuadorian women, and cervical cancer, which is usually most prevalent in rural than in urban areas[48]. Other mobile units that have been put into service have made it possible to take certain services into territories that were not previously able to offer them. This apples to services such as the prevention of adolescent pregnancies, dental and eye health, and specialized legal, psychological and social care for the victims of gender violence.[49] All of this has been carried out by adopting a **territorial approach which involves municipalities and parishes, which is capable of identifying the different needs of the population**, and which puts the emphasis on the human and social development of the provincial population.

43 McCann, "Access to Technology and Services across the EU Regional Divide."

44 OECD, *Rural Well-Being. Geography of Opportunities* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).

45 OECD, *Delivering Quality Education and Health Care to All. Preparing Regions for Demographic Change* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2021).

46 Zoë Heritage and Mark Dooris, "Community Participation and Empowerment in Healthy Cities," *Health Promotion International* 24, no. 1 (2009): 45–55, https://bit.ly/3LWLV1A.

47 Obando and Keith, "Urban Health: Cities Can Care for People and Enable Them to Care for Others, Making Urban Health Possible."

48 Radio Pichincha, "Prefectura de Pichincha cuida la salud de la comunidad," Pichincha Comunicaciones EP, 2021, https://bit.ly/3KvorjL.

49 Pichincha Humana, "Programas y proyectos especiales," 2022,
https://bit.ly/3riinUq.

One important expression of the great inequalities in cities is the average of age of death of their residents. In **Sao Paulo** (Brazil) a difference in life expectancy of up to 25.8 years has been observed between the district with the highest average age (and that with the lowest (Alto de Pinheiros: 79.67 years and Cidade Tiradentes: 53.85 years, respectively). In 17 of the 96 districts of the city, residents generally die before the age of 60. Even discounting the effect of the different age structures, these figures illustrate the unequal living conditions found in the different districts.[50]

Faced with the health challenges posed in urban areas, **local approaches and policies are needed that can guarantee access to water and sanitation.**[51] It is possible to prevent death morbidity through the appropriate provision of these services. The reality, however, is that, in 2020, only 76 % of the world's population a proper drinking water service, and only 54 % used safe sanitation services, while 29 % were still without adequate hygiene measures.[52] The lack of these services in poor countries and territories causes endemic illnesses and malnutrition, amongst other problems. The areas with inadequate access to water coincide with those that will face water stress related to climate change and environmental degradation in the coming years.

Cities can contribute to healthy living through urban planning and design. They can provide quality green spaces that encourage social interaction and public safety and reduce the impact of pollution. Similarly, they can introduce food systems for the city and region that strengthen urban agriculture and links with rural producers (as is underlined in Chapter 7, **Renaturing**).

For cities, it is a challenge to achieve a sustainable urban mobility that implies safety and freedom from pollution. A WHO report published in 2016, about exposure to air pollution and the burden of illness, showed that 80% of people who live in urban areas are exposed to levels of air pollution that exceed recommended limits.[53] Faced with this reality, **it is urgent to promote**

improvements in the quality of transport and other sources of urban air pollution. Other studies, carried out in high-income countries, relating to the impact of active transport on health, such as walking and going by bicycle, have concluded that the net health benefits are substantial (see Chapter 6, **Connecting**).

In spite of the increase in life expectancy in many countries, and sometimes because of it, some advances in the quality of life have stagnated. Studies from Spain have shown that together with an increase in life expectancy, since 2006, there has also been an increase in the time that people live with different ailments, and particularly hypertension, chronic backache, diabetes and heart disease.[54] One priority objective of health systems is, therefore, to reduce morbidity. This would result in a reduction in the demand for care, both by institutions and in the home.

One particularly noteworthy LRG experience which has contributed to care is the *Barrios Saludables* (*Healthy Neighbourhoods*) programme of **Quito** (Ecuador). To achieve healthier environments, it empowered teams working at the neighbourhood level and integrated the departments of health, education, urban planning and waste collection, amongst others. There is also the *Healthy Streets* project of **London** (UK), which has brought together the departments of transport, public health, spatial planning, the environment and economic development, to promote what it called "a healthy city".[55]

As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, public health problems can affect the population as a whole, but their effects are magnified in the most socio-economically vulnerable sectors of society. In a context dominated by risk, **LRGs facilitating mutual and collective care and structuring different areas of response, has assumed even greater importance**.

3.2.3 Other social policies and policies for protecting rights

Education and health have historically been two key areas for the provision of care. Even so, **there are a series of social policies and measures for the protection of the rights of specific groups that are fundamental for advancing social inclusion**

50 Antonio Prado and Vera Kiss, "Urbanización e igualdad: dos dimensiones clave para el desarrollo sostenible de América Latina," in *¿Quién cuida en la ciudad? Aportes para políticas urbanas de igualdad,* ed. María Nieves Rico and Olga Segovia (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 2017), 45–95.

51 Obando and Keith, "Urban Health: Cities Can Care for People and Enable Them to Care for Others, Making Urban Health Possible."

52 UN-Water, "Summary Progress Update 2021: SDG 6 - Water and Sanitation for All" (Geneva, 2021), https://bit.ly/36bqbQy.

53 WHO, "Ambient Air Pollution: A Global Assessment of Exposure and Burden of Disease" (Geneva, 2016), https://bit.ly/3uC6KJT.

54 Pilar Zueras, Elisenda, and Rentería, "La esperanza de vida libre de enfermedad no aumenta en España," *Perspectives demogràfiques* January 21, no. 22 (2021): 1–4, https://bit.ly/3roM3PD.

55 Obando and Keith, "Urban Health: Cities Can Care for People and Enable Them to Care for Others, Making Urban Health Possible."

and the caring role of LRGs. This involves areas as diverse as housing, food provision, social protection and combating discrimination, supporting workers in the informal economy, and providing attention to the migrant population, amongst others. Understanding that there is not sufficient space in this Chapter to examine each of these specific themes (see Chapter 4 on **Commoning** and Chapter 8 on **Prospering**), this section focuses on four specific groups: people with disabilities, older people, groups particularly exposed to urban violence, and migrants.

Participation autonomy and the civil rights of people with disabilities

It is possible to understand disability as the result of "the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".[56]

Theoretical approaches to disabilities are more and more nuanced when it comes to tackling their complexity. Nevertheless, the treatment of disabilities in practical interventions tends to be more black-and-white. Social policy frequently uses cut off criteria for the right to social protection; these are often based on medical evaluations and, therefore, largely binary: disabled versus not disabled. This approach to disabilities is problematical, as it fails to recognize that **people experience disabilities in complex, specific and relational ways**. It is important to emphasize disabilities as part of a wider spectrum of exclusions, but there is also an important political function in recognizing PWD as a distinct group with its own voice, which is a crucial requirement for its mobilization in an active struggle to achieve its self-determination and rights. Gaining recognition for its own identity may, for example, occur with the adoption of disability as a positive and politicized identity,[57] and through the mobilization of PWD as groups with a recognizable interest in their own heterogeneity and complexity.[58]

Attention to disabilities is a fundamental objective from the perspective of *Caring* pathways to equality. However, it can cause tension with respect to other objectives of PWD related to their autonomy and independence; this tension has been expressed in both academic literature and in calls for a disability movement.[59] The Global Compact on Inclusive and Accessible Cities highlights the importance of allowing everyone to live independently. It also calls for appropriate measures to be taken in cities and human settlements to facilitate full participation of PWD and older people by eliminating existing barriers.

The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* specifies their rights to physical surroundings, transport, information and communications, including technology and other public facilities and services. **Gothenburg** (Sweden) has worked in this direction via its *One City for Everyone* project. The city is creating an inventory of public buildings and spaces to measure accessibility; it includes schools, old people's homes, libraries, museums, sports installations and parks. This instrument is employed via an electronic database which is open to all citizens. It can be used to verify whether a certain building or public space is adapted to their needs. The city transport authority has developed the *Travel Planner*, which makes it possible to find the best way to travel according to the accessibility neds of each person.[60]

The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* has called to move beyond policies that ensure accessibility to care infrastructure. **It demands the development of policies that promote the leadership of PWD in talking decisions about issues that affect them, exercising their rights in contexts of informality, and providing help with (paid and unpaid) care work.** In **Freetown** (Sierra Leone), the municipality promotes accessibility to medical attention for PWD in informal settlements. The project has carried out research involving various PWD and some members of the community without disabilities in order to identify their aspirations and demands. One of the key challenges that they have highlighted is the very limited water and sanitation infrastructure at the settlement. This has caused problems both for the self-care of PWD and for their carers when it comes to implementing daily hygiene practices.

56 See point e] of the preamble of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: United Nations, "United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," 2006, https://bit.ly/3KFWjL8.

57 Susan Peters, Susan Gabel, and Simoni Symeonidou, "Resistance, Transformation and the Politics of Hope: Imagining a Way Forward for the Disabled People's Movement," *Disability & Society* 24, no. 5 (2009): 543–56.

58 Julian Walker, "Disability, Care, and the City," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

59 Walker.

60 See: Inter-American Development Bank, "Ciudades accesibles: ¿cómo diseñar ciudades aptas para personas con discapacidad?," Ciudades sostenibles, 2015, https://bit.ly/3LVs3vK.

The lack of attention given to PWD is an urgent problem. Outside high-income countries, there are few specific social protection projects, although there are some exceptions (such as South Africa and Fiji).[61] It is important to address the question of caring for and promoting the independence and autonomy of PWD, and their development, from the perspective of *mutual support*. This is an approach based on a feminist ethic of care that demands meeting a series of care criteria relating to responsibility, competence and receptiveness.[62]

Taking these discussions into account, cites that care for PWD should:

(a) promote an emancipatory care model that supports their autonomy and self-determination, emphasizing interdependence, instead of only focusing on independence;

(b) recognize the importance of the emotional and relational aspects of care; and

(c) attribute value to the social and economic functions of carers and care work.[63]

The prevalence of disability tends to be lower in urban than in rural areas. The WHO *World Report on Disability* found a prevalence of "significant difficulties" in 14.6% of PWD living in urban areas, as opposed to 16.4% of those living in rural areas – a figure that in low-income countries increases to 16.5% in urban areas, as opposed to 18.6% in rural areas.[64]

Instruments like the UNESCO *Assessment Tool for Inclusive Cities in Indonesia* underline the importance of these groups having political participation and being present when decisions concerning their needs are taken in municipal plans.[65] The challenge is to increase the capacity for collective action in the decision-making relating to urban and territorial policies.[66]

Source: Angus Stewart.
A participant in the AT2030 Research Project in Freetown, whose wheelchair was acquired second hand, with no access to assistive technology care services such as fitting or training. Sierra Leone.

Older people and care

The ageing of the population is one of the most significant social transformations of the twenty-first century, and has consequences for almost all sectors of society. In the coming decades, many countries will be placed under important social and political pressure due to the need for healthcare, pensions and social protection for older people. According to the report *World Population Prospects* (2019),[67] by 2050, one in six people in the world will be over 65 years old (16%), compared to the proportion of one in 11 in 2019 (9%). In 2018, for the first time in history, there were more people in the world aged over 65 than children aged under five years old.

The maps in Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 show the predicted rates of world population growth until the year 2050 and the possible evolution of the rate of dependency of the population aged over 65 with respect to that in the central age range (from 25 to 64).

61 Walker, "Disability, Care, and the City."

62 Joan C. Tronto, "An Ethic of Care," *Generations: Journal of the American Society on Aging* 22, no. 3 (1998): 15–20.

63 Walker, "Disability, Care, and the City."

64 WHO, *World Report on Disability 2011*.

65 UNESCO, "Assessment Tool for Inclusive Cities" (Jakarta, 2017), https://bit.ly/37ZFlnk.

66 Alexandre Apsan Frediani et al., "Institutional Capabilities towards Urban Equality: Reflections from the KNOW Programme in Bangalore, Kampala and Havana," KNOW Working Paper Series (London, 2020), https://bit.ly/3K6ESC4.

67 See: UNDESA, "World Population Prospects 2019," Population Division, 2019, https://bit.ly/3wvYElK.

Figure 5.1

Forecast of active/inactive population (number of people aged between 25 and 64 years old / number of people over 65 years old) for 2025; based on the medium variant projection
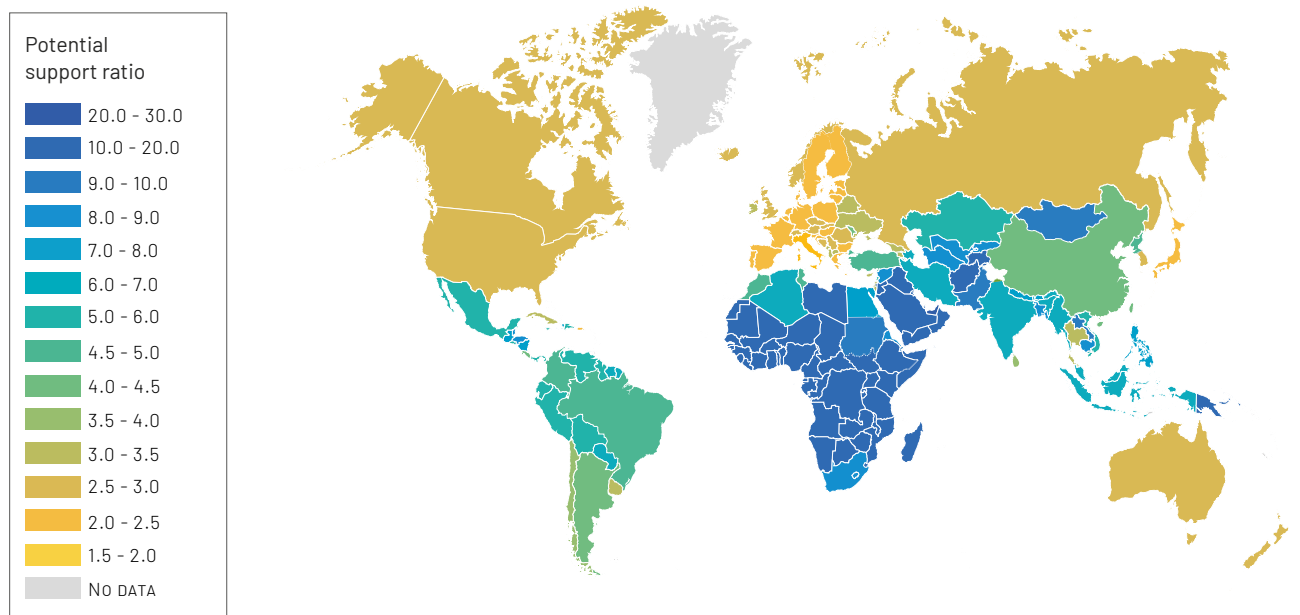
Source: UNDESA, "World Population Prospects 2019," Population Division, 2019, https://bit.ly/3wvYEIK.
Copyright © 2019 by United Nations, made available under a Creative Commons license CC BY 3.0 IGO: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/igo/

Figure 5.2

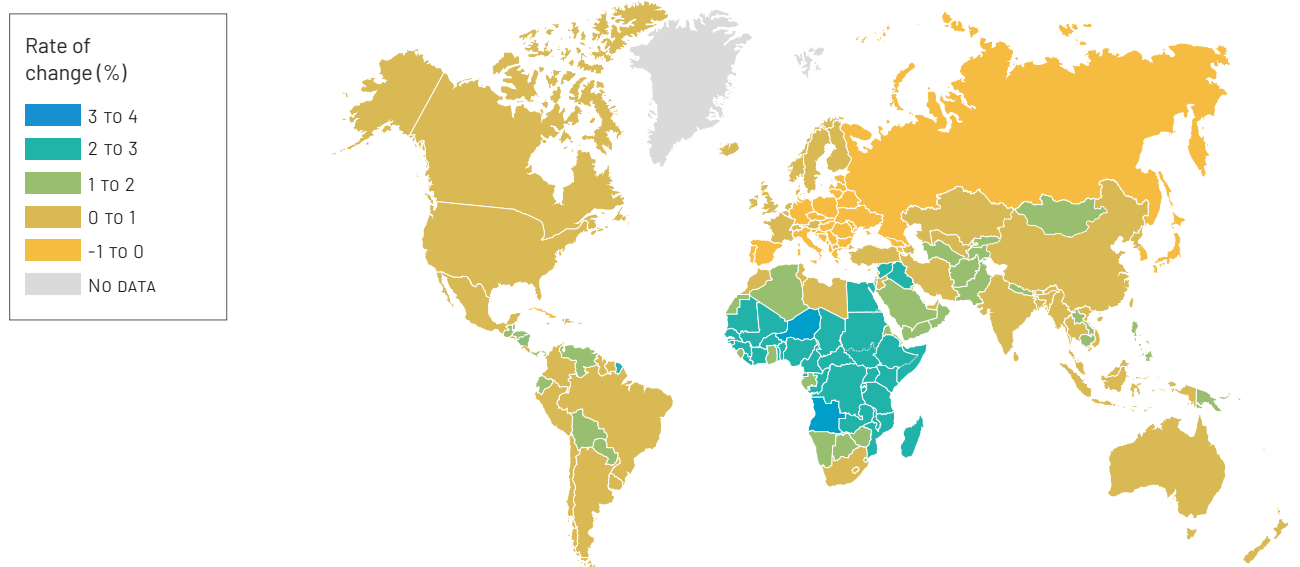**Average annual rate of demographic change (in %) for 2025–2030; according to the medium variant projection**

Source: UNDESA, "World Population Prospects 2019," Population Division, 2019, https://bit.ly/3wvYEIK.
Copyright © 2019 by United Nations, made available under a Creative Commons license CC BY 3.0 IGO: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/igo/

As the youth and old age thresholds change, social organization based on age will have to change. **Technology is already introducing support in the field of care through telecare: contact systems that make it possible to reduce the degree of in-person monitoring. However, this measure cannot fully replace personalized care delivered in person, which is very expensive in terms of attention.** The last stages of life for PWD and dependent people are extraordinarily demanding everywhere, in terms of individual and collective resources, and also in monetary and non-monetary terms.[68]

At present, LRGs have taken action to advance towards answering this challenge. The WHO's *Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities*[69] has already brought together more than 1,000 cities and communities all over the world. It has made a platform available to its members that permits the exchange of good practices, information and mutual support. It also offers advice and knowledge about how to evaluate the degree to which a given city or community is adapted to meet the needs of older people; how to integrate a perspective that takes these people into consideration when conducting urban planning and action; and how to create environments that are adapted to meet their needs. This initiative focuses on eight thematic areas: transport; housing; social participation; respect and social inclusion; civic participation and employment; communications and information; community and health services; and outdoor spaces and buildings.

Along these lines, the First World Assembly on Ageing (which was held in Vienna, in 1982) highlighted the need for publicly constructed solutions to housing issues and for the application of specific community services to meet the needs of this age group.

Cities free from violence against women, LGBTQIA+ groups, and children and adolescents

Urban violence and insecurity present various risks and connotations for men and women. It manifests itself both in the home and outside it. There is little reliable data about domestic violence, which is an extreme form of "anti-care" which mainly affects women, children and older people. There are very little data available from either surveys or official records (police complaints, murders, etc.) due to reticence to make them public. In the case of women and LGBTQIA+ people, there is the additional threat of this resulting in bodily harm, which takes their fears to another level. However, this type of violence is still not sufficiently taken into consideration by policies undertaken in cities that seek to reduce and, if possible, prevent insecurity.

A fragmented and disconnected city, with peripheral and marginalized neighbourhoods that lack urban services, affects the sense of belonging and identification with the local territory, and also increases urban insecurity; this has a major impact on the overall autonomy of certain people and groups (women, LGBTQIA+ people, children, adolescents, older people, etc.). When people feel fear, they avoid public spaces, use urban services with less frequency, and change their routes. In short, they redefine and restrict the time and space that they dedicate to exchanges and movements within the city.[70] In the same way, the capacity of children to circulate in areas perceived as unsafe is also directly affected. For example, in **London** (UK), in 2017, it is estimated that, on average, children only moved within a radius of 300 metres from their houses. This was due, amongst other factors, to road safety issues and to the threat of violence; in 1919, they would have moved within a radius of around 10 kilometres.[71]

The *Charter for Women's Right to the City* (2004) constituted a landmark in the debate about the recognition of the demands of women to include their interests in political agendas.[72] The Charter highlighted proposals related to territorial management and guaranteeing the participation of women in local affairs. It also called for the right to safe and sustainable cities, including equitable access to housing and urban amenities, and for the creation of services dedicated to caring for the dependent population.

Along the same lines, the *European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life*, which was adopted by

68 María Ángeles Durán Heras, "El futuro del cuidado: el envejecimiento de la población y sus consecuencias," *Pasajes: Revista de pensamiento contemporáneo* 50 (2016): 114–27, https://bit.ly/3Pw1Kiv.

69 WHO, "Age-Friendly World," WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities, 2022, https://bit.ly/3lucro1.

70 Olga Segovia Marín, "Convivencia en la diversidad: una mirada de género al espacio público," in *Mujeres en la ciudad. de violencias y derechos*, ed. Ana Falú (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones SUR, 2009), 145–62.

71 Sandra Vicente, "Tim Gill: 'Garantir un estiu de joc és un reconeixement als sacrificis que els infants han fet durant la pandèmia,'" *El Diari de l'Educació - Educa.Barcelona*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3MD1UTy.

72 This document was produced at the World Women's Forum, which was held in Barcelona, in 2004, and was associated with the World Urban Forum. See: World Women's Forum, "Charter for Women's Right to the City," 2004, https://bit.ly/3Pw08Fv.

the Council of European Municipalities and Regions in 2006, was both a political and a practical instrument and proposed specific measures for achieving equality between women and men in different competence areas, such as: political participation, employment, public services and urban planning.[73]

Sexual harassment and other forms of violence in public spaces are found in all countries, in both rural areas and cities, and even in virtual spaces. Understanding the nature of gender violence highlights the urgent need to provide effective, holistic solutions. The UN Women's worldwide initiative entitled *Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces*[74] focuses on carrying out local-level action to put an end to violence against women and girls, and to support the political participation and economic empowerment of women. Such initiatives are helping cities to combat the normalization of sexual harassment and other forms of gender violence, with special attention being given to women and girls who live in the poorest neighbourhoods and/or who are discriminated against because of their race, ethnic group, age, disability or sexual orientation.

Source: Ferran Thornycroft, President/CEO of STUCCO. Group of residents removing a dead palm tree from the communal garden during a quarterly cleanup. Australia.

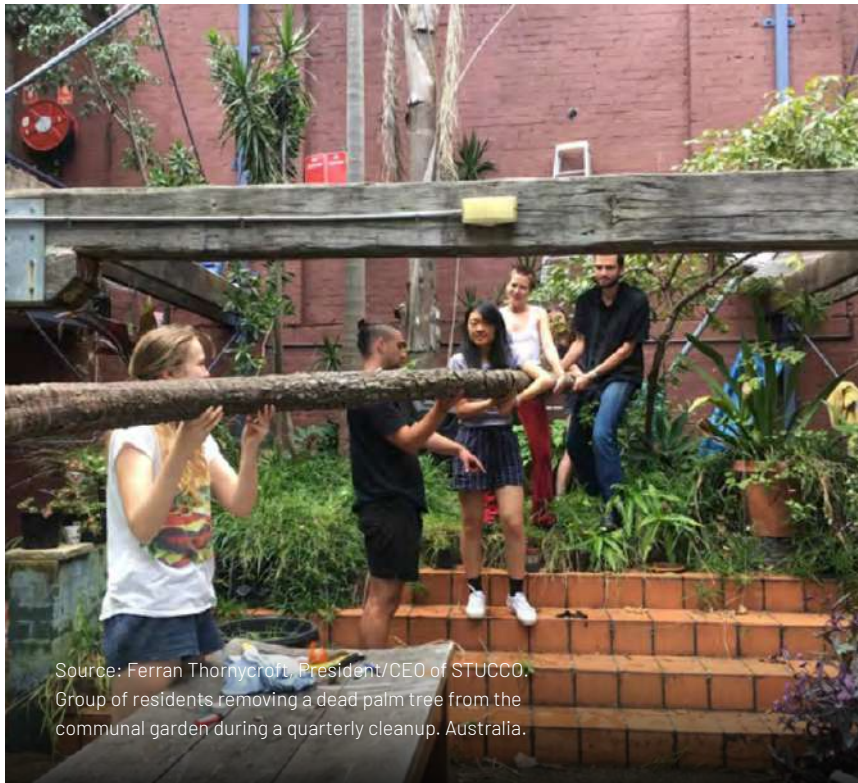## The complexities and opportunities of migration

Human mobility, which ranges from voluntary movements to forced displacements, is one of the highest-priority challenges on the international agenda. It constitutes a complex, global phenomenon, whose origins and effects relate to many different economic, social, cultural and security-related phenomena and has important implications for the future. It can have benefits for migrants and their families and also for transit and destination countries, and even for their places of origin.[75] The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a general framework for approaching the relationship between migration and development, including migrants in its basic aim to leave no one behind.

According to data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in 2020 alone, more than 281 million people around the world moved. This is a situation which has become even more complex in 2022, with

the eruption of more armed conflicts.[76] The causes and reasons for their displacements have been many and varied: the search for better opportunities; fleeing from situations of violence, war and conflict; extreme climatic conditions; and reuniting families, are just a few of them. **Migration does not affect everyone and everywhere in the same way, and in many cases, it takes place in unfavourable circumstances, particularly if the legal status of the migrants is irregular.**

Although migration policy is the responsibility of national-level authorities, filters and barriers are set up at the points of initial contact. Historically speaking, cities have been, and still are, places of refuge. Around 60% of refugees and 80% of the population displaced within their own countries move to urban areas.[77] However, the formulation of migration policies at the local and regional levels to attend to the migrant population is still in its infancy and often meets with resistance.

Migratory experience tends to exacerbate existing inequalities and vulnerabilities related to race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, age and disability. Many migrants directly participate in the care challenges faced in cities, both as those receiving care and also by working as caregivers.

73 See: CEMR-CCRE, "European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life," 2022, https://bit.ly/3Owrl4K.

74 UN-Women, "Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces: Global Results Report" (New York, 2017), https://bit.ly/3K6yStp.

75 IOM, "World Migration Report 2018" (Geneva, 2017), https://bit.ly/3ED6r4T.

76 IOM, "World Migration Report 2020" (Geneva, 2019), https://bit.ly/3rK927T.

77 Hans Park, "The Power of Cities," UNHCR Innovation, 2016, https://bit.ly/3OstJ1X.

Cities do not only have to fight against restricted mandates, resources and knowledge that reduce their capacity to take care of new arrivals; they must also struggle with the local repercussions of decisions taken by central authorities, such as budget allocations or the creation of camps to house displaced populations.[78] In Europe, as a result of the refugee crisis of 2015, numerous initiatives by individual cities and coalitions of cities became visible. While national governments sought to limit flows of immigrants across their borders, these initiatives proposed specific and symbolic actions to receive those coming from countries like Syria and Iraq and seeking asylum. The crisis in this region has since been further aggravated by the outbreak of war in Ukraine in 2022.

As the main point of contact when migrant populations arrive, LRGs usually have to implement support action and to provide basic services for their new residents. However, procedures are often complicated by the lack of resources and information, language barriers and discrimination.

Several experiences have sought to tackle these challenges. In **Amsterdam** (the Netherlands), migrants receive assessment on employment, education, entrepreneurship, participation and language. In **Berlin** (Germany), representatives of immigrant organizations participate in the State Advisory Board on Migration and Integration.[79] The Local Centre for Migrants' Integration and Support of the City Council of **Lisbon** (Portugal) works as a "single-window" service that provides information and support. **Johannesburg's** (South Africa) Policy on Integration of Migrants recognizes the crucial role that local civil society and organizations led by immigrants can play in this process. In **Bogota** (Colombia), the local Ombudsperson has social responsibility for the work carried out by the local public administration and presents the concerns of local residents before their representatives. The activism of cities on issues relating to migration at the global scale has led to the establishment of international networks, like the *Mayors' Mechanism* of the *Global Forum on Migration and Development*, which was set up in 2018.[80]

The *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, of 2018,[81] which was promoted by the UN as a way of complying with the 2030 Agenda, is a tool for promoting governance which fosters the improved well-being and integration of migrants in their countries of transit and destination. Along these lines, and as part of the Coalition of Latin American and Caribbean Cities against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia, the local authorities of **Quito** (Ecuador), **Mexico City** (Mexico), **Medellin** (Colombia) and **Montevideo** (Uruguay) have reflected upon the structural dynamics of racism and discrimination against vulnerable people, with special emphasis on groups of migrants.[82]

One of the characteristics of today's migratory movements throughout the world is their growing feminization. This is not so much characterized by an increase in the movement of women, but by the fact that more and more women migrate independently. On top of the uprooting that this situation causes, it is necessary to add the fact that, both during migratory transit and at their destination, women and girls face various types of inequality that limit their protection and ability to exercise their rights.[83] In a similar way, LGBTQIA+ migrants and refugees face specific threats and violence during their migratory experience. To deal with some of these challenges, **Sao Paulo** (Brazil) developed its *Municipal Plan of Public Policies for Refugees and Migrants (2021-2024)*, whose objectives include promoting the inclusion and participation of women and LGBTQIA+ members of migrant communities.[84]

It is interesting to highlight the fact that the notion of "reciprocity" points to the need to promote the recognition of the diversity of people and of their living conditions. At the same time, it is crucial to encourage people to recognize themselves and to lead campaigns related to their social identities and the injustices in their living conditions. This recognition does not become something unilateral, or imposed, but rather a reciprocal action.[85]

78 Alia Fakhry, "'Sanctuary Cities': How Do Cities Care for Newcomers? An Overview of Inclusive Local Responses to Migration," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

79 See: UN-Habitat, "Local Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees. A Gateway to Existing Ideas, Resources and Capacities for Cities Across the World" (Nairobi, 2021), https://bit.ly/3xKV2i4.

80 Fakhry, "'Sanctuary Cities': How Do Cities Care for Newcomers? An Overview of Inclusive Local Responses to Migration."

81 United Nations, "The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration," 2022, https://bit.ly/3rIYXbD.

82 IOM, "World Migration Report 2015 - Migrants and Cities: New Partnerships to Manage Mobility" (Geneva, 2015), https://bit.ly/3MmppPZ.

83 UNDP, ILO, and IOM, "Guía de planificación: mujeres migrantes y medios de vida," 2021, https://bit.ly/3vAPJiL.

84 Fakhry, "'Sanctuary Cities': How Do Cities Care for Newcomers? An Overview of Inclusive Local Responses to Migration."

85 Christopher Yap, Camila Cociña, and Caren Levy, "The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

4 Towards cities and territories that care: Recognizing, redistributing and reducing the burden of care work

The care crisis calls for sustainable measures and policies based on a new model of social organization which responds to current and future needs. **The consequences of the persistent sexual, socio-economic and racial division of labour are multiple**: (a) a step backwards in the participation of women in the world of work and their concentration in poorly paid employment; (b) an increase in poverty amongst people who provide care and those who require care; (c) a loss of human talent; (d) the physical, mental and emotional toll on those who provide care, etc.

The so-called "new normality", which is implicit to the current healthcare and social crisis, requires opening the way to important changes in the modalities and structure of both productive and reproductive work, with new reorganizational challenges that must be assumed by homes, society and the state. **It is necessary to move forward in the recognition of the central role of care for the sustainability of life, for the working of economies and for processes of economic recovery that advance gender equality. This recognition is crucial to achieve a greater level of coresponsibility for care between the state, the market and communities, and between men and women.**[86]

Achieving substantive equality and the empowerment of women requires recognizing the inequalities that are present in work destined for the provision of unpaid care and building the conditions required to reduce and redistribute it. It is therefore central to:

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86 CEPAL-ECLAC and UN-Women, "Care in Latin America and the Caribbean during the COVID-19: Towards Comprehensive Systems to Strengthen Response and Recovery" (Santiago de Chile, 2020), https://bit.ly/3K4OIES.

(a) **Recognize**, make visible and revalue care work (and also those who provide it and who need it) as being of key importance for the well-being of societies and for the working of their economies. This involves recognizing both care service provided in the heart of the home and those that constitute an economic sector through decent employment;

(b) **Redistribute**, in a fair and balanced way, unpaid care work and domestic responsibilities between men and women, and between different social groups; and

(c) **Reduce** the load of unpaid work, diminishing the burden which women have to assume in the home, via the provision of local public care services, support and better coverage of basic care needs. This should be done from a rights-based perspective, and based on the principles of equality, universality and solidarity.[87]

The above implies, amongst others, the following challenges:

(a) *Democratizing* or, in other words, promoting coresponsibility and participation in the taking of decisions; redistributing the provision of care between the state, the market, the community and families; and ensuring the participation of people who provide care and those who need or receive care in decision-making spaces;

(b) *Decommodifying* the care experience, moving on from the mantra "who can pay, can have access". Having access to quality care services is a way of reducing social inequalities and of guaranteeing the rights of those who require care and those who provide care; and

(c) *Defeminizing* or, in other words, deconstructing gender roles by making caring an option and including those who deliver unpaid care within the social protection system.[88]

Source: ACHR.
The Suwit Watnoo Homeless Center, in Bangkok's Taling Chan District, was the country's first homeless shelter to be designed, built and managed entirely by homeless people themselves. Thailand.

Both the state and its territorial political organs have an important role to play in providing care. They can, for example, directly provide goods, infrastructure and services. At the same time, they can legislate to allow, promote, encourage or oblige other actors to cover care needs. Providing public and social care infrastructure has the potential, in the medium and long term, to reduce inequalities, especially if the quality of the public and private community services that provide care are adequately regulated and controlled.

Advancing towards the right to care and to receive care implies the construction of care systems that provide a wide range of coverage. It also implies recognizing those areas of public action that require focused actions for specific groups, such as those who are in situations of dependency, and those sectors that can be run based on the principles of universality, such as health and education. One important aspect that must be taken into consideration is the most efficient scale for approaching care within different territories. It has been proposed that this should be the neighbourhood, as this is where solidarities are woven and where women build and rebuild the empathic mark of care.[89] It is important to measure and give value to the broad contribution that women make to the development of care.

On *Caring* pathways, it is possible to identify contexts and conditions that create an atmosphere that is conducive to advancing in the development of practices that give a central position to the challenges and responses associated with urban and territorial equality. The different initiatives that are discussed below touch on the different subjects and demands that these pathways propose. They are organized around

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87 Sallé and Molpeceres, "Recognition, Redistribution and Reduction of Care Work. Inspiring Practices in Latin America and the Caribbean."

88 CEPAL-ECLAC, "Panorama Social de América Latina," 2017.

89 Pollo, Falú, and Franganillo, "Transformar los cuidados, ampliar la autonomía feminista."

the three groups of strategies mentioned earlier, as a way of reflecting on the key challenges associated with care in the widest sense of the term. It is possible to highlight solidarity experiences of different types and scales that have approached care from a rights, inclusion and sustainability-based perspective.

4.1 Recognizing and democratizing care: Civic participation for urban and territorial equity

Civil society and LRGs have given rise to numerous experiences following a process of trial, search and learning (and sometimes conflictive struggles) on the part of the communities concerned. These have covered such themes as homelessness and the inclusion of groups that have traditionally suffered marginalization in decision making processes and in terms of safety and security.

Organizations and social networks have shown that **when people have the opportunity to organize themselves and to actively participate in tackling their problems, this process strengthens them and their solutions are usually more in line with their real needs than external proposals implemented in a top-down manner**. There now follow a selection of noteworthy experiences related to this subject.

° The Thailand Homeless Network (THN) in **Bangkok** (Thailand).[90] The network provides an example of how, through activism and with the support of NGOs and LRGs, homeless people (who are amongst the poorest and most marginalized in the city) managed to find innovative and appropriate to their needs

for care and attention. Instead of the traditional response of public shelters that separate different members the same family, the THN proposes self-managed centres that offer different options to meet families' needs for housing and care. The action taken has included the creation of spaces, training and developing productive activities. This has taken place during the COVID-19 pandemic. The self-managed centre located in Bangkok has also been able to influence the policy of the city's municipal authority. With the support of central government and of various LRGs, the experience has now been replicated in three other cities in Thailand.

° Networks of street vendors of **Delhi** (India) and **Durban** (South Africa).[91] Street vendors affected by the closure of economic activity due to COVID-19 organized themselves in order to maintain their sources of work as well as their health security and that of their buyers. Their organization emerged in response to the need for care and access to food during the pandemic. In Delhi, they received the support of the National Hawkers Federation in India, and from the Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing network. In Durban, they received support from the NGO Asiye eTafuleni. Although the two cities are very different, these organizations both introduced innovations such as the provision of basic infrastructure, and especially washing stations, and spatially redesigned commercial areas. They also introduced social distancing measures and came to agreements with their local authorities over such measures. This suggests a possible way of minimizing health risks and maximizing opportunities for subsistence and thereby contributing to care in the community.

Some LRGs have recognized the need to prioritize the recognition and democratization of care. Starting from a human rights perspective, in various cities it has been possible to observe an evolution in the concept of security (which is a challenge facing LRGs), which has integrated notions such as inclusion, non-discrimination, peace culture and gender equality. From this perspective, **caring for citizens implies a transformation in the public perception of official institutions and their personnel. As a result of this change, citizenship and institutionalization have come to be seen as allies.**

90 Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, "Thailand Homeless Network," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

91 WIEGO and Asiye eTafuleni, "Public Space Trading Innovations in Delhi, India and Durban, South Africa," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

In recent decades, there has been a rise in new initiatives carried out by city networks, such as Mayors for Peace, the European Forum for Urban Security, and the World Forum of Cities and Territories of Peace. These initiatives are currently helping to recover cities as *places*, and by LRGs, which are working as *actors* that take care of their citizens.[92]

Some of the most outstanding experiences are explained below.

° The Ombudspersons of **Seoul** (Republic of Korea). The city has a system of ombudspersons that allows residents to directly report any violations of human rights. This often affects people who need, or provide, care as they are collectives that have traditionally been excluded and structurally discriminated against. The system provides representation before a tribunal formed by local authorities and defenders of human rights. As part of its local human rights policy, Seoul has introduced an ambitious training programme that has reached more than 40,000 government officials.[93]

° Police training. In various cities, police institutions have introduced capacity-building programmes and have adopted new approaches and protocols. Amongst other examples, **Mexico City** (Mexico) has set up an online academy to train police officials on the specific subject of violence against women and girls. In response to recent cases of police brutality, many cities in the USA are now making changes to their policing procedures. **Atlanta** has adopted new protocols to prevent police brutality; **Oakland** has incorporated a violence prevention approach driven by organizations from its local communities; and **New York** has transferred 1,000 million USD, which had previously been assigned to the police force, to civil agencies that work in public security and to improve youth centres.

° Security policies with non-discrimination strategies. Within these policies, it is relevant to highlight non-discrimination strategies that celebrate diversity within the city.[94] The Human Rights Office of **New York** (USA) has promoted a campaign called "I still believe in our city". In **Vancouver** (Canada), in order to combat anti-Asian hatred arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, a campaign was launched with the slogan "It's a health issue, not a race issue". In Europe, the department of **Seine-Saint Denis** (France) and **Barcelona** (Spain) have focused on producing information about discrimination at the local level. Through its membership of the Rainbow Cities network, **Amsterdam** (the Netherlands) has advanced in its policy of preventing violence against the LGBTQIA+ community, which includes interventions in the public space and in the school system.

° Promoting a culture of peace. **Grigny** (France) has introduced a plan from the framework of the Mayors for Peace initiative. This implies integrating peace culture into public events, school curricula, and youth clubs, among other actions. **Mexico City** (Mexico) has proposed the *Maps of peace* initiative, which is closely associated with the World Forum on Cities and Territories of Peace. Its objective is to emphasize the role of the city as a place of coexistence.[95] Similarly, the narrative of the peaceful coexistence has been promoted in different neighbourhoods and the fight against the normalization of violence has made it possible to change perceptions about peace and urban security by giving a voice to local residents.

The task of recognizing and democratizing care has also been materialized in efforts to provide answers to the needs of migrant groups.

° The inclusion of migrants. In **Amsterdam** (the Netherlands), the initiative *Amsterdam Focus* was established in 2017. Through it, migrants are provided with guidance, over a period of three years, in areas such as employment, education, entrepreneurship, participation and language. In **Quilicura** (Chile), in response to cases of discrimination against migrant students in municipal schools, public employees were given training about human mobility as a right. In **Vienna** (Austria), migrants are offered training

92 Jaume Puigpinós and Amanda Fléty (UCLG CSIPDHR), "Local Governments' Shifting Approaches to Urban Security: The Role of Care in Advancing Peace Culture and Social Justice," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

93 Jaume Puigpinós and Amanda Fléty (UCLG CSIPDHR), "Reinventing and Expanding Social Assistance to Vulnerable Groups in the Wake of the COVID-19 Crisis," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

94 Puigpinós and Fléty (UCLG CSIPDHR), "Local Governments' Shifting Approaches to Urban Security: The Role of Care in Advancing Peace Culture and Social Justice." Experiences from Chihuahua, Seoul, Atlanta, Oakland, New York, Mexico City, Barcelona, Seine-Saint Denis, Vancouver, Amsterdam, Grigny, Gwangju, Bogota, the Local Government Association of the United Kingdom, Granollers and Rivas Vaciamadrid.

95 Puigpinós and Fléty (UCLG CSIPDHR).

Source: Fred Romero, Flickr.
Les Grands Voisins – Hôpital Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, Paris, France.

4.2 Redistributing and decommodifying care: Public management and capacities for social protection and care

in various different areas of knowledge. In **Paris** (France), *Les Grand Voisins* (*The Great Neighbours*) is a reception centre for refugees installed in an old hospital which the city has made available for this purpose. In **Mogadishu** (Somalia), sites have been selected for housing projects and prototypes have been developed that have been complemented by a plan for rented accommodation.[96]

° Collaborations to support migrants between civil society in Asia.[97] Studies involving migrants at **Gwangju** (Republic of Korea) have shown the importance of CSOs providing information and assistance and facilitating mechanisms that improve the access that migrants have to information that allows them to navigate through the public systems and services provided by the LRGs in their host country.

Migrant women and their children are particularly vulnerable to abuse, violence, exploitation and discrimination. Protecting and ensuring the rights of these groups is essential for tackling urban inequalities based on gender and age within migration processes.

From civil society, and in collaboration with LRGs, various experiences have advanced models for housing management led by communities that seek to decommodify urban space and housing and to treat it as a space with which to respond to the care needs of specific sectors of the population.[98]

Access to housing for groups that commonly suffer discrimination is one of the ways in which public action can sponsor collaborative projects that foster mutual aid. The following cases show how some groups have solved their housing and care needs.

° Communities of older LGBTQIA+ people – **London** (UK).[99] Tonic Housing Association is a non-profit-making organization which creates urban communities for older, retired LGBTQIA+ people. The first community established Bankhouse One Housing, which is a group of housing destined for people over 55 years old. Tonic acquired 19 properties in this complex in 2021 and is currently evaluating other sites in London in order to develop more LGBTQIA+ affirmative retirement communities. Tonic collaborates with the Greater London Authority

96 UN-Habitat, "Local Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees. A Gateway to Existing Ideas, Resources and Capacities for Cities Across the World."

97 Global Platform for the Right to the City, "Migration Experiences in China and Other Asian Countries," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

98 Housing led by the community is a model for producing affordable housing without speculation. In addition, it contributes to the right to housing and plays an important role in the integration of care practices and of marginalized communities and/or those with specific needs.

99 CoHabitat Network, "Community-Led Housing: A Driver of Social Inclusion for Vulnerable Urban Populations," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

and with other local councils in the metropolitan area, and with investors, developers and registered housing providers to purchase properties and land destined for projects. The Greater London Authority has offered political support to the LGBTQIA+ community: it has acted as a facilitator and has often financed initiatives through capital loans and income from the Mayor of London's Community Housing Fund. Tonic is also working in association with the LGBT Foundation in **Manchester** (UK) to create an LGBTQIA+ affirmative retirement community which will be developed on a site purchased by the city council. This again illustrates how support provided by LRGs can facilitate the creation of projects with a high social value that help to reduce social inequality and facilitate care for specific groups.

°   Cooperatives of university students.[100] During their student years, young people are a social group with particular care needs. Often, their studies do not allow them to actively participate in the labour market. Combined with the usual lack of affordable housing solutions, this generates precariousness and impedes the development of their studies. Several housing cooperatives for university students have been developed in response to these challenges. These do not only respond to their housing needs, but also provide an important support community and collective care. Examples of such initiatives include: the NASCO student cooperative in the USA, the STUCCO cooperative in **Sydney** (Australia), and the CIGUË cooperative in **Geneva** (Switzerland). To develop such initiatives, the support of local public administrations is indispensable. CIGUË, for example, has received loans, concessions of land and government help from the city of Geneva.

Faced with crises, LRGs have seen the need to innovate in the management of their policies and social services. One of the ways in which this has been done is through transfers and direct aid to the population, whether in money or in kind, and by promoting the consumption of local products in order to offset losses of income suffered by local workers. In particular, **instruments have been introduced with which to minimize dependence on the market of those who provide and receive care**. Amongst other good practices, it is possible to highlight:

°   Transfers and other measures of support to combat the pandemic.[101] Faced with the emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic, **Montevideo** (Uruguay) made money transfers to prevent the eviction of housing tenants who had lost their income; **Sfax** (Tunisia) directed funds to migrant residents; **Bogota** (Colombia) made transfers to traders to reactivate local businesses; **Recoleta** (Chile), **Renca** (Chile) and **Lima** (Peru) gave food to canteens, community kitchens and *ollas solidarias* and *ollas communes* (communal pots); and **Pichincha** (Ecuador) supported consumption and redistribution schemes based on proximity.

For families and people impoverished by the pandemic, the development of social assistance programmes has been of great importance. These have included programmes involving the distribution of food and clothes and/or the suspension of payments for public services. **Mexico City** (Mexico) is one example of such practices. Even before the pandemic, the Secretariat for Social Development used its *Red de Servicios* (*Service Network*) to provide a network of restaurants, or community canteens, where residents could have access to food as a guaranteed right. With the aim of providing support to female workers and/or those responsible for delivering care, the city of **Iztapalapa** (Mexico) created a municipal care programme to provide help and emotional support and which also makes direct transfers of money and provides education and training for carers.

Looking beyond transfers, some LRGs have advanced the redistribution and decommodification of care services by providing direct support to both carers and to those who need care. Some examples of providing intergenerational care and care for older people include:

°   Intergenerational care programmes. In **Mexico City** (Mexico), a programme has been developed for providing attention to older people which delivers medical attention and food to their homes and provides access to a network of young local volunteers who help the beneficiaries, fostering a relationship of intergenerational care. The **Barcelona Provincial Council** (Spain) has introduced

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100 CoHabitat Network.

101 Jaume Puigpinós and Amanda Fléty (UCLG CSIPDHR), "Local Governments' Caring for the Youth: Protecting the Rights of the Child in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

a local telecare service which guarantees security to people who may find themselves in situations of risk due to factors such as age. It offers them peace of mind and support and provides immediate responses in emergency situations.

At **Mersin** (Turkey), municipal homes for older people include complementary facilities, such as art workshops, psycho-social assessment services, and opportunities for socialization with young volunteers.[102] In **Seongdon** (Republic of Korea), a programme of medical assistance in the home for older people who are isolated and have low incomes offers them opportunities to participate in socialization activities. In **Seoul** (Republic of Korea), the metropolitan government has established a working group that offers support to households that face a variety of obstacles. This measure seeks to improve the coordination between various municipal services and focuses on five major preoccupations: security, illness, poverty, solitude and housing.

° The inclusion of older people in the urban space in **Havana** (Cuba).[103] The municipality Plaza de la Revolución, which forms part of the Friendly Cities and Communities network, has established a multiple-actor alliance whose objective is to provide care to older people through the creation of urban-architectonic spaces which are more inclusive. This initiative defined three socio-spatial areas: housing, the neighbourhood and facilities that offer care services. These proposals extend the notion of care to the sphere that supports active daily life within the community.

The public sector has the duty of actively protecting the population from all types of violence. This implies promoting practices that seek to guarantee the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls in both public and private spaces. Achieving political will is indispensable, it is not sufficient on its own: it must be turned into effective action and appropriate investment by the authorities responsible for strategic areas of local government.[104]

Source: Andrey Sulitskiy, Flickr.
Plaza de la Revolución, Havana, Cuba.

Several experiences have promoted the participation of women in the decision-making related to the city and in the definition of urban agendas. These include the project *Voces de mujeres diversas por ciudades seguras, inclusivas y sostenibles* (*Voices of various women in favour of safe, inclusive and sustainable cities*), developed in cities like **Guatemala City** (Guatemala), **San Salvador** (El Salvador), **Bogota** (Colombia) and **Santiago** (Chile); and the project *Somos territorios: mujeres y actores locales articuladas por espacios libres de violencias* (*We are territories: women and local actors organized in favour of spaces free from violence*), in **Cordoba** (Argentina).[105] These experiences have enriched the debate on the Right to the City and to care in cities. They have also shown the importance of generating connections between different local actors in order to promote policies, infrastructures and public services as instruments of social redistribution in unequal cities.

102 John Paul P. Cruz and Federico Batista Poitier, "Missing Pieces: Three Metropolis Break Down Barriers for Everyone", GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

103 CUJAE-KNOW Habana, "Los retos del envejecimiento y la configuración de ciudades inclusivas: el caso habanero," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

104 Olga Segovia Marín, "Programa ciudades y espacios públicos seguros para mujeres y niñas en América Latina: informe de resultados" (Panama,

2020), https://bit.ly/3xJBry0.

105 CISCSA Ciudades Feministas, "Construyendo ciudades feministas: experiencias y acciones por el derecho de las mujeres a la ciudad y a territorios libres de violencias," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

4.3 Reducing and defeminizing care: Networks and the protection of those who provide and receive care

As already extensively commented, care work, whether badly paid or unpaid, has historically been feminized. In many cases, this work has been carried out by racialized and marginalized groups. Opening the way towards cities and territories that are more equal and that care implies reducing the burden of care tasks that these groups must bear via initiatives that focus on social and gender coresponsibility in the provision of care.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of LRG experiences that have sought to advance in this direction, and even more so within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the experiences and local proposals of four Latin America cities, and faced with the challenge posed by the impact of the pandemic, the current project *Ciudades y territorios que cuidan: sistemas locales de cuidado con enfoque de género* (*Cities and territories that care: local care systems with a gender-related approach*) is a good example in this direction. This project contributes to the design of care policies and strategies that focus on gender and territory and that seek to guarantee people's right to care and to be cared for.[106]

LRGs can also promote innovative initiatives that contribute to equality through education systems. These actions seek to go beyond schools, to reduce segregation, and to strengthen inclusion and diversity and, at the same time, to reduce the very high level of feminization in the day-to-day care load. The following innovative examples are worthy of mention:

° Educating cities.[107] In order to become an educating city, **Grigny** (France) has provided support to families in their role as educators. The city offers spaces that facilitate access to safe and attractive environments for learning beyond the school. Another case is that of **Granollers** (Spain), whose initiatives in the field of social and urban inclusion have been based on coordinating interest groups within the city based on two main axes: creating educational institutions aimed at all local residents, and promoting access to out-of-school opportunities for all citizens.

° Responses for the education of young people with a great risk of vulnerability during the COVID-19 crisis.[108] **Vienna** (Austria) has distributed more than 5,000 portable computers to families with children that did not have the economic means to pay for them while education was home-based. **Rivas Vaciamadrid** (Spain) has also provided tablet computers and SIM cards to help children in similar circumstances. **Gwangju** (Republic of Korea) has provided 2,600 intelligent devices to schools to help with distance learning for children from low-income families and is paying their Internet connection fees. The city has also provided online conferences that are specially adapted for blind students and has produced made-to-measure materials for deaf students and those with development-related disabilities.

In Latin America, **Bogota**'s (Colombia) *Aprende en Casa* (*Learn at Home*) platform has included a radio and television channel with educational material aimed at motivating girls and boys to follow its lessons. It has also provided materials that enable teachers and parents to help students to follow

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106 Project supported by GRRIPP (Gender Responsive Resilience & Intersectionality in Policy & Practice) and implemented by the Woman and Habitat Network LAC. This is coordinated by the Corporación SUR (Chile) and carried out by CISCSA in José C. Paz (Greater Buenos Aires) and Córdoba (Argentina); by Fundación AVP in Bogota (Colombia); and by Corporación SUR in Santiago de Chile. In all four cities, networks of women and territorial organizations are working in conjunction with local governments and universities. Several of the partners involved are: Universidad Nacional de José C. Paz (UNPAZ); municipality of Córdoba

and Maestría Vivienda and Ciudad UNC; the Women's Secretariat of the Mayorship of Bogota and the University of Rosario; and Municipality of Santiago and the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Santiago.

107 Puigpinós and Fléty (UCLG CSIPDHR), "Local Governments' Caring for the Youth: Protecting the Rights of the Child in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic."

108 Puigpinós and Fléty (UCLG CSIPDHR).

Source: Granollers City Council.
Granollers fosters access to extracurricular opportunities through a lens of inclusion. Spain.

their school curricula. In **Lima** (Peru), the *Escuela de Lima* (*Lima School*) initiative has provided additional material for both children educated at home and for adolescents and adults.

In relation to the provision of food, the demand to address the provision of care has historically been promoted by local civil society networks, working in collaboration with public institutions. Specific initiatives of note include:

° Network of *Ollas Comunes* (*Communal Pots*) in **Lima** (Peru).[109] As in many cities in Latin America, and on other continents, communal pots have been, and are, a response to hunger. In the peripheral areas of Lima, the families with fewest resources have seen how their income has first fallen and then completely disappeared during the lockdown period for the COVID-19 pandemic. Faced with this situation, neighbourhood associations have established communal pots in order to take advantage of economies of scale and reduce the cost of obtaining food. From the beginning, the majority of the communal pots have formed alliances with public, private and academic institutions to gain further support.

Peru's central government has destined part of its public budget to providing support for communal pots, and the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima has set up a Food Security Board, where the leaders of different communal pots can meet with various NGOs, universities and representatives from different levels of government. Via this multiactor platform, it has been possible to establish working committees to register and provide accounts for communal pots, make food provisions, improve existing infrastructure, and promote urban agriculture. To complement these efforts, there have also been proposals for codesigning infrastructure and shared spaces. Spaces have also been assigned for caring for children and older people, and developing capacity-building initiatives for the communities. All of this has helped to revalue the work done by women and to promote initiatives in the city that are based on a perspective of social and gender-based coresponsibility.

109 PUCP and CENCA, "Ollas comunes en Lima, Perú: combatiendo el hambre," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Caring (Barcelona, 2022).

5 Conclusions and recommendations

Considering caring as a subject of public interest means recognizing it as a central function for the reproduction of life, but one that has been historically ignored. The global-scale crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has, however, reaffirmed its importance. It has emphasized the need for responses, especially aimed at those groups that suffer discrimination and/or which find themselves in situations of vulnerability.

The central position of care in the current public debate makes it necessary to revisit certain definitions in order to realize the different functions associated with it and how they can be approached through social and gender-based coresponsibility, working with public actors and at different scales. **In accordance with demands for inclusive, equitable and sustainable societies, LRGs have a key role to play on account of their proximity. They must advance a social contract that incorporates care policies as a pillar of well-being and create material, institutional and symbolic conditions that can force a break with the traditional sexual division of labour.**

In a context full of challenges, the relevance and leadership of LRGs has been clearly shown, as has their ability to promote inclusion and urban and territorial equality as guiding principles for sustainable policies. This leadership is based on a new model for the social organization of care, which focuses on gender and recognizes the rights of both those who receive care and those who provide it.

The market can only meet part of the demand for care. Care policies must therefore include the non-monetarized economy and recognize the production of the immense majority of the direct and indirect care provided, which is mainly delivered in the home and by non-profit organizations. Thinking up and adopting policy measures requires a clear understanding of this distinction, although in practice there are numerous interactions between the monetarized and non-monetarized economies.

Advancing towards greater equality in cities and territories requires policies aimed at specific sectors and groups. Education, health, social services, housing, action to promote better coexistence and security, amongst others, are all key areas for providing care to citizens. It is particularly important to make progress in the field of the rights to receive care of people who, for structural or circumstantial reasons, have acute, specific and urgent needs (and rights) to care: children, older people, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ people, the structurally discriminated population and the migrant population, amongst others.

Exercising the right to care for others and to receive care implies the construction of care systems with a wide range of coverage. It also requires recognizing those areas of public action that require focused interventions and those sectors that can support themselves based on universal principles, such as health and education.

In the same way, it is necessary to usher in important changes in the modalities and structure of both productive and reproductive work, with new challenges for its reorganization that must be taken up by households,

society and the state. ***Caring* territories and cities must attribute value to the sphere of social reproduction, which is the space for day-to-day living in which care work is essential. In addition, they must formulate policies and management models which respond to the challenges posed by societies undergoing increasing demographic, socio-economic and technological transformations.** Moving towards the model of a compact city, with short distances and proximity, will make it easier to meet care requirements. Providing care services from an inclusive perspective requires identifying which territories should be prioritized and also requires designing programmes aimed at making family time spent at home more compatible with working time.

From the perspective of gender-based and territorial equality, it is of central importance to: (a) *recognize*, make visible and give value to care work as a form of labour that is key for the well-being of societies; (b) *redistribute* unpaid care work and domestic responsibilities between men and women in a fairer and more balanced way; and (c) *reduce* the burden of unpaid work, as well as support and give better coverage to basic care needs, working from a rights-based perspective, based on the principles of equality, universality and solidarity.

It is similarly necessary to: (a) *democratize* or, in other words, redistribute responsibility for the provision of care between the state, the market, the community and families; (b) *decommodify* the care experience, to move away from the concept "who can pay can have access"; and (c) *defeminize* or deconstruct gender roles by making care an option, and including those who provide unpaid care within the social protection system.

Bringing together these different approaches, this chapter emphasizes that pathways towards cities and territories that care can identify different contexts and

conditions that can create an environment propitious to progressing with innovative practices for combating urban and territorial inequality.

Distinguishing specific experiences which have been driven and structured by LRGs, CSOs and academia, amongst others, it is proposed to: *recognize and democratize*, *redistribute and decommodify*, and *reduce the burden of and defeminize* care. Through different cases, **this chapter highlights the importance of the interaction between care and territory, which is a perspective that requires the leadership of LRGs in order to promote inclusion and gender equality as the guiding principles in the social, academic and political debate on care**.

In order to effectively respond to the increasing demand for care, it is essential to advance with processes of decentralization that: (a) reinforce the institutional role of LRGs in the provision of care; (b) establish mechanisms for coordination and cooperation between different levels of government that provide care; and (c) guarantee the financial sustainability of care.

The construction of systems and responses to the diverse demands for care following a territorial approach is a process that requires the political will of a multitude of people and organizations and the coordination of different actors and levels of management. Amongst other strategies, it is important to create structured institutional spaces, shared by local actors, which make it possible to: (a) reach programmatic agreements and put them into practice; (b) establish instruments to strengthen and empower CSOs by transferring resources and giving them the capacity to resolve deficits in care at the community level; and (c) establish a dialogue with national-level powers and get them to contribute sustainability to the local actions or policies that are undertaken.

Source: Kelly Jaime.
"Olla Común" in the periphery of the Metropolitan City of Lima, Peru.

06 ↓ Connecting

Source: Kamil Kalkan. Unsplash.
Osmanağa, Bahariye Caddesi, Kadıköy/İstanbul, Turkey.

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This chapter has been produced based on the following valuable contributions, which are available as part of the *GOLD VI Working Paper Series* and the *Pathways to Equality Cases Repository*:

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Social and territorial connectivity. Towards a paradigm shift in mobility and accessibility for gender equality	Zaida Muxí Daniela Arias
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Challenges and opportunities of regional connectivity and local accessibility in intermediary cities in the Global North and South

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Abstract

Being connected implies having access to a wide range of facilities, services, infrastructure, and opportunities that contribute to a decent life and the possibilities for social, employment and economic development. In turn, not offering access to physical or digital connectivity is a mechanism for socio-spatial and economic exclusion. The COVID-19 pandemic has galvanized this: it has presented a major threat to our ability to interact directly with others. It has shown that comparatively few people can afford not to move in their daily life to access education, health, jobs, family, friends and leisure. The pandemic has also exposed existing inequalities in accessing all of the previously mentioned aspects of daily life virtually. Having access to reliable, safe, and affordable transport and, increasingly, to internet-enabled devices, has become central to bridging inequalities. A Connecting pathway can contribute to overcoming these challenges and facilitating the process of creating social and human capital.

This chapter considers the contribution, within an urban and regional setting, of physical and digital connectivity to shaping a pathway to greater urban and territorial equality; this can be achieved through recognizing social relations and creating new opportunities for personal and collective development. Improved physical connectivity, via transport systems and public spaces that are easily accessible, safe for all and sustainable, is essential for promoting greater urban and territorial equality. The advent and widespread availability of digital technologies means that digital interactions can complement and, under certain conditions, serve as substitutes for physical interactions; indeed, in some contexts, they can also open up new opportunities for everyone and also help to save energy, time, money, and carbon emissions. Where digital connections are available and accessible, they can significantly contribute to making information, education and health services, political representation, and commercial transactions faster and more efficient and more readily available to a much larger proportion of the population than older technologies.

Therefore, this chapter underlines the role that LRGs can play in advancing urban and territorial equality through interventions that improve physical and digital connectivity at different scales. It provides an overview of spatial planning instruments that LRGs can leverage to improve physical connectivity in a way that actively seeks to improve urban and territorial equality. These include, but are not limited to, the integration of formal and informal transport systems and the promotion of transit-oriented development and integrated multimodal transport. Moreover, it provides an exploration of how LRGs can adopt a human rights-based approach to digital connectivity, in order to ensure that no one and no place are left behind as access to opportunities and basic services becomes increasingly digitalized.
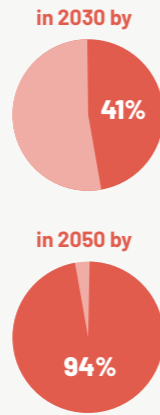
Unsustainable and inequitable transport patterns

Increases in average incomes and commuting distances have led to massive growth in private motorized transport.[a]

In Latin America's five largest cities, between 38% and 44% of residents spend a daily average of 1.5 hours travelling.[a]

Looking at 29 Latin American cities between 2007 and 2014:[b]

Population grew by **10%**

Cars rose by **40%**

Motorcycles rose by **200%**
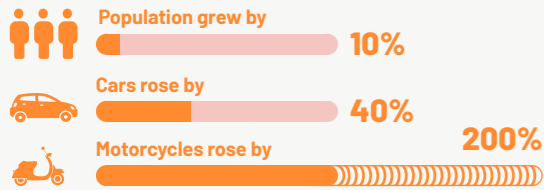
If current trends continue, private motorized mobility in cities will rise:[b]

in 2030 by **41%**

in 2050 by **94%**

3m deaths a year from air pollution[c]
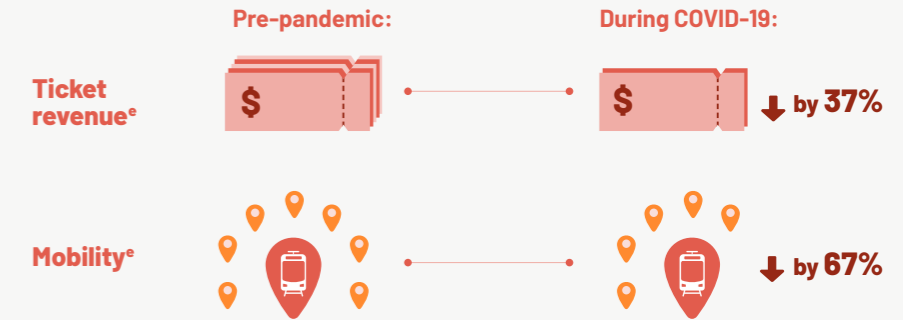
24% CO₂ CO_2

14% GHG
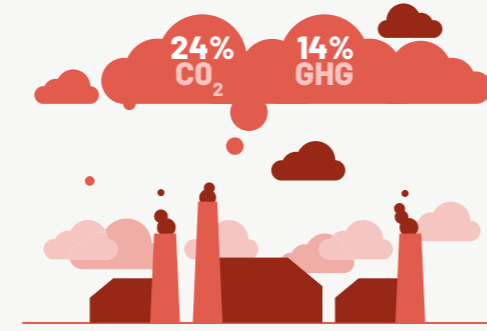
Globally, the transport sector accounts for over 24% of CO_2 and 14% of GHG emissions, with road transport accounting for about 72% of total transport-related CO_2 emissions.[c]

1.3m+ deaths a year from road traffic accidents[d]

Populations traveling on foot, by bicycle or by informal transport are disproportionately exposed to traffic accidents and air pollution.[d]

20-50m people suffer non-fatal injuries.[d]

93% of the world's road fatalities occur in low- and middle-income countries.[d]

60% of the world's vehicles belong to people in low- and middle-income countries.[d]

COVID-19 and future challenges for transport systems

During COVID-19, the decrease in public transport demand was huge.[e]

Pre-pandemic: | During COVID-19:

Ticket revenue[e] — $ — ↓ by 37%

Mobility[e] — ↓ by 67%

On average, the level of informal system patronage dropped by 90% worldwide during lockdown. Service levels also decreased by 30-40% with a minimum still being operated: a lifeline for service users and providers.[e]

Why connecting?

Unequal access to basic services and public space

As of 2020, only 52%
of the world's urban population have convenient* access to public transport:[f]

North, West and Sub-Saharan Africa **33%**

Central and South Asia **34%**

East and Southeast Asia **38%**

High-income countries **75-82%**
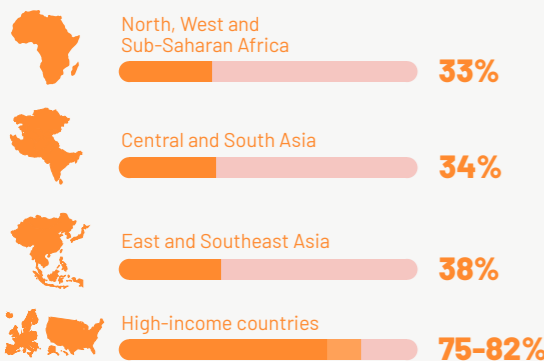
*Convenient access = residing within 500 m walking distance from a bus stop or 1 km away from a railway or ferry terminal.

20% of the poorest households cannot afford public transport.[g]

Costs are often beyond the reach of the poor in cities such as CapeTown (South Africa), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Mumbai (India), Mexico City (Mexico), Manila (the Philippines), and Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).[g]

Formal public transport[h]

38.8%

Average modal share of formal public transport in 29 Latin American cities[h]

Share of informal trips:[h]

Panama City (Panama) and Bogota (Colombia)[h] **30-40%**

Lima (Peru), Quito (Ecuador) and Caracas (Venezuela)[h] **50%**

In many African cities[h] **90%**
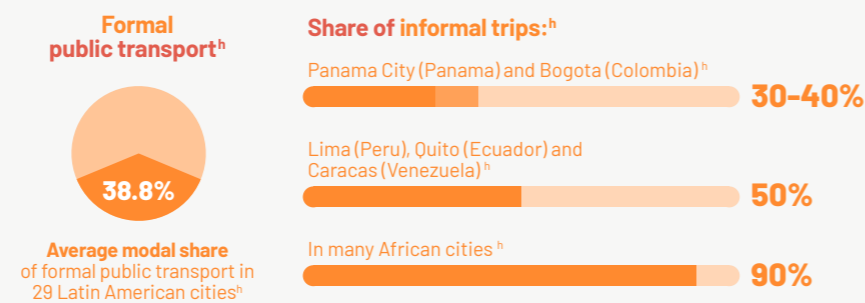
7.3m people employed through formal public transport[i]

2.8m in Asia-Pacific[i]

1.2m in Eurasia, Latin America and the Middle East[i]

200,000 in North Africa[i]

70,000 in Sub-Saharan Africa[i]

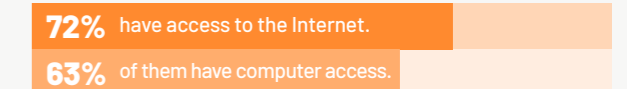## Unequal access to digital connectivity

95% of the world's population had access to a mobile broadband network in 2021. Yet "coverage" does not mean "usage".[j]

4.9bn people used the Internet.[j]

2.9bn people did not use it.[j]
96% of those lacking Internet access live in low-income countries, including 4 out of 5 women.[j]

Connection costs[k] + Insufficient skills[k]

Barriers to ICT use[k]

Urban households in 2019:[l]

72% have access to the Internet.

63% of them have computer access.

Rural households in 2019:[l]

38% have access to the Internet.

25% of them have computer access.
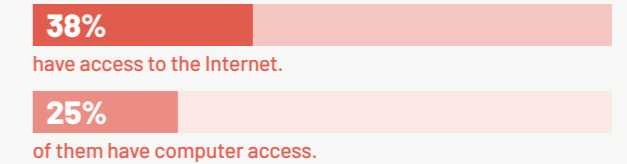
In only 10% of countries
were 70% of individuals able to perform activities that require basic ICT skills (data from 2017–2020).[k]

Connecting pathway

Mobility and digital connectivity

Towards urban and territorial equality

- Reliable and affordable physical and digital infrastructure accessible to everyone

- Formal and informal transport systems that are integrated, multimodal and sustainable

- Sustainable and safe infrastructure at the neighbourhood level that fosters proximity

- Enhanced use of soft mobility and non-polluting public transport

- Accessible digital technologies designed and implemented through a rights-based approach

Working in partnerships between all levels of government and local actors through planning and other means to reduce barriers to connectivity and to progressively eliminate discrimination and segregation in public spaces and public transport.

Creating an efficient, equitable, safe and sustainable multimodal urban and regional transport system that recognizes both formal and informal services, adapted to different populations' mobility needs, and that enables access to livelihood opportunities.

Enabling physical and digital connectivity that allows diverse people to communicate and meet with each other, leveraging proximity to enable access to opportunities, care, creativity, trust and tolerance in ways that lead to inclusion and increased equality.

Leveraging the potential of urban planning to jointly improve access to transport and urban infrastructure and urban regeneration in order to offer populations access to opportunities and make significant improvements in their environments and daily lives (e.g. expanding public spaces, reducing urban pollution and accidents).

Promoting sustainable and safe transit oriented development to manage urban expansion and to regenerate urban areas, particularly those with high levels of motorization and decaying central areas, while avoiding their gentrification and the exclusion of lower-income populations.

Promoting clean and active mobility in cities, supporting non-polluting mass public transport, as well as non-motorized transport such as cycling, walking and micro-mobility, through adequate infrastructure and incentives that recognize diverse mobility practices and needs.

How can physical and digital connectivity be enabled in ways that advance equality and address urban fragmentation, recognizing social relations and creating personal and collective development opportunities for people from diverse and intersecting identities?

In the context of increasing environmental and social challenges, how can mobility infrastructure, public space and transport oriented development promote sustainable models of connectivity, capable of dealing with both social fragmentation and the climate emergency?

Embracing the use of democratic and inclusive smart city technologies, without sidestepping participatory and context-sensitive processes, in order to improve and extend the provision of information and public services to all citizens.

Guaranteeing a digital rights framework that enables access to the online provision of basic services for all, avoiding the exclusion of populations who struggle to access or use digital technologies.

1 Introduction

Cities facilitate the exchange of ideas, as well as of goods and services. Crucial to this function is their **connectivity**. This can be understood as the capacity of citizens to maintain regular contact with other individuals or groups of individuals. **Connectivity within a territory is important because it helps people access opportunities, facilitates social interaction and cultural exchange, and enables access to education, health, work, personal development, leisure and participation in political life. Connectivity also helps businesses to exchange goods and services, and individuals to maintain and expand their social bonds, thus fostering the potential for increased solidarity.**

Connectivity cannot be understood merely as a physical process involving the movement of people over space. **Digital connectivity can significantly contribute to facilitating access to information, education and health services, political representation and participation, and commercial transactions.** By making both physical and digital connectivity accessible to individuals, businesses and organizations that would otherwise find physical travel difficult, inconvenient, expensive or time consuming, a *Connecting* pathway can make a significant contribution to reducing inequalities.

Few urban dwellers, particularly in the Global South, are entirely free to choose where to reside or work. Some groups are even anchored to a particular place due to their lack of resources and/or choice. It became abundantly clear during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns of 2020-22 that only a handful of individuals and households were able to continue working, or studying, normally at a distance. Whilst others, and particularly manual and health workers, and the children of families with no Internet connection, were either cut-off from social interactions (and therefore from learning) or had no choice but to be exposed to COVID-19. In both cases the pandemic revealed the potentially powerful interchangeability of digital and physical connectivity, but also their shortcomings. If it is available to everyone, connectivity can be a great equalizer. However, for technology to facilitate connectivity, it must be accessible to all individuals, regardless of their social position, and to all businesses and institutions. However, and as will be shown in this chapter, technology can also exclude people due to its cost, its complexity, and the control exerted over it by certain individuals and institutions.

At a time of unprecedented urbanization, as well as unparalleled growth and penetration of digital services all over the world, it is important to pose the following questions: How can connectivity be a pathway to urban and territorial equality? What roles can local and regional governments (LRGs) play in promoting this? Can digital connectivity, at least in part, compensate the worst consequences of the ever-expanding physical distances endured by urban commuters, and the additional carbon emissions, travel times and mental health burdens associated with them? To what extent do the unchecked spatial expansion of cities, the social and spatial fragmentation arising from speculative developments and unplanned growth, and the so-called "digital divide" produce even greater inter-personal inequalities of opportunity? Tackling and seeking answers to these questions is central to the future well-being of urban populations, to the contribution LRGs can make to a

Source: Ryoji Iwata. Unsplash. Shibuya crossing. Tokyo, Japan.

low-carbon energy transition, and to the liveability and sustainability of a predominantly urban world.

This chapter considers how LRGs can engage with physical and digital connectivity and the impact that they can have on spatial management and in promoting a *Connecting* pathway that creates opportunities for personal and collective development and promote equality within urban and regional settings. It starts from the principle that, **by engaging with a *Connecting* pathway that actively seeks to produce equality outcomes, LRGs can contribute to advancing towards equality. They can do so by promoting such capacities as caring, creativity, innovation, trust and tolerance, both within and between their respective urban and regional jurisdictions**. LRGs are in a privileged position to help nurture such qualities. Connectivity can act as a lever at different spatial scales and be used to promote greater equality. However, it can also act as a barrier which may need to be overcome by using a range of instruments that are already available to LRGs, such as zoning and land-use plans, as well as newer ones, such as artificial intelligence. These scales range from that of the smallest unit: the household, to that of the

whole country. Although LRGs are equipped to either mainly, or solely, act within their own jurisdiction, the chapter argues that there is also much that they can do to ensure that connectivity contributes to greater equality. This may involve influencing relations between individuals, groups of individuals, or even whole territorial units. Conversely, a lack of connectivity, whether physical or digital, can act as a mechanism for exclusion and cause inequality.

Given the disciplinary, institutional and, to a lesser extent, technological separation between physical mobility and digital connectivity, they are examined in two separate sections. Each section offers an overview of the existing situation and of emerging trends in so much as they relate to equality and the role that LRGs can play to promote it. The chapter then describes the different scales at which LRGs may intervene through their policies and/or planning in order to help shape a *Connecting* pathway to advance towards greater urban and territorial equality. It does this by proposing an analytical framework that identifies factors that enable LRGs to promote a *Connecting* pathway and the barriers that they must overcome.

2 Urban and regional trends: Spatial and digital drivers of connectivity inequalities

As urbanization has advanced worldwide, and transport and digital technologies have become more widely available, the historical high-density core, which was so characteristic of cities in many parts of the world until the 19th century, has changed fundamentally. Suburbanization is a characteristic of many urban areas in the USA and also in much of Western Europe. In Latin America, much of Asia, and parts of Africa, urban sprawl is also a defining feature of urbanization. In order to address the resulting problem of suburbanization in urban and territorial areas, many governments are continuing to expand and update their transport infrastructure and related services within the context of land use policy. Improvements in access to these services have often aimed to connect people to life-enhancing opportunities, such as jobs, public services and amenities. In this way, the provision of only limited transport options has resulted in transport exclusion, as they often limit people's ability

Source: Tom Rumble, Unsplash.
Suburbs in Melbourne, Australia.

to access opportunities, social networks and goods and services.[1] Access to reliable, safe and affordable transport is central to bridging inequalities in mobility and shaping a *Connecting* pathway to urban equality.

2.1 Linking transport infrastructure and spatial planning to territorial inequalities

Over the past three decades, academics and planners have identified a range of spatial developments in which urban, suburban and rural elements are mixed together in different forms and degrees of intensity.[2] Terms like peri-urbanization, "rurban development", and in-between cities seek to capture these processes. In some cases, this has given rise to polycentric regions, or urban corridors, with smaller satellite cities that grow faster than the urban core.[3] These have been documented in a range of countries and have given rise to terms such as "*desakota*", in Indonesia, and "*chengshongcun*", in China.[4] In China, this has taken the form of extended urban regions, offering more and more employment in the manufacturing and services

sectors, in areas that were formerly classified as rural and agricultural, and which could potentially house over 200 million residents in the coming years.[5] While it is argued that *desakota* could potentially produce a shift away from the traditional sense of community and towards more individual competitiveness, exacerbating inequalities between rich and poor, they have been linked to major urban centres by cheap transport services. They have become places where more intense commercial agricultural and non-agricultural economic activities take place, in contrast with purely rural areas. Furthermore, they allow the penetration of economic networks into what were hitherto relatively remote areas, thereby promoting more proximity to economic activity which has been made possible by the extension of transportation and communication systems, improved access to energy, and more affordable private and public transport.[6]

Transportation and urban growth are strongly related. Urbanization is influenced by the power and efficiency of transport systems and their ability to contribute to productive processes. Even so, the way these transport systems are conceived may also lead them to create and deepen existing social and spatial inequalities. In turn, urban growth and the resulting urban forms also help to shape transport infrastructure in what could be described as a "reciprocal relationship".[7] As noted above, transport has given rise to urban sprawl around: relatively densely populated European cities, such as **London** (UK), **Madrid** (Spain) and **Paris** (France); industrializing metropolises, like **Shanghai** (China), **Mexico City** (Mexico) and **Seoul** (Republic of Korea); and cities that have more recently undergone rapid and largely informal urban growth, such as **Jakarta** (Indonesia), **Lagos** (Nigeria) and **Mumbai** (India).[8] Such spatial growth largely hinges on road transport as the

1 Eric Yobo, "State Intervention in Public Transportation In Ghana," *Journal of Transportation and Logistics* 3, no. 1 (2018): 36–51; Dominic Edem Hotor, "The Use of Public Transport Services by Residents in the Accra Metropolitan Area" (University of Ghana, 2017); Karen Lucas, "Transport and Social Exclusion: Where Are We Now?," *Transport Policy* 20 (2012): 105–13; Tan Yigitcanlar et al., "Understanding Transport-Related Social Exclusion: A Multidimensional Approach," *Urban Policy and Research* 37, no. 1 (2019): 97–110.

2 Borja M. Iglesias, "Challenges and Opportunities of Regional Connectivity and Local Accessibility in Intermediary Cities in the Global North and South," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022); Wellington Didibhuku Thwala, "The New Global Frontier: Urbanization, Poverty and Environment in the 21st Century," *Development in Practice* 19, no. 7 (2009): 943–45; Cecilia Tacoli, *The Earthscan Reader in Rural-Urban Linkages* (London: Routledge, 2006).

3 Brian H. Roberts, *Managing Systems of Secondary Cities* (Brussels: Cities Alliance, 2014); Iglesias, "Challenges and Opportunities of Regional Connectivity and Local Accessibility in Intermediary Cities in the Global North and South."

4 Terry McGee, *Urbanisasi Or Kotadesasi? The Emergence of New Regions of Economic Interaction in Asia* (Environment and Policy Institute, 1987); Edward Soja, "Regional Urbanization and the End of the Metropolis Era," in *The New Blackwell Companion to The City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 679–89.

5 Soja, "Regional Urbanization and the End of the Metropolis Era."

6 Michael Mitchell et al., "Improving Water Management in Pakistan Using Social-Ecological Systems Research," in *Water Resources of Pakistan*, ed. Muhammad Arif Watto, Michael Mitchell, and Safdar Bashir (New York: Springer, 2021), 249–271; Desakota Study Team, "Re-Imagining the Rural-Urban Continuum: Understanding the Role Ecosystem Services Play in the Livelihoods of the Poor in Desakota Regions Undergoing Rapid Change" (Kathmandu, 2008).

7 Jean-Paul Rodrigue, *The Geography of Transport Systems* (New York: Routledge, 2020); M. Aljoufie et al., "Urban Growth and Transport: Understanding the Spatial Temporal Relationship," *WIT Transactions on The Built Environment* 116 (2011): 315–28, https://bit.ly/3LSXHKh.

8 Rodrigue, *The Geography of Transport Systems*.

Source: Louis Paulin. Unsplash.
Metro in Paris, France.

main support for mobility. As advances in transportation technology produce cheaper commuting within urban areas and the expansion of transport infrastructure becomes a catalyst for both urban growth and land use changes, it has become important to coordinate policy and planning for mobility with planning for the development and organization of urbanized spaces.

Underpinned by modern urban planning principles, **since the mid-20th century, in many countries, urbanization has involved the separation of activities based on their land use. This, in turn, has led to the concentration of key activities within an urban core and to the location of the main industrial areas on the periphery of cities**. As private cars became more affordable, traffic congestion increased in the most central areas of cities. These trends eventually led to the dispersal of predominantly residential functions to lower density, and more affordable, suburban locations, or to nearby towns and villages. A frequent response by transport planners was to invest in transport infrastructure, such as roads and high-speed routes, in a bid to reduce the time spent travelling. **Where commuter trains were absent, and as cities grew and congestion worsened, road building became associated with longer travel distances instead of shorter travel times.** The result was a technological "lock-in" characterized by individual motorized vehicles and a "path dependency" shaped by a dominant mode of

transport. This has subsequently proven very costly to replace by, for example, less carbon-intensive modes of transport (such as trains, which are a costly option to retrofit into densely built areas) and compact cities in which a range of activities are easily within walking or cycling distance.

2.2 The spatial fragmentation of the territory as a driver of inequalities in connectivity

In recent years, the hierarchical nature of metropolitan innovation, which larger cities tend to almost monopolize, often to the detriment of smaller ones, and the way in which connectivity reinforces pre-existing differ-

ences in territorial attractiveness, have contributed to a further exacerbation of territorial inequalities and deficits at the local level. **Spatial fragmentation is characterized by socio-economic differences within urban regions; this further highlights disconnections that are deeply associated with barriers that limit choices and opportunities for more spatial and social connections and interactions.** Furthermore, the political allocation of public resources and the planning of transportation infrastructure can add to existing spatial fragmentation. This can then lead to mostly, or even only, the better-off households being able to access desired housing and well-serviced neighbourhoods. As a result, lower income groups and people from cultural minorities are more often than not forced to relocate to neighbourhoods with less, and poorer quality, infrastructure, such as paved roads, quality schools, safe streets, public transit services and clean water.[9]

These processes can take place both within and across urban areas and have been intensified by market-led tendencies within urban development. They have triggered rising prices for land and property and have often made well-serviced areas virtually unaffordable for low-income groups. This forced, and market-led, displacement has taken place in many different contexts, pushing marginalized groups to more peripheral and vulnerable areas, resulting in a spatial fragmentation that has been intertwined with social segregation. Apart from affecting low-income groups, social and spatial drivers of inequalities in urban territories tend to particularly affect historically marginalized groups, thus deepening existing gender, racial and ethnic inequalities.

The rise of self-segregating urban forms, which are often characterized by social privatism and the withdrawal of rich and affluent households from the institutional and social network flows of cities, has become a subject of concern to planners, scholars and LRGs. Gated communities foster the splintering of urban society and increase spatial and social inequalities, particularly in suburbia.[10] They are often seen by those

who can afford them as a way of escaping from the problems of the city, such as traffic congestion, crime, noise and other forms of pollution. Their inhabitants often rely on private transportation to access goods and services in city centres. New developments, including commercial, recreational and educational facilities, tend to be concentrated within driving distance of gated communities, often causing deficiencies in the provision of infrastructure and services to other city residents.[11] In time, the emergence of digital connectivity and the decentralization of certain activities (whether due to diseconomies of scale in more densely populated areas, or resulting from government policies) may limit the importance of proximity to city centres for some activities.

LRGs have a critical role to play in promoting urbanization patterns that differ from those of splintering urbanism. For instance, LRGs can engage with citizens and promote greater awareness of the social and environmental costs of certain kinds of developments that require the daily use of private transport. There are benefits for everyone in improving cohesion between the socio-economic urban fabric and the urban infrastructure. LRGs can actively engage with all local inhabitants, irrespective of their income groupings, and get them involved in decision-making regarding transport and land use policy and planning while, at the same time, building up a consensus through participatory processes. For example, in some regions such as Europe intermediary cities have pedestrianized streets and made public spaces more welcoming in central areas, thus helping to reduce socio-spatial segregation between different neighbourhoods and districts of the city. This is a critical way in which to improve connectivity and strengthen cohesion within the urban fabric.[12]

The planning of service and facility provision in territories can enhance the connections between different spheres of life, such as productive, reproductive, personal and community action. In **Santa Fe** (Argentina), initiatives focused on promoting more productive and

9 Iglesias, "Challenges and Opportunities of Regional Connectivity and Local Accessibility in Intermediary Cities in the Global North and South"; Eunice Nthambi Jimmy, "Spatial Fragmentation in Nairobi City: The Elephant in the Room," *Urbanet*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3PF1vBV; Igor Tempels Moreno Pessoa, "Spatial Fragmentation and Self-Organisation: A Negative Relationship in Brazilian Metropolises," *Urbe. Revista Brasileira de Gestão Urbana* 11 (2019), https://bit.ly/39LRlJw; Shadi O. Tehrani, Shuling J. Wu, and Jennifer D. Roberts, "The Color of Health: Residential Segregation, Light Rail Transit Developments, and Gentrification in the United States," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16, no. 19 (2019): 3683.

10 Rowland Atkinson and Bruce Tranter, "Outside Society? The Social Implications of Gated and Secured Neighbourhoods in Australia," Centre for Urban Research (CURB) Working Paper (York, 2011), https://bit.ly/3MFVW4h; Sonia Roitman, "Splintering (Sub)Urbanism and Social Differences: Gated Communities as the Driver for Suburban Change in Chacras de Coria (Mendoza, Argentina)," *Revista INVI* 32, no. 90 (2017): 159–82.

11 Roitman, "Splintering (Sub)Urbanism and Social Differences: Gated Communities as the Driver for Suburban Change in Chacras de Coria (Mendoza, Argentina)."

12 Iglesias, "Challenges and Opportunities of Regional Connectivity and Local Accessibility in Intermediary Cities in the Global North and South."

environmental sustainability have been successfully rolled out. They have aimed to recover a natural area and have made concessions of garden areas to rehoused people. In the city of **Shiraz** (Iran), the reforestation and creation of green spaces on the periphery of the city has succeeded not only in restricting its unbridled development, but also in improving the quality of local life and created more productive work. It has also encouraged citizens to plant rooftop gardens and has managed to get the private sector to also adhere to the city's development plan.[13]

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13 Zaida Muxí and Daniela Arias, "Social and Territorial Connectivity. Towards a Paradigm Shift in Mobility and Accessibility for Gender Equality," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022).

Spatial planning instruments can be important mechanisms with which LRGs can promote a *Connecting* pathway to combat socio-spatial fragmentation. Box 6.1 outlines some of these instruments, divided into spatial development plans and policies, and development management instruments. These levers available to LRGs, and particularly spatial development plans, have the potential to create development lock-ins. It is therefore crucial that these instruments are actively deployed to promote urban and territorial equality from their very conception and at every stage of their implementation.

Box 6.1

Spatial planning instruments, shaping a *Connecting* pathway and equality

Spatial development plans and policies are often multitiered instruments that help to set up the framework and guidelines for spatial planning. LRG competencies enable them to use particular spatial frameworks (such as master plans) and regulatory instruments (such as local and subdivision plans) to shape a *Connecting* pathway to achieve more equitable outcomes.

Spatial frameworks	Master plans are key spatial framework instruments that allow LRGs to determine location-specific land use zoning and socio-economic policy instruments using national- and regional-level instruments. They prepare the way for more detailed land-use and development-management instruments. If applied in meaningful and democratic ways, master planning processes can open up important opportunities, recognize marginalized voices within the city, and be used to discuss mechanisms through which to redistribute spatial investments and opportunities. A *Connecting* pathway can be promoted through master plans, as they establish the framework and guidelines with which to address urban sprawl, can be used to manage desirable densification processes, and provide mechanisms for addressing socio-spatial fragmentation.
Regulatory instruments	Regulatory instruments, such as local and subdivision plans, are used to regulate development and for the protection of individual plots of land. They can vary in size and may contain land-use zoning standards, building standards and codes, norms relating to permissible densities and other regulations. These instruments can be of critical importance for LRGs when they are pursuing equality outcomes. For example, when trying to upgrade and regularize informal settlements, they can be used to establish maximum densities and land use regulations to meet the needs of different typologies of human settlement. They can also be used to reduce the threat of market-led displacement, as they can establish land-use regulations that discourage large-scale developments and protect low-income housing and business developments.

Development management instruments can be used by LRGs to influence the decisions of actors in land and property-development processes. LRGs can use them to manage and control growth as well as to raise revenue for LRGs.

Regulatory instruments	Regulatory instruments can establish restrictions that constrain the choice of actors operating in the land and property markets. Some examples of such instruments include: zoning policies, development moratoria, growth-rate controls and urban growth boundaries. These can be key for LRGs, especially when they are attempting to control urban sprawl and seek to protect agricultural activities in peri-urban areas.
Fiscal instruments: taxes, exactions and fees	Fiscal instruments are taxes levied on developers. They aim to allow LRGs to mitigate the negative externalities generated by developments and for LRGs to capture positive externalities generated by public investment. Property taxes can be crucial sources of revenue for LRGs. The resulting revenue increases their capacity to fund interventions and enables them to invest in infrastructure to promote physical and digital connectivity. Land value capture is another fiscal instrument that LRGs can use, particularly when they seek to capture the financial benefits generated by investment in public infrastructure, such as that of transport infrastructure. If the correct conditions are established for a more equitable use of such revenues, they can be used to create meaningful opportunities for LRGs to generate a more equitable distribution of public resources. LRGs can also use such funds to increase their capacity to improve conditions in more marginalized urban areas and to address the problem of deepening social-spatial fragmentation.
Incentive-based instruments	LRGs can deploy a series of instruments that create incentives for developers to invest in particular areas. These instruments take the form of subsidies, tax credits, development rights and the provision of land and infrastructure to attract investment. However, in the past, such instruments have often been used in ways that have deepened rather than reduced social-spatial inequalities in cities. Under favourable political conditions, LRGs also have the capacity to apply this type of incentive-based instrument to promote more equitable and sustainable urban development.

Source: drawing from Elisabete A. Silva and Ransford A. Acheampong, "Developing an Inventory and Typology of Land-Use Planning Systems and Policy Instruments in OECD Countries," OECD Environment Working Papers (Paris, 2015), https://bit.ly/3LD3fIv

Source: Alireza Vahed. Unsplash. Shiraz, Iran.

2.3 Connecting as a pathway to urban and territorial equality: Accessibility as a core value

Source: Egor Myznik. Unsplash.
Petrovsko-Razumovskaya metro station. Moscow, Russia.

Ensuring equality of opportunity through connectivity is critical for a *Connecting* pathway to help advance towards urban and territorial equality. If one of the LRG policy goals is to increase access to opportunities, the concept of accessibility is a useful entry point from which to examine connectivity in both physical and digital terms. The success of any development intervention whose aim is to increase connectivity can be judged through several different criteria, with the help of certain established parameters. Accessibility and speed of movement are the most conventionally accepted parameters when it comes to transport planning. In the case of passenger transport, accessibility is defined as "the extent to which land-use and transport systems enable [groups of] individuals to reach activities or destinations by means of a [combination of] transport mode[s]".[14] This is predicated based upon the notion of "derived demand", whereby a transport service (an "intermediate good") is consumed so that users can take advantage of a particular activity, or opportunity, such as education, shopping and leisure, or to provide their own labour. The "success" of a transport service is then measured in terms of how effectively it offers accessibility to its users. However, the link between improved accessibility and improved mobility is not necessarily automatic.

The distribution of accessibility is a powerful indicator of social, functional and structural inequalities and reflects the intersection between transport and social (dis)advantages.[15] For example, rapidly growing cities in

Latin America show repeated patterns of socio-spatial segregation and unequal land-use distribution that have led to the concentration of opportunities in well-defined centres, while pushing the poor out onto the urban periphery.[16] Such a trend is commonly found across the Global South. This imbalance in the distribution of opportunities is compounded by differences in access to transport supply. As mainstream approaches to transport planning and infrastructure investment tend to prioritize high-demand and the most attractive areas, traditional transport development practices have led to a self-reinforcing, vicious circle of disconnection for the poor and disadvantaged.[17] **Gaps in accessibility that have grown over generations can only be addressed by moving away from a mobility- and efficiency-oriented paradigm and to viewing transport as part of social policy.** Research into targeted improvements in both the physical supply and affordability of public

14 Karst T. Geurs and Bert van Wee, "Accessibility Evaluation of Land-Use and Transport Strategies: Review and Research Directions," *Journal of Transport Geography* 12, no. 2 (2004): 127–40.

15 V. Dimitra Pyrialakou, Konstantina Gkritza, and Jon D. Fricker, "Accessibility, Mobility, and Realized Travel Behavior: Assessing Transport Disadvantage from a Policy Perspective," *Journal of Transport Geography* 51 (2016): 252–69; Giovanni Vecchio, Ignacio Tiznado-Aitken, and Ricardo Hurtubia, "Transport and Equity in Latin America: A Critical Review of Socially Oriented Accessibility Assessments," *Transport Reviews* 40, no. 3 (2020): 354–81.

16 Daniel Oviedo, "Making the Links between Accessibility, Social and Spatial Inequality, and Social Exclusion: A Framework for Cities in Latin America," ed. Rafael H.M. Pereira and Geneviève Boisjoly, *Advances in Transport Policy and Planning* 8 (2021): 135–72.

17 Daniel Oviedo and Mariajose Nieto-Combariza, "Transport Planning in the Global South," in *International Encyclopedia of Transportation*, ed. Roger Vickerman (Elsevier, 2021), 118–24.

Source: Galen Crout. Unsplash.
Jing'an district, North-East Shanghai, China.

transport in marginalized areas has shown the significant social value of accessibility-oriented planning for the reduction of inequalities.[18] Such interventions may include: providing targeted subsidies for specific sections of the population based on means-tested selection mechanisms;[19] the prioritization of walking- and cycling-based connectivity in low-income areas;[20] and the development of infrastructure that integrates segregated communities into the wider urban fabric (such as cable-cars).

It is important to note that transport policy decisions have long-term consequences for equality. Accessibility therefore needs to be a central criterion and must be used to retrofit new policy decisions in ways that help to advance towards equality. For example, unless public transport is given priority, costly investments in high-speed highways will tend to most benefit those who can afford a private car. Similarly, a high-speed underground train with few stops may be

beneficial for workers travelling long distances; while discouraging or banning rickshaws from residential areas may negatively affect middle-income females, who are the main people who use them to travel short distances involving frequent stops. Safety is also a crucial consideration. Pedestrians and motorcyclists, who in much of the Global South tend to earn below-average incomes, are much more likely to be the victims of fatal traffic accidents than car drivers.

To make transport more accessible to everyone, and especially to groups that suffer from different forms of exclusion, LRGs are currently introducing a range of new initiatives. Public transport services are being increasingly adapted to suit people with special needs. For instance, the government of **Shanghai** (China) engages older people and persons with disabilities to audit transport accessibility. In **Moscow** (Russia), the city government has implemented the *Dobry Avtobus* (*Bus of Kindness*) social project to support senior citizens and help to increase their mobility and social activity.[21]

Despite concerns about a digital divide (see Section 4 below), the ability to access and use digital technologies seems to have become an accepted parameter for gauging the success of digital connectivity. The concept of accessibility can be adapted, from the previously provided definition, and understood as reflecting the extent to which digital technologies enable (groups of) individuals to remotely access a range of opportunities. The success of a digital service can then be gauged in terms of how effective it is at securing such opportunities. However, as with transport, as there are differences in the ways in which different people access and effectively make use of digital technologies, not all policy decisions are likely to benefit everyone equally. As discussed later, the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns made it evident that there is currently a large gap between those who have access to digital connectivity and its benefits and those who do not, and this has important repercussions for equality. Digital technology made it possible for only a relatively small proportion of the labour force to continue working, almost uninterruptedly, while a vast number of manual workers, informal sector workers and the children of families with no access to the Internet were either completely cut off from income-earning and education opportunities, or had to risk their health and that of their households.

18 Daniel Oviedo and Luis Ángel Guzmán, "Should Urban Transport Become a Social Policy? Interrogating the Role of Accessibility in Social Equity and Urban Development in Bogotá, Colombia," in *Urban Mobility and Social Equity in Latin America: Evidence, Concepts, Methods*, ed. Daniel Oviedo, Natalia Villamizar Duarte, and Ana Marcela Ardila Pinto (Bingley: Emerald Publishing, 2020), 11–32.

19 Daniel Oviedo and Luis Ángel Guzmán, "Accessibility, Affordability and Equity: Assessing 'pro-Poor' Public Transport Subsidies in Bogotá," *Transport Policy* 68 (2018): 37–51.

20 Lisa Bostock, "Pathways of Disadvantage? Walking as a Mode of Transport among Low-Income Mothers," *Health & Social Care in the Community* 9, no. 1 (2001): 11–18.

21 Claudia García Zaragoza, 'Transport as a Means of Inclusion', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022).

2.4 Transit-oriented development and intergenerational inequalities

Described as "a sustainable urban development solution that successfully creates mixed-use, dense, walkable communities with access to high-quality transport", transit-oriented development (TOD) has become "one of today's primary strategies for transforming cities into more dynamic, sustainable, and integrated spaces for all citizens alike".[22] This is particularly relevant in urban cores affected by the loss of population and commercial activities, as in many US cities. The products of TOD policy and planning are normally located within easy walking distance of major transit stops. They are also generally associated with solutions that offer a mixture of residential, employment and shopping opportunities and are designed for pedestrians, but without necessarily excluding motorized transport.[23] TOD can help create walkable and more sustainable communities by offering more transportation and housing choices, including solutions that make such lifestyles affordable for a wider range of income groups. They can also provide a social environment in which children can play, and comfortable living spaces for older people. TOD can achieve this by supporting non-motorized modes of transport, such as cycling and walking, boosting the use of mass rapid transport, and increasing densification and mixed uses of land and urban space.[24] This is seen as a response to the myriad of challenges facing urban land use and transportation, including increasing

traffic congestion and environmental pollution.[25] Apart from the US cities, such as **Denver** (USA), TOD has been successfully implemented in many other cities, including **Copenhagen** (Denmark), **Curitiba** (Brazil) and **Hong Kong**, where it has been argued that a key element in its success is having equality as an explicitly desired policy outcome.[26]

For example, in **Curitiba** (Brazil), the government has subsidized the construction of homes designed to incorporate low-income housing schemes as part of a TOD project and it has also assisted in the provision of housing schemes for 17,000 families. A bus rapid transit (BRT) network now covers 90% of the core of this conurbation of two million people, with local inhabitants not having to walk more than 500 metres to access mass rapid transit services. The project directly serves an estimated 28% of the city's homes, which are located along the transit corridor.[27] In the Pearl District of **Portland** (USA), the implementation of TOD helped to change the outlook of the area from being little more than a warehouse to becoming a liveable, mixed-use, walkable community with affordable housing and mass transit options.[28] The project was made possible by a public-private partnership in transit and land use planning in which the private owner of a 40-acre area of land signed an agreement with the city authorities to upgrade the density of housing units from 15 dwelling units per acre to 125 along a streetcar transit line. The area attracted many new residents and jobs, leading to further development of a second area of vacant land.[29]

Though a well-intentioned planning strategy, **TOD has been criticized on the grounds of its potential to displace low-income households as to disrupt mixed-income neighbourhoods due to causing increases in property values**.[30] For instance, in **London** (UK), the city's redevelopment plan for the 2012 Summer Olympic Games centred around the extensively

22 Brittany Giroux Lane, "Governance of Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development in Brazil," World Resources Institute Working Paper (Washington, DC, 2017), https://bit.ly/3yTspzT; Jason Hobbs, Carolina Baima, and Renata Seabra, "Transit Oriented Development: How to Make Cities More Compact, Connected and Coordinated: Recommendations for Brazilian Municipalities," 2021, https://bit.ly/3Mlo46C.

23 Terry Parker et al., "Statewide Transit-Oriented Development Study: Factors for Success in California," 2002, https://bit.ly/3sUbdXb.

24 Erin Machell, Troy Reinhalter, and Karen Chapple, "Building Support for Transit-Oriented Development: Do Community-Engagement Toolkits Work?" (Berkeley, 2009), https://bit.ly/39Q52wN.

25 Dick Nelson, John Niles, and Aharon Hibshoosh, "A Planning Template for Nonwork Travel and Transit Oriented Development" (San Jose, 2001).

26 Salvador Medina Ramírez and Jimena Veloz Rosas, "Transit Oriented Development: Regenerate Mexican Cities to Improve Mobility" (México, 2014), https://bit.ly/3sUcf5v.

27 Ramírez and Rosas.

28 Ian Carlton and William Fleissig, "Advancing Equitable Transit-Oriented Development: Steps to Avoid Stalled Equitable TOD Projects" (New York, 2014), https://bit.ly/3LF1QkE.

29 Reconnecting America and Center for Transit-Oriented Development, "Why Transit-Oriented Development and Why Now?" (Oakland, 2007), https://bit.ly/3NskDB2.

30 Kwabena Koforobour Agyemang et al., "Transit Oriented Development: Theory and Implementation Challenges in Ghana," *Journal of Land Use, Mobility and Environment* 13, no. 3 (2020): 409–25.

renovating and expanding Stratford rail station. Critics saw this as favouring "greater economic activity and quicker construction" resulting in "lower percentages of affordable housing and a rather higher minimum income threshold requirement to qualify for the available housing".[31] TOD must be planned in an integrated way so that low income and working-class households, who stand to benefit most from its proximity, will indeed have sustained access to the resulting opportunities and improvements in quality of life.[32]

This calls for the meaningful involvement of the existing communities at all stages of the development process: from planning through to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It also requires a better understanding of the effects of the project upon all the parties involved, which may include possible gentrification. As policymakers, LRGs must take steps to strengthen citizen participation in such projects, and to safeguard the longevity of the TOD project and its success, by creating an institutional framework for project implementation at the local or metropolitan level. In order to achieve this, LRGs must give priority to development policies and improving services[33] and thereby ensure that "TOD strategies and principles are deliberately incorporated into urban/metropolitan policy, prioritizing public interests".[34] In fact, commitment to making TOD work is strongest where LRGs work in consonance with transit agencies in order to coordinate TOD-supportive policies.[35] The commitment of LRGs to pursuing an urban planning agenda that "combines adequate housing with quality, inclusive and sustainable neighbourhoods" is therefore an important *Connecting* pathway in the quest towards closing the inequality gap.[36]

Source: Kat Northern Lights Man. Flickr. Give Me A Ring. Toronto, Canada.

2.5 Key trends in motorized mobility worldwide, and their relation with health, safety and environmental inequalities

Inequalities generate multidimensional exclusion which tends to tilt social provisions away from those individuals and groups who tend to most need the services provided. This can result in significant gaps between different social groups, even though they may live in relatively close proximity. Ultimately, this situation leads to fragmented systems of social provision in which individuals and groups who can afford to opt out of public transport services either do so voluntarily or are forced to resort to other alternatives.[37]

31 Lane, "Governance of Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development in Brazil"; Penny Bernstock, *Olympic Housing: A Critical Review of London 2012's Legacy* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2014).

32 Annelise Grube-Cavers and Zachary Patterson, "In Order to Keep Mass Transit Accessible, We Must Understand the Relationship between Gentrification and Public Transportation," *LSE Politics and Policy*, 2014, https://bit.ly/3LzhH4g.

33 Daniel Baldwin Hess and Peter A. Lombardi, "Policy Support for and Barriers to Transit-Oriented Development in the Inner City: Literature Review," *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board* 1887, no. 1 (2004): 26–33; Jieh-Haur Chen et al., "Transit-Oriented Development: Exploring Citizen Perceptions in a Booming City, Can Tho City, Vietnam," *Sustainability* 13, no. 3 (2021): 1–14.

34 Hobbs, Baima, and Seabra, "Transit Oriented Development: How to Make Cities More Compact, Connected and Coordinated: Recommendations for Brazilian Municipalities."

35 Hess and Lombardi, "Policy Support for and Barriers to Transit-Oriented Development in the Inner City: Literature Review."

36 Christopher Yap, Camila Cociña, and Caren Levy, "The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).
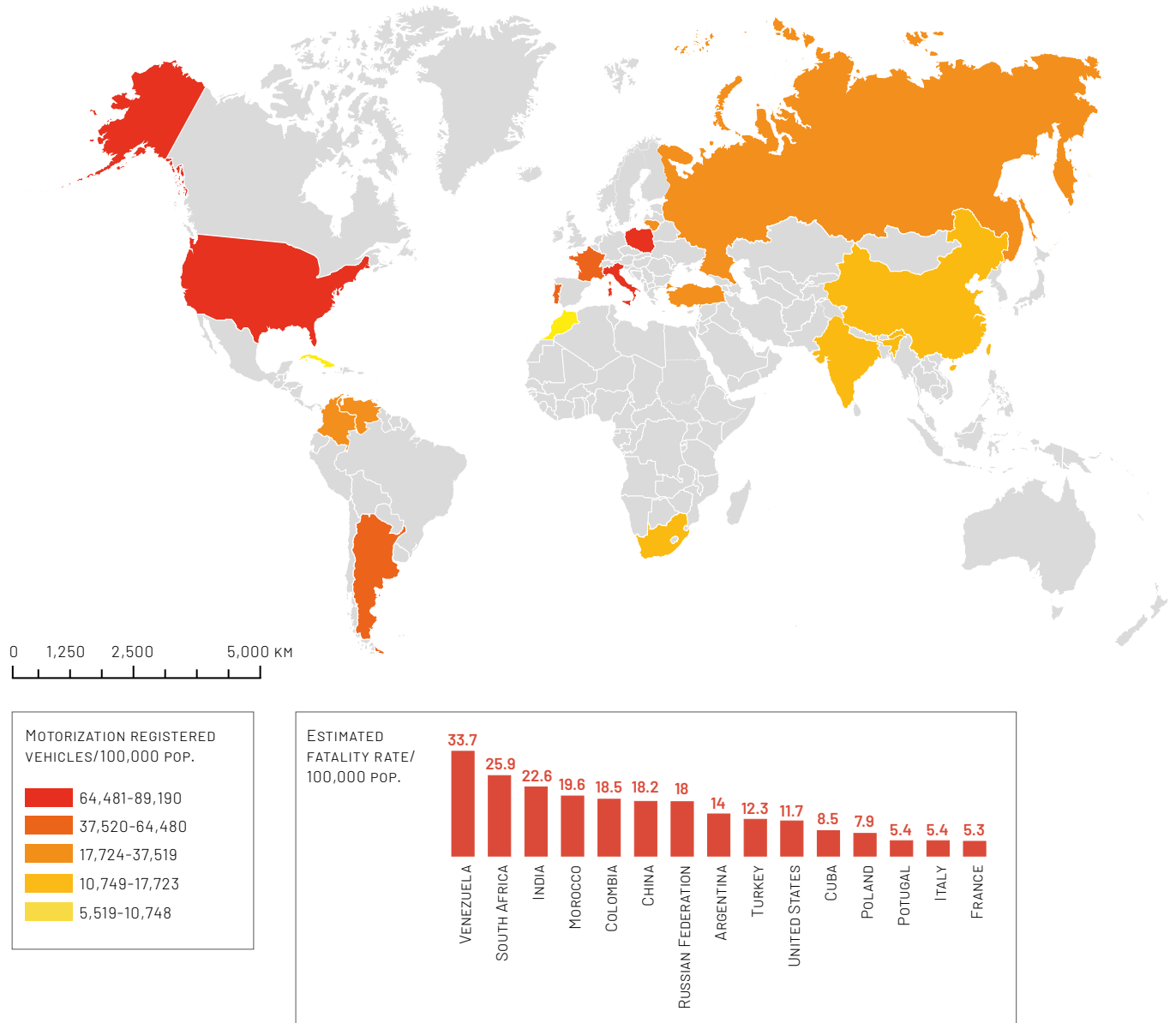
37 Alina Rocha Menocal, "Why Inequality Is Democracy's Catch-22," in *Research Handbook on Democracy and Development*, ed. Gordon Crawford and Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021), 392–407; Richard Bourn, "Transport and Poverty: A Literature Review" (London, 2012), https://bit.ly/3Nv6T8L.

Figure 6.1

Motorization and traffic accident fatality rates in selected countries, 2019

0   1,250   2,500   5,000 KM

MOTORIZATION REGISTERED VEHICLES/100,000 POP.

- 64,481-89,190
- 37,520-64,480
- 17,724-37,519
- 10,749-17,723
- 5,519-10,748

ESTIMATED FATALITY RATE/ 100,000 POP.

Country	Rate
VENEZUELA	33.7
SOUTH AFRICA	25.9
INDIA	22.6
MOROCCO	19.6
COLOMBIA	18.5
CHINA	18.2
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	18
ARGENTINA	14
TURKEY	12.3
UNITED STATES	11.7
CUBA	8.5
POLAND	7.9
POTUGAL	5.4
ITALY	5.4
FRANCE	5.3

Source: authors, based on data from HERE, Garmin, USGS & Esri.

In Latin America's five largest cities, between 38% and 44% of residents spend a daily average of 1.5 hours travelling,[38] with households spending between 6% and 19% of their monthly expenditure on transport.[39] Increases in average 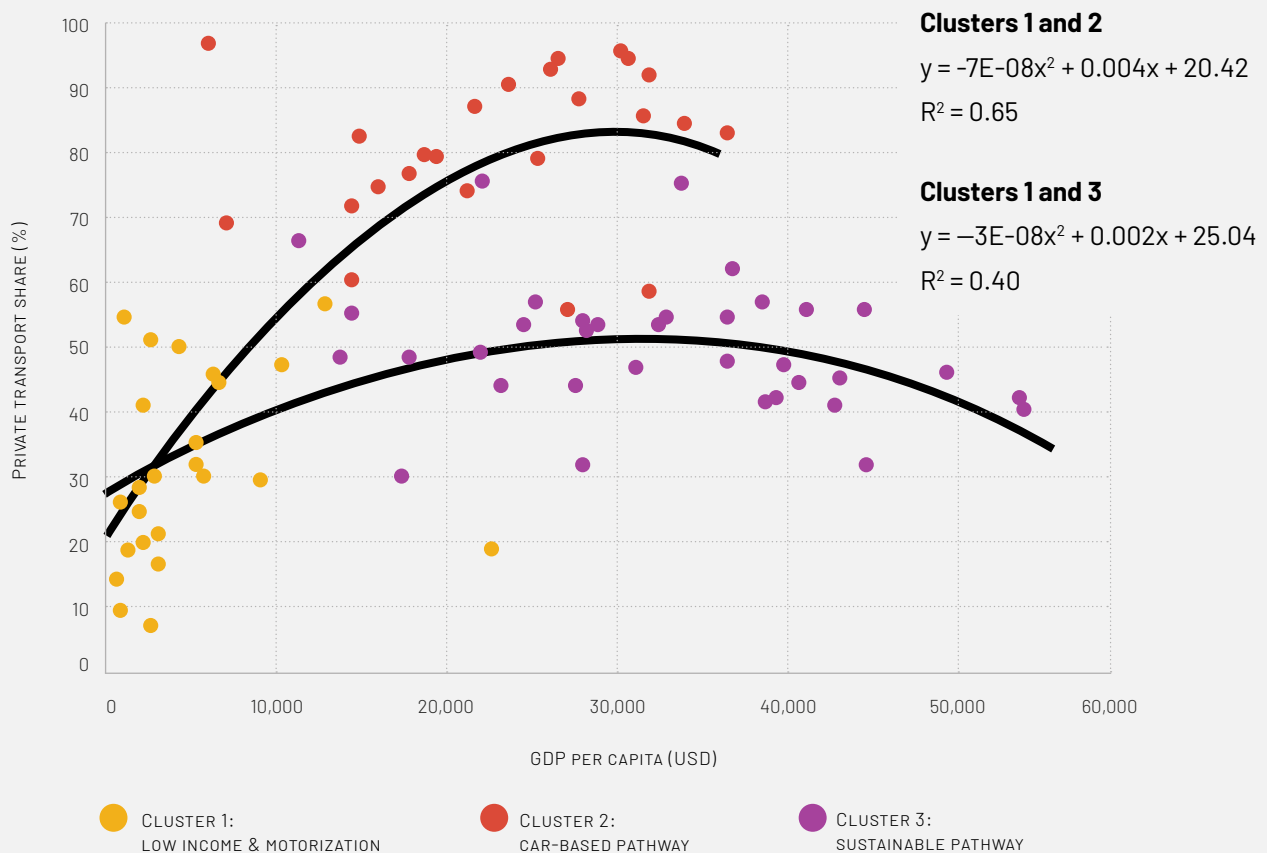incomes and commuting distances have led to a massive growth in private motorized transport: while the populations of 29 cities of the region grew by 10% in the period 2007-2014, the number of cars increased by 40% and of motorcycles by 200%.[40]

If current trends continue throughout the world, motorized mobility in cities will double between 2015 and 2050, increasing by 41% by 2030 and by 94% by 2050. It is expected that the share of private car ownership

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38 Luis A. Guzmán, Daniel Oviedo, and Ana Marcela Ardila, "La Política de Transporte Urbano Como Herramienta Para Disminuir Desigualdades Sociales y Mejorar La Calidad de Vida Urbana En Latinoamérica," 2019, https://bit.ly/3ML4XJi.

39 Juan Vargas et al., "Urban Growth and Access to Opportunities: A Challenge for Latin America" (Bogotá, 2017), https://bit.ly/3lJZpmc.

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40 Vargas et al.

Figure 6.2

City-level relationships between GDP per capita and the private ownership of motorized vehicles

Clusters 1 and 2

$y = -7E{-}08x^2 + 0.004x + 20.42$

$R^2 = 0.65$

Clusters 1 and 3

$y = -3E{-}08x^2 + 0.002x + 25.04$

$R^2 = 0.40$

CLUSTER 1:
LOW INCOME & MOTORIZATION

CLUSTER 2:
CAR-BASED PATHWAY

CLUSTER 3:
SUSTAINABLE PATHWAY

Source: Roger Teoh, Paulo Anciaes, and Peter Jones, "Urban Mobility Transitions through GDP Growth: Policy Choices Facing Cities in Developing Countries,"
Journal of Transport Geography 88 (2020): 9.

in developing countries will sharply increase, and that in developed countries it will slightly fall.[41] These changes will be accompanied by several associated urban transport challenges, with increases in traffic congestion, pollution and road traffic accidents. Despite having lower rates of motorization, poorer countries tend to have higher levels of road accident mortality than richer ones (see Figure 6.1). This can be partly explained by technological lock-ins, and partly by the high rates at which these countries have urbanized. The high level of traffic accidents in poorer countries is also associated to the relatively little time and few resources that they have dedicated to building mass transit systems. Furthermore, their city planning insti-

tutions and old infrastructure are unable to cope with the high demands that increased motorized vehicle transport, associated with a rapidly growing middle classes, places upon them.

The current correlation observed in many cities between GDP per capita and the percentage of privately-owned motorized transport suggests two different patterns being associated with cities whose wealth is increasing. Figure 6.2 shows city-level relationships, at a specific point in time (1995), between GDP per capita and the share of trips made by residents using private motorized modes of transport (such as car and motorcycle drivers and passengers) in a range of large cities in different continents. Although this is based on cross-sectional data, research has shown that it is broadly replicated

41 OECD and International Transport Forum, "ITF Transport Outlook 2017" (Paris, 2017), https://bit.ly/38MQ22F.

Source: The OPEC Fund. Flickr.
Improving road transport in Sierra Leone.

over time in individual-city trajectories.[42] African cities such as **Freetown** (Sierra Leone) currently occupy positions shown to the far left of this graph, with relatively low GDP and few private motorized trips, but with the city beginning to note a rapid increase in car ownership. This means that the policymakers, planners, politicians and citizens of these African cities are currently facing long-term choices that need to be made (whether implicitly or explicitly) as soon as possible. Figure 6.2 illustrates different potential transport development trajectories cities can take, which can help to inform processes of planning, drawing on localized experiences as well as lessons learned from paths adopted by other cities.[43] In the case of Freetown, awareness of the potential development trajectories has permitted a process involving the participation of local and national governments and also of key private, civil society, academic and development organizations. They have worked together to coproduce a vision for sustainable mobility in the city and have identified the main policy instruments and practical implementation issues that could influence the city's development. They have also

established a set of priority criteria for reducing citizens' dependency on private cars.[44]

LRGs can mitigate these outcomes by using effective local policies and transport planning guided by equality principles, and also by engaging in a multimodal, integrated approach to public transport. Instead of adopting one-size-fits-all solutions, transport modes must be carefully planned to suit a range of urban parameters, including socio-economic composition, density, location and topography. LRGs need to invest in non-motorized modes of transport, such as walking and cycling, and to provide the infrastructure needed to support these more environmentally friendly modes of transport. Beyond this, applying measures such as taxes, congestion charges, parking fees and tolls can also be used to disincentivize the use of private vehicles.[45] To be effective in helping reduce inequalities, transport systems must be well-adapted to local conditions, as the *Metrocable* in **Medellin** (Colombia) has amply shown (see Box 6.2).

42 Roger Teoh, Paulo Anciaes, and Peter Jones, "Urban Mobility Transitions through GDP Growth: Policy Choices Facing Cities in Developing Countries," *Journal of Transport Geography* 88 (2020): 1–12.

43 See project: T-SUM, "Transitions to Sustainable Urban Mobility," 2022, https://bit.ly/3sUssaS.

44 Clemence Cavoli et al., "Transitions to Sustainable Urban Mobility. Participatory Policy Planning" (Freetown, 2021), https://bit.ly/3a8bi2T.

45 Tim Schwanen, "Inequalities in Everyday Urban Mobility," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

Box 6.2

Lifting informal neighbourhoods out of poverty

Rarely have transport interventions explicitly sought to broaden opportunities for the poorer and more marginal urban populations. However, cable-cars are a notable exception to the general rule. Having adapted ski-lift technology commonly found at tourist resorts, aerial cable-cars can now be found in eight Latin American countries where hilly terrain and densely built informal settlements make the implementation of conventional public transport systems, such as BRT, costly and socially unviable.

In **Medellin**, Colombia's second largest city, the use of aerial cable-cars, or *Metrocable*, for urban commuting dates from the early 2000s. The first line, which opened in 2004, was built to connect the steep hills, and their informally settled areas, scarred by poverty and violence, to the centre of the city. Medellin now boasts five aerial cable-car lines located in low-income peripheral neighbourhoods which had started their lives as informal settlements. Except for the most recent line, they have all been completely paid for with local public funds (as the initial demand was below the threshold required to qualify for national funding). These lines form part of an integrated, mass transit system which combines various modes of public transport, including overground rail, the BRT and its feeder routes, and a tramway. In all cases commuting times for residents have been dramatically reduced. In the past, they were typically close to an hour and involved trips along steep, narrow roads, but have now been reduced to only a few minutes.

While most cities with difficult topographies have used cable-cars to link previously inaccessible informal neighbourhoods, **La Paz** (Bolivia) has placed its ten aerial cable-car lines at the core of an existing urban transit system. It now provides flying pods that silently cover longer distances faster and more efficiently than its urban buses. Many other cities have, with varying degrees of success, sought inspiration from Medellin. They have tended to put plans for cable-car lines at the core of major urban upgrading efforts and to use them to inject funds and hope for a better future into low-income neighbourhoods. For LRGs, an added attraction of cable-car lines is that their construction involves relatively few expropriations and little demolition work compared to making space for new bus lanes or railway lines. This not only saves time and money, but it also implies a much smaller carbon footprint associated with demolishing buildings and relocating them elsewhere.[46]

Source: Snowscat. Unsplash.
Cable car in La Paz, Bolivia.

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46 Julio Dávila, "Medellín's Low-Carbon Metrocables. Lifting Informal Barrios out of Poverty," *ReVista. Harvard Review of Latin America* 20 (2021): 1–8.

Source: Mikael Colville-Andersen. Flickr.
Cargo bike.

An intergenerational perspective of inequality should also lead to LRGs gradually shifting towards less carbon-intensive and less polluting modes of transport. **Globally speaking, the transport sector accounts for over 24% of CO₂ and 14% of greenhouse gas emissions, with road transport being responsible for about 72% of total transport CO₂ emissions. Cities around the globe need to act quickly to meet their global climate change targets.**[47] Alternative modes of transport, which use cleaner forms of energy, are currently being adopted faster in the cities of the Global North than in the Global South where, despite lower rates of motorization, the urban poor tend to suffer worse health effects due to emissions.

Currently, only 16% of the world's motorized fleet is electrically powered. A couple of factors may, however, prevent the successful transfer of policies targeted at reducing automobile ownership and usage and, conse-

quently, reducing transport-induced carbon footprints. These include differences in city layouts, practical differences between the modes of transport used in specific geographical areas, and the level of motorized transport use in different countries.[48] The greatest challenges perhaps involve switching to cleaner forms of alternative energy. These are currently being faced by several countries in the Global South, and especially in Africa and Asia, where there is a heavy reliance on minibuses (*trotros, danfos, matatus*), motorcycles (*boda bodas, okada*) and tricycles, all of which heavily rely on fossil fuels and are major sources of pollution. To tackle climate-related transport challenges, some national governments, including that of Ghana,[49] have levied high tax rates on the importation of old motor vehicles to deter people from buying and using them. Even so, the importation of such vehicles continues to increase, year after year, because most people cannot afford to buy new vehicles. The question is therefore: How prepared are lower and middle-income countries for the migration to cleaner energy alternatives without widening existing inequalities in mobility?

LRGs can support the transition to more environmentally sustainable means of transport by engaging in the promotion of more supportive environments for pedestrians and cyclists and other non-motorized modes of transit, and by granting them safe access to shared spaces.[50] There is a need for a conscious effort by city authorities to get their constituents to recognize cycling and walking as viable and effective transportation options which offer benefits for both health and the environment. This should not simply be seen as promoting a pro-poor means of connecting people, as that is a narrative that often leads to people abandoning non-motorized modes of transport as soon as improvements in their household income allows them to do this.

Achieving affordable, safe and clean public transportation is now possible, but: How can the transition to low-carbon transport in low-income and lower middle-income countries be made both inclusive and equitable?

47 Luciano Pana Tronca, Manos Chaniotakis, and Maria Kamargianni, "Transport in Cities," The Bartlett, 2021, https://bit.ly/3a9a9YS.

48 David P. Ashmore et al., "Gauging Differences in Public Transport Symbolism across National Cultures: Implications for Policy Development and Transfer," *Journal of Transport Geography* 77 (2019): 26–38.

49 Baba Imoro Musah, Lai Peng, and Yifeng Xu, "Urban Congestion and Pollution: A Quest for Cogent Solutions for Accra City," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 435 (2020): 12026.

50 Schwanen, "Inequalities in Everyday Urban Mobility."

3 Passenger transport services at the city and regional scales

Accessibility to good quality passenger transport services has the potential to deepen and disrupt the currently uneven distribution of capabilities to live a flourishing life in cities and their neighbouring territories. However, market-based approaches to the provision of passenger transport services have resulted in the use of demand and supply analysis, which has prioritized profitability over using transport solutions to promote more equitable outcomes.[51] Inequalities in the provision of passenger transport services are founded upon, and often sustained by, socio-economic factors, urban transport infrastructure and the quality and availability of public transport, and they are also largely embedded in cultural norms.[52] Public transport is critical for creating economic, educational and rela-

tional opportunities. High fares discourage the use of public transport and force the poorest urban citizens to resort, instead, to walking, or even to not move at all, while accessible and affordable public transport has the potential to increase the chances of people to access job opportunities.[53] Measures taken by LRGs to ensure affordability often include targeted subsidies. An example can be found in **Bogota** (Colombia), where poverty targeting systems and databases holding detailed socio-economic data about local households have been used to issue smart transport cards to targeted beneficiaries. In **Perth** (Australia), fares are kept low to keep transport affordable for certain specifically targeted groups, such as the retired, students and the unemployed. In France, some cities are moving towards free-of-charge public transport to foster its use and help reduce the use of private cars.[54]

A perception of insecurity can also affect the use of public transport and the enjoyment of public spaces.

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51 The demand for passenger transport services is often associated with the needs of consumers, their purchasing power and population density, while the volume of supply of these services is generally associated with issues of investment, and the length and distribution of the road network, amongst other factors. See: Maria Cieśla et al., "Scenarios for the Development of Polish Passenger Transport Services in Pandemic Conditions," *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 13, no. 18 (2021); Thomas W. Sanchez, "The Impact of Public Transport on US Metropolitan Wage Inequality," *Urban Studies* 39, no. 3 (2002): 423–36.

52 Tom Voege, "The Future of Transport Services," IDB Transport Division, 2019, https://bit.ly/3wEFnP6.

53 Shivonne Gates et al., "Transport and Inequality: An Evidence Review for the Department for Transport" (London, 2019); Paul Starkey and John Hine, "Poverty and Sustainable Transport: How Transport Affects Poor People with Policy Implications for Poverty Reduction" (London, 2014).

54 García Zaragoza, "Transport as a Means of Inclusion."

Source: Gabriella Clare Marino. Unsplash.
Woman on public transport in Rome, Italy.

Spaces for mobility that lack visibility and street lighting are often perceived as being unsafe, especially by women, LGBTQIA+ people, children and older people. Violence and a lack of security on transport systems are factors that limit equal access to connectivity. Public policies such as the *Bájale al acoso* (*Say "No" to harassment*) have been implemented by the Metropolitan District of **Quito** (Ecuador), since 2017, within the global framework of the UN Women's *Safe Cities for Women and Girls*, as part of an initiative that seeks to eliminate sexual violence from the transport system.

Inequalities in access to, and the use of, public transportation are gendered, with significant differences in travel patterns between women and men. Women tend to have less access to, and control over, private cars, and are more likely to use public transport, make shorter, multistop trips, and engage in more non-work-related travel outside rush hours. Given their multiple productive, reproductive and caring household roles, reliable transport should offer women the ability to reach multiple destinations in a timely and affordable manner. The gender gap in mobility tends to widen as socio-economic status decreases, so poorer women tend to remain more localized than their male counterparts.[55] These gaps often affect the participation of women in labour markets and political life.

To tackle gender-based gaps in mobility, it is important to consider the quality, safety and accessibility of stations and stops, as well as the public space that connects the transport system (see Box 6.3). To ensure safer mobility, women often incur additional transport costs (ranging from approximately 26 to 50 USD per month in the UK) compared to men.[56] In **New York City** (USA), women who have to travel late at night feel safer using for-hire vehicles and taxis than public transportation.[57] Women's mobility would be enhanced if the accessibility, safety and comfort of the modes of transport that they use were improved.[58] In **Malmo** (Sweden), attempts have been made to mainstream the process of developing the city's public transport system with a specific emphasis on gender. This has included carrying out simple activities such as removing bushes and shrubbery adjacent to bus stops and eliminating dark accesses to stops to improve the perception of safety. In **Kalmar** (Sweden), allowing night buses to drop off passengers between regular stops has improved night-time safety.[59] In trains run by SYTRAL, **Lyon**'s (France) public transportation system, staff are aware of safety issues faced by women and try to provide users with the most accurate information about bus arrival times so that they can better plan their journeys. These measures were implemented after SYTRAL conducted a series of women's "exploratory walks", in which female ambassadors were accompanied by SYTRAL officials. Along the way, the women involved identified areas in which they felt unsafe and made recommendations for changes to the system.[60] To counteract the violence and harassment often experienced by women using public transport in cities like **Delhi** (India) and **Mexico City** (Mexico), they now offer women-only carriages. All of the above are necessary measures. Similar gender-aware approaches should also be considered when addressing the quality, safety and accessibility of stations and stops and also those of the public spaces that connect transport infrastructure. These measures must also be complemented with other structural policies to tackle what has become an important problem in many cities.

55 Laetitia Gauvin et al., "Gender Gaps in Urban Mobility," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 7, no. 1 (2020): 1–13.

56 Gates et al., "Transport and Inequality: An Evidence Review for the Department for Transport."

57 Sarah M. Kaufman, Christopher F. Polack, and Gloria A. Campbell, "The Pink Tax on Transportation: Women's Challenges in Mobility" (New York, 2018), https://bit.ly/3lHeFQS.

58 Silvia Maffii, Patrizia Malgieri, and Caterina Di Bartolo, "Gender Equality and Mobility: Mind the Gap!," 2019, https://bit.ly/3sXY3bF.

59 Maffii, Malgieri, and Di Bartolo.

60 Muxi and Arias, "Social and Territorial Connectivity. Towards a Paradigm Shift in Mobility and Accessibility for Gender Equality."

Box 6.3

Mainstreaming intersectionality into a *Connecting* pathway

Looking at connectivity from an intersectional[61] perspective implies promoting proximity in order to satisfy the different requirements of the daily life of residents according to their social identities. This implies: (a) taking into account the many structural inequalities that they face; (b) examining their specific needs and aspirations, and especially those of people living in peripheral areas that are socially segregated and territorially disconnected; and (c) resolving problems of interaction with other areas of the same cities through the provision of quality public transport.

In the USA, transportation systems have been shown to reinforce racial inequalities and discrimination, which are experienced on a daily basis by some citizens. In recent decades, racial discrimination would largely explain why some communities have benefited from, or been disadvantaged by, transport systems. Those discriminated against tend to have included urban minorities such as Black and Hispanic people.

To eliminate the centre-periphery, public-private, productive-reproductive binomials, it is necessary to generate a grid of connectivity that can help improve the use of travel time, especially for women who, due to their assigned care tasks, find it difficult to actively participate in formal productive spaces. Sustainability must begin with valuing and improving the use of people's time.

Adopting a gender-based perspective makes the mobility and accessibility that is not considered in traditional studies of transport more clearly visible. Such studies only tend to deal with mobility that is, inappropriately, often referred to as "obligatory"; this is generally related to productive work and university studies and not to the mobility of everyday life and care work. In addition, a gender-based approach also regards walking in public spaces as part of mobility and not only the use of mechanical modes of transport.[62]

Source: Sebastian Meier. Unsplash.
Bern Railway station. Bern, Switzerland.

61 Intersectionality, as introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, refers to the approach that analyzes how systems of oppression overlap, operate together and exacerbate each other to create distinct, multidimensional experiences for people belonging to multiple identity categories, according to their gender, race, class, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, etc. Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. 1 (1989).

62 Muxi and Arias, "Social and Territorial Connectivity. Towards a Paradigm Shift in Mobility and Accessibility for Gender Equality."

3.1 Exploring the coverage of formal urban public transport worldwide: A focus on BRT and metro systems

Table 6.1

BRT systems in cities across the globe

Regions	Passengers per day	Number of cities	Length (km)
Africa	491,578	5	131
Asia	9,238,060	45	1,691
Europe	1,613,580	44	875
Latin America	20,916,474	57	1,886
North America	988,683	21	683
Oceania	436,200	5	109

Source: Centre of Excellence for BRT, "Global BRT Data," 2022, https://bit.ly/3lB4jCh.

The Observatory of Urban Mobility estimates the average modal share of formal public transport in 29 Latin American cities at 38.8%,[63] with it reaching over 50% in cities such as **Lima** (Peru), **Quito** (Ecuador), **Caracas** (Venezuela) and **Mexico City** (Mexico). BRT offers a cheaper alternative to rail-based mass-transport systems and that has expanded to become an important mode of formal transport. As shown in Table 6.1, BRT is widely used across Latin America and accounts for 59% of public transport journeys made in **Bogota** (Colombia), which is a city with one of the world's most extensive BRT systems. This compares with 44% in **Cape Town** (South Africa) and 29% in **Santiago de Chile** (Chile).

Globally, metro systems are assuming increasing importance. They are currently carrying an average of 168 million passengers per day. They are present in 182 cities, in 56 countries, and in 2017 they carried a total of 53,768 million passengers on 642 lines, with a combined length of 13,903 km and 11,084 stations.[64] By 2018, about a quarter of the world's metro systems had at least one fully automated line in operation. In all, there were 64 fully-automated metro lines in service, providing passenger transport services over a distance of 1,026 km, and operating in 42 different cities around the world.[65] Regionally speaking, between 2012 and 2017,

Source: Nitin Warrier. Flickr.
Nitin Warrier BRT system in Pune, India.

the Middle East and North Africa region saw the greatest growth in use (58%), followed by Asia (28%) and Latin America (20%), while Eurasia lost 3% of its passengers (see Figure 6.3). In North America, an increase of 10% in metro-line use was recorded, with data showing that while the figures of the Canadian and **New York City** (USA) metros grew significantly (between 5% and 46%), 13 other metro systems registered decreases in passenger use. There are still no metro systems in Sub-Saharan Africa.

63 Verena Flues et al., "Sustainable Urban Mobility in Latin America: Assessment and Recommendations for Mobility Policies" (Bogotá, 2020), https://bit.ly/3LHNoZh.

64 UITP, "World Metro Figures 2018" (Brussels, 2018), https://bit.ly/3yWHEln.

65 UITP, "World Report on Metro Automation" (Brussels, 2018), https://bit.ly/3LJJnUj.

Figure 6.3
Global metro networks 2017

North America
3,730m passengers annually
17 cities
1,544 km of track
1,270 stations
14,200 carriages

Europe
10,750m passengers annually
46 cities
2,950 km of track
2,950 stations
25,800 carriages

Eurasia
4,700m passengers annually
16 cities
813 km of track
540 stations
8,100 carriages

Latin America
5,915m passengers annually
19 cities
943 km of track
780 stations
9,000 carriages

Middle East and North Africa
1,990m passengers annually
11 cities
464 km of track
350 stations
3,300 carriages

Asia-Pacific
26,690m passengers annually
73 cities
7,218 km of track
5,200 stations
53,700 carriages
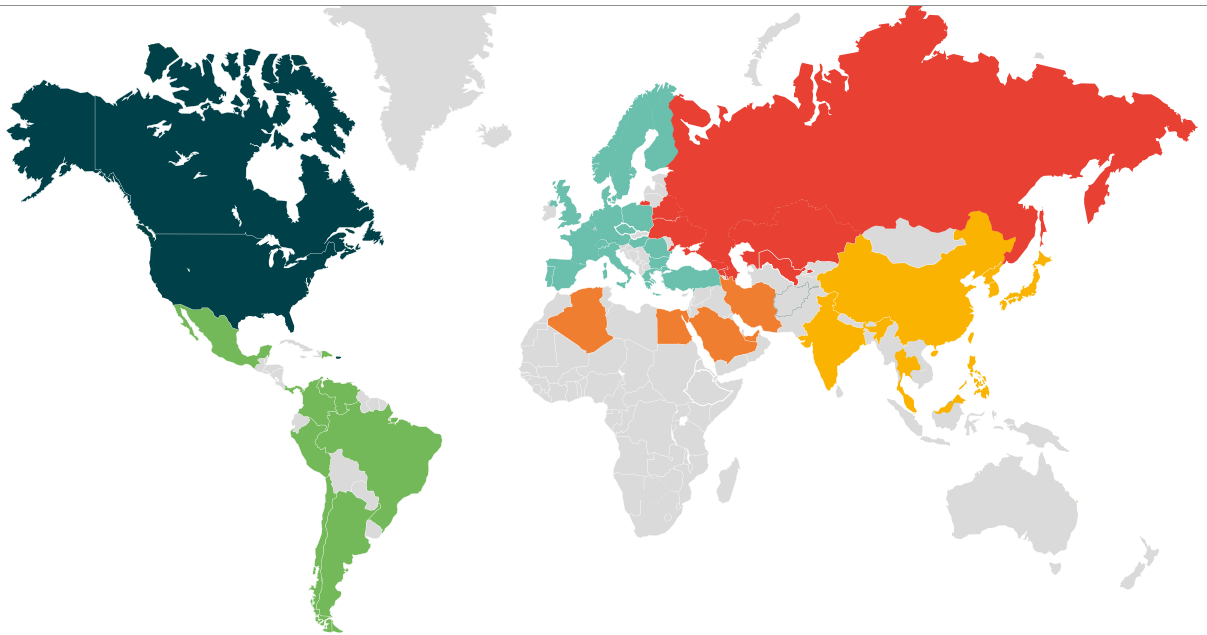
Source: UITP, "World Metro Figures 2018" (Brussels, 2018), https://bit.ly/3yWHEIn.

A well-integrated passenger transport system maximizes the ease and efficiency of passenger use in terms of time, cost, comfort, safety, accessibility and convenience. User surveys show that offering real-time service information would encourage even greater use of public transport.[66] User fees and differential tariffs could help to reduce costs, as could offering cross-subsidies to a range of users and covering different areas of the city. **Rio de Janeiro** (Brazil) has connected bike transit to BRT services and, as a result, increased mobility and access for a larger share of the city's population. Most importantly, the city has focused on providing quality public transportation to low-income residents, as about 64% of passengers using the city's *Transoeste* and *Transcarioca* BRT services earn less than twice the legal minimum wage.[67] These services have also helped to improve mobility and reduced commuting times; this has been especially beneficial to low-income residents living in the northern and western areas of the city. This also shows the benefits of connecting high-density areas of the city with public transport.

66 Moovit, "2020 Global Public Transport Report" (San Francisco, 2021), https://bit.ly/3wENk6U.

67 Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, "Rio de Janeiro," 2016, https://bit.ly/3GeVirM.

Source: Mariana Gil. Flickr.
EMBARQ Brasil *TransOeste* BRT in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Source: Adedotun Ajibade, Flickr.
Bus terminal in Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria.

Box 6.4

Lagos' BRT

In response to what had previously been almost insurmountable challenges to its transportation system (including serious traffic jams and negative environmental impacts), the state government of **Lagos** (Nigeria) developed a Strategic Transport Master Plan in 2006.[68] This was conceived to address multi-faceted problems and to provide this megacity with an efficient public transportation system within two decades. As part of this plan, a feasibility study was carried out for an initial corridor and BRT system; this was commissioned in August 2006. The primary aim of the Lagos BRT was to provide more transport choices for users, with a special focus on meeting the mobility needs of the urban poor. The Lagos BRT was specifically developed to reduce traffic congestion and urban transportation-induced emissions while, at the same time, optimizing the usage of the existing road network. It also aimed to help the poor by reducing their household expenditure on public transportation and the time that they had to spend on the road. The BRT system, which was called "BRT-Lite", was implemented by the Lagos Metropolitan Transport Authority.

Although connecting many people, formal transport modes are not always accessible to the broader population. Even in cities that have recently invested heavily in government-funded mass transit systems, like **Addis Ababa** (Ethiopia), these often perpetuate existing problems of accessibility and affordability. This affects particularly for the poorest residents, who have little choice but to use informal types of transport. Those living in informal settlements tend to rely heavily on informal transport services or, in their absence, to travel on foot over long distances.

3.2 Informal urban transport and its prevalence in cities in the Global South

In cities in middle- and low-income countries, informal transport systems are often the only viable way to connect peripheral, and more remote, areas with central business districts and areas offering access to basic services and professional opportunities. Despite addressing the needs of low-income urban dwellers, informal transport systems tend to be associated with negative externalities, such as congestion, pollution and lower levels of road and personal safety. This does not mean that informal services should be banned, but if they are to continue to serve their users, they must be acknowledged, improved and incorporated as an integral part of their city's transportation system.

In several cities across Africa and Asia, informal transport is the most accessible and, in some cases, the only available transport option that connects people of all income brackets, other than walking.[69] In cities such as **Freetown** (Sierra Leone), informal transport services account for about 80% of all public transport services. There are a range of different modes, which

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68 Dayo Mobereola, "Lagos Bus Rapid Transit: Africa's First BRT Scheme," SSATP Discussion Paper - Urban Transport Series, 2009, https://bit.ly/3aeg7Yx.

69 Md. Musleh Uddin Hasan and Julio D. Dávila, "The Politics of (Im)Mobility: Rickshaw Bans in Dhaka, Bangladesh," *Journal of Transport Geography* 70, no. C (2018): 246–55.

include a few full-sized buses, minibuses (*trotro, matatu, danfo*), shared taxis, three-wheelers (*kekeh*) and motorbikes (*okada, bodaboda*). This service has evolved organically over time to fill in gaps left by an ageing national operator. Informal transport is now the main means of connecting the city, especially for low-and middle-income households who do not own private vehicles.[70]

The pandemic dramatically affected passenger transport services due the drastic limits on passenger numbers imposed by governments to curb the spread of the pandemic. **Mexico City** (Mexico) shut down 20% of its metro and BRT services, while the **Nairobi** metropolis and the counties of **Kilifi**, **Kwale** and **Mombasa** (Kenya) temporarily banned all public transport services between different counties.[71] The informal transport sector stepped in to fill the vacuum left by formal transport services and has served as a "lifeline for low-income residents who cannot work from home, do not have access to cars, and for whom it is unfeasible to walk or cycle".[72]

In some countries, public sector strategies have been put into place to transform the informal sector and provide better quality services to users. This has often involved the introduction of technological innovations, such as the institutional reforms carried out in **Mexico City** (Mexico), the restructuring of the transport system in **Freetown** (Sierra Leone), and other improvements made in cities across Turkey. Informal urban transport must therefore be recognized by LRGs as providing both key and complementary transport services, in addition to formal ones.[73]

The engagement of LRGs with informal and formal transport systems can also have a major impact on addressing inequalities, as both systems are important sources of livelihoods worldwide. Formal urban public transport is estimated to employ about 7.3 million

people throughout the world, with the Asia-Pacific region accounting for over a third of this number (2.8 million), Eurasia about 1.2 million, and Latin America and the Middle East and North Africa 1.2 million and 200,000, respectively. The figure is lower (70,000) in Sub-Saharan Africa, where informal services are comparatively much more extensive. Informal public transport represents up to 90% of transport in some African cities. Moreover, the introduction of tricycles and motorcycles into informal transport services has significantly increased employment in the sector. For instance, **Nairobi** (Kenya), with a population of 3.4 million, is estimated to have between 5,000 and 6,500 *matatu* minibuses, employing an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 people, while at the national scale, the informal transport sector in Kenya employs nearly 500,000 people.[74] While it is estimated that **Mumbai** (India) has about 150,000 auto-rickshaws, the number of *boda boda*[75] operators in **Kampala** (Uganda) is probably around 120,000.[76] Unfortunately, many of these people are probably amongst the poorest of the poor, lack representation and a voice in society, and have to endure poor working conditions and job insecurity.[77]

3.3 Government financing of passenger transport services

Within the context of pursuing more equitable transport policies, public financing of passenger services is becoming increasingly challenging for LRGs. **Developing and operating robust and equitable transpor-**

70 Joseph Mustapha Macarthy and Braima Koroma, 'Transport and Equality in Freetown', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022).

71 Talia Calnek-Sugin and Catarina Heeckt, "Mobility for the Masses: The Essential Role of Informal Transport in the COVID-19 Recovery," *LSE Cities Blog*, 2020, https://bit.ly/3sW8ufP; Rael Ombuor, "Kenya's President Halts All Passenger Transport in Four Counties to Stop Coronavirus," *Voa News*, 2020, https://bit.ly/3Nwyjed.

72 Calnek-Sugin and Heeckt, "Mobility for the Masses: The Essential Role of Informal Transport in the COVID-19 Recovery."

73 Roger Behrens, Saksith Chalermpong, and Daniel Oviedo, "Informal Paratransit in the Global South," in *The Routledge Handbook of Public Transport*, ed. Corinne Mulley, John D. Nelson, and Stephen Ison (London: Routledge, 2021).

74 Calnek-Sugin and Heeckt, "Mobility for the Masses: The Essential Role of Informal Transport in the COVID-19 Recovery."

75 Starkey and Hine, "Poverty and Sustainable Transport: How Transport Affects Poor People with Policy Implications for Poverty Reduction."

76 International Transport Workers' Federation, "The Power of Informal Transport," 2017, https://bit.ly/3wSKjAm.

77 WIEGO, "Occupations of Informal Transport Workers," Transport Workers, 2011, https://bit.ly/3zbmndU; International Transport Workers' Federation, "The Power of Informal Transport."

tation systems requires large amounts of funding from a variety of sources. Although decentralized fiscal policies encourage subnational governments to generate own-source revenues to help fund localized transit services, the high costs of implementing, operating and maintaining rail and rapid transit systems call for diversified funding instruments, including central government transfers. However, given the numerous positive externalities of transit use, revenue may be collected from a broad base of users and non-users alike, at the local, regional and national levels. Drawing on practices from different countries, Box 6.5 outlines possible sources of local government revenue related to urban transport. It refers both to local policy instruments used to finance transport and also to other sources of revenue resulting from transport investments. Insofar as public transport makes a significant contribution to promoting greater equality in cities, ensuring a robust base to fund public transport is an important area of policy concern for LRGs.

Box 6.5

Local financial instruments associated with urban transport

LRGs often collect their own-source revenues to cover public transit costs through various taxes. However, some shared subnational taxes, such as value added taxes and sales taxes, are regressive and therefore lower-income residents pay proportionally more of their income in taxes than wealthier residents. In contrast, revenue from motor-vehicle-related charges is considered a better source of funding for public transit as this tax is progressive. Charges such as fuel levies, vehicle registration fees, vehicle sales taxes and license fees not only mitigate the negative externalities of personal vehicle use but can also target wealthier households, as long as public transit and shipping are appropriately treated. Fuel charges are considered a robust, efficient, and progressive revenue source, and they do not require extensive administrative capacity. In **Bogota** (Colombia), for example, approximately 25% of Phase I of the *TransMilenio* BRT system was funded through a local fuel surcharge, and 67% of fuel taxes in South Africa are spent on (although not specifically earmarked for) municipal transit.

User charges

Fares can be charged to cover public transit costs. Although public finance experts prefer user charges to finance operational budgets, LRGs worldwide frequently require subsidies to support the ongoing costs of public transit. Fare subsidies have been proven to increase ridership, enhance the public benefit of expanded transit use, and reduce negative externalities. To promote equality, fares can be reduced for certain user groups, and higher fares can be charged on certain routes and to certain users to help subsidize the fares for services used by lower-income passengers.

Land value capture

LRGs may also utilize development-based land value capture to create sustainable sources of finance for new and expanded transit systems. LRGs may lease, or sell, development rights either above, or adjacent to, recently constructed transit stations not only to collect revenue from the sale or lease, but also to increase the population density and, in turn, maximize passenger use and fare revenue. Similarly, as property values increase along new transit corridors, cities may seek to increase revenue obtained from the areas affected and to apply the resulting funds to transit-related projects. Although property taxes can be lucrative and may be progressively structured, their administration may be costly compared to user and motor-vehicle-related charges.

Source: box developed by Paul Smoke and Jamie Boex for GOLD VI.

Source: Walimai.photo. Flickr.
Bayswater, London, UK.

Among the most widely used sources of public transport funding available are fares, sales taxes, property taxes, fuel taxes, station rents and advertising. In 2016, **Seattle** (USA) successfully raised USD 13.2 million in traffic fines levied in connection with speed enforcement cameras located in school zones; this money was subsequently used to fund its school transportation safety projects.[78] However, the use of such fines may also reinforce inequalities because lower income groups may bear the brunt of such penalties while higher income groups may not see fines as an effective deterrent.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the finances of most public sector funded mass transport systems suffered significantly due to the loss of passenger fares and other sources of revenue. For example, the **Washington** (USA) Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, whose jurisdiction covers Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, reported a fall in income of about 80% associated with the combined passenger use of its Metrorail and Metrobus services in September 2020, compared to pre-pandemic levels. This led to a shortfall of 200 million USD in its 2020 budget projections and an anticipated 560 million USD in reduced revenue for 2021.[79] Transport for **London** (UK) lost an estimated 100 million GBP in advertising revenue in 2020-21.[80] It is, however, important to underline that in their attempt to generate income in the post-pandemic era, many LRGs have considered redistributing profits from high income/high mobility groups to low income/low mobility groups. Sources of funding for mobility should be obtained from the groups that have been least hard hit by the pandemic, such as large property owners and high-income groups with considerable assets and whose income was less affected by lockdowns. For cities in the Global South, national governments should consider mobilizing funds to bail out both formal and informal local public transport services and providing support to mitigate the impact of increased costs resulting from the implementation of health and safety guidelines.[81]

Faced with the need to find alternative sources of financing for public transit systems, while maintaining equitable access for all income groups, the response of some LRGs has been to involve the private sector in operating these services as well as in building or maintaining existing facilities.[82] In recent times, the possibility to develop mass rapid transit services in some cities has often hinged on public-private collaborations. **Bogota**'s (Colombia) *TransMilenio* BRT, and its associated aerial cable-car (*TransmiCable*) offshoot, offers a classic example of this. However, in some cities, public sector involvement has sometimes been limited to performing regulatory checks and setting institutional standards to ensure safety and security within the transport sector.

78 Safe Routes to School National Partnership, "Finding the Money: How Local Governments Generate Active Transportation Funding," 2019, https://bit.ly/38Fw9dP.

79 Liu Luyu, Jonathan Scheff, and Harvey J. Miller, "The Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on Public Transit Demand in the United States," *PLoS ONE* 15, no. 11 (2020); Mark Sweney, "TfL Hit by £100m Fall in Ad Revenue across Tube, Rail and Bus Network," *The Guardian*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3wKmk7z.

80 Sweney, "TfL Hit by £100m Fall in Ad Revenue across Tube, Rail and Bus Network."

81 Wol-san Liem, "The Pandemic, Local Public and Union Funding Transport Responses. Part I: The Global North," 2020, https://bit.ly/3a9oeWg; Wol-san Liem, "The Pandemic, Local Public and Union Funding Transport Responses. Part II: The Global South," 2021, https://bit.ly/3GdlG5A; Todd Litman, "Evaluating Public Transportation Local Funding Options," *Journal of Public Transportation* 17, no. 1 (2014): 43–74; Safe Routes to School National Partnership, "Finding the Money: How Local Governments Generate Active Transportation Funding."

82 Tony Merna and Faisal F. Al-Thani, "Financing Infrastructure Projects," 2018, https://bit.ly/3MLrWE4.

4 Digital connectivity

Uneven access to digital infrastructure and technologies has been a key driver of urban and territorial inequalities and has compromised the equitable distribution of opportunities for people to access services and livelihoods. This chapter argues that LRGs can, and should, advance urban and territorial equality by promoting a *Connecting* pathway that tackles digital disparities within and between territories. According to the World Bank, "by overcoming information barriers, augmenting factors, and transforming products, digital technologies can make development more inclusive, efficient, and innovative".[83] Research into the effects of Internet penetration suggests that, above a certain critical threshold, penetration is positively correlated with national economic growth, although this is more modest in developing countries than had previously been estimated. In so far as economic growth alone is unlikely to reduce poverty, the evidence on whether Internet adoption can improve wealth distribution is more mixed. This idea would suggest that Internet diffusion positively affects wages, though the benefits of Internet adoption tend to be disproportionately appropriated by the most skilled workers.[84] By improving access to pricing information and potential buyers, mobile technologies have been shown to improve market performance among farmers and isolated and poor populations, like the fishermen of **Kerala** (India).[85]

Source: Emily Boyd. Flickr.
Connectivity in Vietnam.

Mobile phone and Internet usage have also been shown to help labour migration by allowing migrants to maintain remote ties with their family and friends. It has also increased their employability through the acquisition of information communication technology (ICT) skills.

In terms of digital connectivity at the scale of urban regions, the lockdowns that were imposed by governments in March 2020 to contain the spread of COVID-19 brought to the fore the importance of having access to regular and reliable communication in daily endeavours to millions of people. After the initial shock, a relatively small proportion of mainly service workers were able to work from home with the help of digital technologies

83 World Bank, "World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends" (Washington, DC, 2016), https://bit.ly/3lHzD20.

84 Hernan Galperin and M. Fernanda Viecens, "Connected for Development? Theory and Evidence about the Impact of Internet Technologies on Poverty Alleviation," *Development Policy Review* 35, no. 3 (2017): 315–36.

85 Robert Jensen, "The Digital Provide: Information -Technology, Market Performance, and Welfare in the South Indian Fisheries Sector," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122, no. 3 (2007): 879–924.

(no more than 43% in **London** (UK), a city with one of the world's largest shares of service-sector workers), while only a limited number of students were able to connect to their teachers and schoolmates over the Internet.[86]

4.1 Mapping access to digital connectivity and its evolution

Source: Ralston Smith. Unsplash.
Homeschooling during the pandemic, Richmond, USA.

Even before the pandemic, there is no doubt that the changes brought about by the increasing availability of smart mobile phones, Internet-enabled computers and the software applications that facilitate their use had transformed how most people around the planet access information and communicate with each other. Over the past two decades, the coverage of mobile networks has grown at an astounding rate, though this has slowed down somewhat in recent years. **By 2020, nearly 85% of the world's population had access to a 4G network, which represented a doubling of access since 2015. By 2020, 93% of the world's population had potential access to the Internet by 4G, or at least by either 2G or 3G.**[87] In fact, **no region of the world had less than 88% mobile network penetration**. Even so, according to UN data, the availability of the fastest 4G system in the "least economically developed countries" was considerably lower than in Europe or in the Asia-Pacific region: 44% against 97.2% and 94.2%, respectively. According to the World Bank, in 2015, more households in developing countries owned a mobile phone than had access to electricity or improved sanitation.[88]

Remarkable though these figures are, **the mere availability of new technology does not guarantee that it will transform everyone's life to a similar extent, nor that it will help cities become more prosperous, more**

sustainable or more equal: "new technology shapes new opportunities, to create new industries and transform old ones, to present new ways of organizing firms or entire societies, to transform the potential for living; but it does not compel these changes, and certainly in some societies and in some places the resulting opportunities may never be seized".[89]

When looked at more closely, the figures presented above reveal significant disparities, not only among countries, but also within countries. For example, the International Telecommunication Union estimates that, in 2019, 72% of urban households had access to the Internet, compared to only 38% of rural households. The percentages were even lower for computer access: 63% in urban areas and 25% in rural areas.[90] However, these figures are perhaps less significant than they may initially seem, given that computers have recently been losing ground to mobile phones as the main gateway to the Internet.

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86 Michele Acuto, "Digital Connectivity and the COVID-19 'Forced Experiment,'" GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022); Esteve Almirall, "Redefining Connectivity - Implications for LRGs," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).
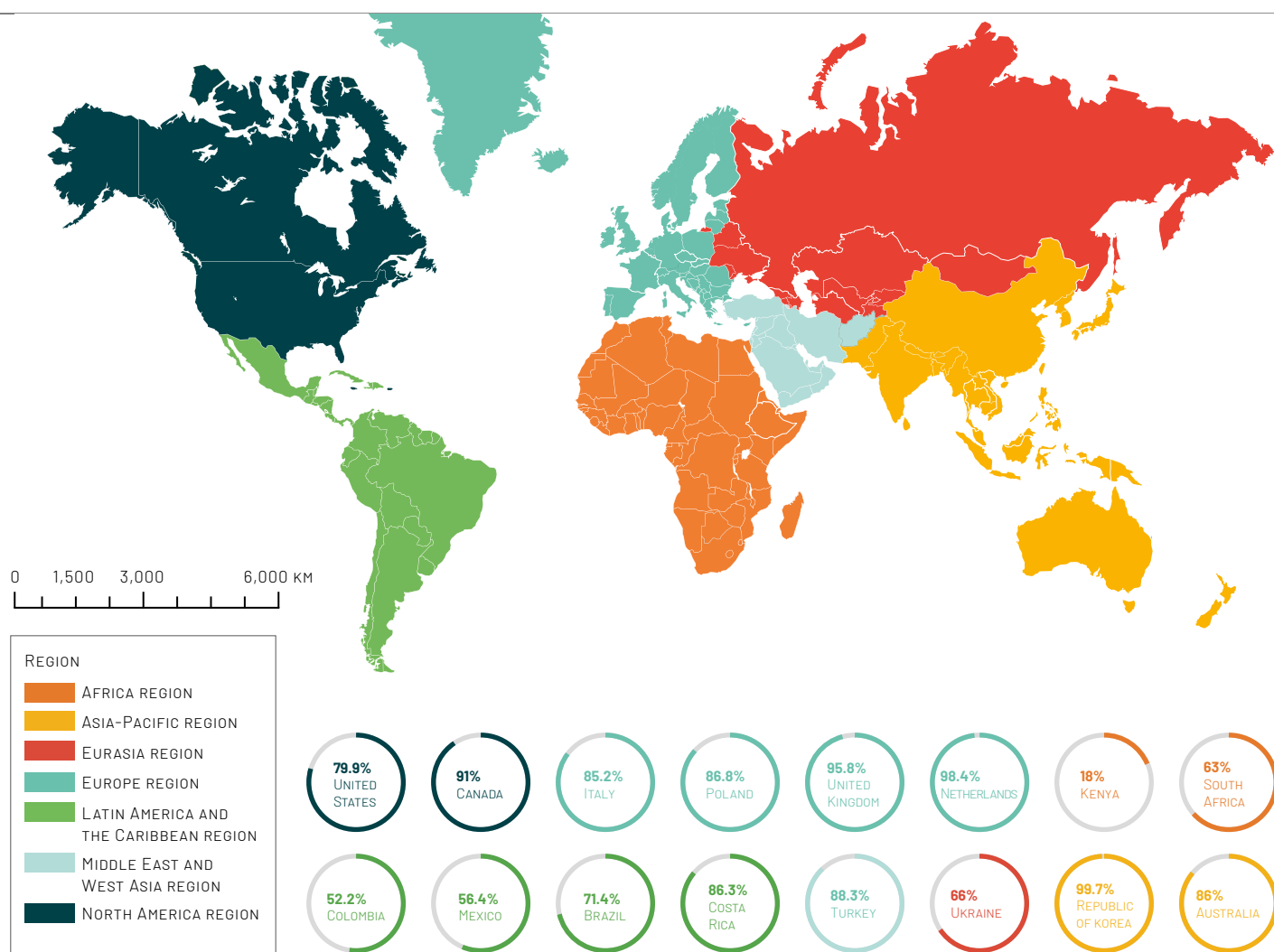
87 ITU, "Measuring Digital Development: Facts and Figures 2021," 2021, https://bit.ly/3PDV0PI.

88 World Bank, "World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends."

89 Peter Hall, *Cities in Civilization* (London: Widenfeld & Nicholson, 1998).

90 ITU, "Measuring Digital Development: Facts and Figures 2021."

Figure 6.4

Share of households with Internet access at home, 2019

Region
- Africa region
- Asia-Pacific region
- Eurasia region
- Europe region
- Latin America and the Caribbean region
- Middle East and West Asia region
- North America region

79.9% United States	**91%** Canada	**85.2%** Italy	**86.8%** Poland	**95.8%** United Kingdom	**98.4%** Netherlands	**18%** Kenya	**63%** South Africa
52.2% Colombia	**56.4%** Mexico	**71.4%** Brazil	**86.3%** Costa Rica	**88.3%** Turkey	**66%** Ukraine	**99.7%** Republic of korea	**86%** Australia

Source: authors, based on OECD, "OECD Statistics," 2022, https://bit.ly/3lHCjg4, and ITU, "Digital Development Dashboard," 2022, https://bit.ly/3sTNmaf.
Note: Australia's data is from 2017

Not surprisingly, access to the Internet is significantly lower in national territories marked by large distances between population centres, shortages of specialised skills, and a lack of basic infrastructure and investment capital. There are also marked differentials between urban and rural areas and those with very different rates of urbanization. In Africa, for example, 28% of urban households have access to the Internet, compared with a mere 6% of rural households. In the Americas, which is the world's most urbanized continent, the differences are less marked, but there are still significant disparities in access: 74% and 50%, respectively. In two-thirds of OECD countries, fewer than 70% of rural households have access to fast broadband. Moreover, in more than 80% of OECD countries, household broadband connectivity levels differ by more than 10% between urban and rural areas, with the difference being over 20% in two-thirds of OECD countries.[91]

However, even when disaggregated into urban and rural, such figures continue to mask significant differences in access and use. Young people aged 15-24 are more likely to use the Internet than either their older or younger peers.[92] For example, in 2019, in the Asia-Pacific region, 70% of young people used the Internet regularly, compared with 45% in all the other age groups. The

91 OECD, "Transport Bridging Divides" (Paris, 2020), https://bit.ly/3MJxZZD; OECD, *OECD Regions and Cities at a Glance 2020* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020), https://bit.ly/3MA8NEq.

92 ITU, "Measuring Digital Development: Facts and Figures 2021."

gap was smaller in other regions, however, including in Arab States (67% against 55%), Europe (96% against 83%) and the Americas (90% against 77%). Furthermore, studies conducted in Spain found that 83% of people aged between 65 and 75 who had been to university currently use ICT, while the percentage was only 45% for those in the same age bracket who had only completed secondary education, and 14% for those who only completed primary education.[93] In contrast, the gender gap appeared to be less marked: worldwide, 48% of females and 55% of males regularly used the Internet in 2019. The largest differences were observed in Africa, with 20% of females and 37% of males using it, and in the Arab States, with 47% and 61%, respectively.[94]

4.2 The digital divide: The potential of LRGs' rights–based approach

The statistics presented above point to several important features of digital connectivity, as well as to the potential for LRGs using policy to reduce inequalities within their areas of influence. One concept that has emerged over the past two decades from observing such differentials is that of the "digital divide", which highlights inequalities in accessing and using ICT, such as mobile phones and the Internet. According to the OECD, the digital divide refers to "the gap between individuals, households, businesses and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels with regard to both their opportunities to access information and communication technologies and their use of the Internet for a wide variety of activities".[95] Even so, **understanding and**

dealing with the digital divide means viewing it "not as simply a technological phenomenon, but a deeply social, political and spatial one as well".[96]

In this sense, the issue of digital connectivity relates more broadly to how marginalized urban groups access different forms of technology, with research highlighting the potential offered by, but also the risks associated with, the use of such technologies.[97] **Bridging the digital divide has consequently become an important policy issue for national governments and LRGs alike.** However, measuring the digital divide is fraught with methodological and empirical difficulties as "it is complex, rapidly changing, difficult to measure accurately, and a serious challenge to surmount". It is a multidimensional problem, best viewed "as a continuum measured using multiple variables such as income, age, educational level, and degree of technical skill".[98] The notion of a digital divide is not limited to access to ICT by users, but also involves all the other areas of urban life that are affected by it, or that the application of digital technologies can have an impact upon, such as the management of infrastructure networks, access to transport services, and e-governance, among others. It is therefore of critical importance that LRGs reflect on how a *Connecting* pathway that can help bridge the digital divide.

It is also very important to understand that **ensuring each household has an Internet connection is unlikely to guarantee that all individuals benefit equally from them**. The pandemic has highlighted that an Internet connection at home is likely to be insufficient for extreme situations when several members of a given household need daily, simultaneous, and reliable access, not only to the Internet, but also to a personal device enabling that access. The problem is both a financial and a practical one of ensuring that everyone has unconstrained access to a device when needed, as well as having the necessary bandwidth for several users to be able to reliably connect to the Internet at the same time. A related problem is the extent to which cultural norms dictate that some members of the household are given priority of access over others (e.g. boys over girls),

93 Pensium, "La Digitalización En Las Personas Mayores," 2020, https://bit.ly/3sV65Ce.

94 ITU, "Measuring Digital Development: Facts and Figures 2021."

95 Gloria Goncalves, Tiago Oliveira, and Frederico Cruz-Jesus, "Understanding Individual-Level Digital Divide: Evidence of an African Country," *Computers in Human Behavior* 87 (2018): 276–91.

96 Barney Warf, "Urban Informatics and E-Governance," in *Handbook of Urban Geography*, ed. Tim Schwanen and Ronald van Kempen (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019), 311–26.

97 Gina Porter et al., "Youth Livelihoods in the Cellphone Era: Perspectives from Urban Africa," *Journal of International Development* 30, no. 4 (2018): 539–58.

98 Warf, "Urban Informatics and E-Governance," 314.

as has so often been noted for other scarce household resources, such as transport.[99]

A separate point from access is that of usage of the Internet. Here, technical competency is the key issue. Using the Internet requires not only physical access, but also certain technical skills and also the confidence to sort out unexpected problems, as well as a degree of critical judgement, and perhaps also some ethical guidance, so as to make the most of what it has to offer. Within the European Union, high-income users in the most connected countries are many times more likely to use Internet services than the poorest users in the least connected countries.[100] Among OECD countries, the most prosperous regions typically offer better conditions for, and have larger shares of their populations, exploiting remote-working possibilities, while there tend to be far fewer such opportunities in less prosperous regions.[101] Although the volume of information available from the Internet grows exponentially year after year, the majority of it is still in English, and especially so in the technical and cultural domains; this reveals the cultural biases of the users who generate content.

With the increased penetration of digital technologies and services, inequalities in accessing and using them imply that the access to basic rights of some individuals and communities, which may include the right to work, health and quality education as well as equality of opportunity, may be at risk. The European Union has pioneered the notion of digital rights, and particularly in relation to privacy, access to data, transparency and technological accountability and the General Data Protection Regulation, of 2016, marked a major step towards achieving this. Similar concerns have been echoed by cities such as **Barcelona** (Spain), whose city council has been active in promoting a "rights-based digital city model" that "guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms (privacy, participation, and citizen control); democratically regulates emerging technologies (artificial intelligence, 5G) based on their social use; and has incorporated the digital dimension into its existing set of social rights (education, social

care, accessibility, and housing)".[102] Concerns over privacy, data protection and algorithmic transparency have even led the European Union to propose banning the use of systems using facial image recognition in public spaces.[103]

The pandemic has accelerated what were already ongoing transformations relating to the remote and online provision of public services. Some of the most profound changes have been observed in health and healthcare provision. Prior to the pandemic, several major steps in this direction had already been taken in Europe regarding the provision of e-health,[104] e-government,[105] and smart public services.[106] However, there is a danger that this will only exacerbate the existing urban-rural divide with regard to the scale and quality of local healthcare provision, although new technologies also offer possibilities to help bridge this divide.[107] The Netherlands have recently seen people aged over 75 moving back into urban areas in order to enjoy easier access to public and social services.[108] However, new technologies also offer the possibility to counter these shifts and to ensure that rural dwellers enjoy similar levels of healthcare coverage to those living in urban areas. In particular, remote monitoring is an essential element of e-health, or telehealth, and this is of particular importance in the context of chronic disease associated with an ageing society.

ICT services are usually supplied by private, and often multinational, companies with the necessary capital to invest in local infrastructure and connectivity. This raises the question of how the services that they provide should be regulated. Constraints of the monopoly power exerted by large telecommunications companies have led 800 municipalities in the USA to set up their own companies (see Box 6.6). By and large, such services are regulated by national governments, through specialized bodies attached to their respective ministries of communications. LRGs rarely have a say

99 Caroline Moser, *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training* (London: Routledge, 1993); Caren Levy, "Travel Choice Reframed: 'Deep Distribution' and Gender in Urban Transport," *Environment and Urbanization* 25, no. 1 (2013): 47–63; Sylvia Chant and Kerwin Datu, "Women in Cities: Prosperity or Poverty? A Need for Multi-Dimensional and Multi-Spatial Analysis," in *The City in Urban Poverty*, ed. Charlotte Lemanski and Colin Marx (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 39–63.

100 World Bank, "World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends."

101 OECD, "Transport Bridging Divides"; OECD, *OECD Regions and Cities at a Glance 2020*.

102 Guillem Ramirez Chico, "Connect the City: Rights, Justice and the Digital Divide," *Green European Journal*, 2020, 1, https://bit.ly/3wTMg0k.

103 Almirall, "Redefining Connectivity - Implications for LRGs."

104 European Commission, "EHealth," Shaping Europe's digital future, 2022, https://bit.ly/3PGtfFZ.

105 European Commission, "EGovernment and Digital Public Services," Shaping Europe's digital future, 2022, https://bit.ly/3MNXXv2.

106 European Commission.

107 European Commission, "Digital Public Services and Environments," Shaping Europe's digital future, 2022, https://bit.ly/3LK015Z.

108 Petra A. De Jong, Philip McCann, and Aleid E. Brouwer, "Moving up and down the Urban Hierarchy: Age-Articulated Interregional Migration Flows in the Netherlands," *The Annals of Regional Science* 57 (2016): 145–64.

Source: Bru Aguiló. Flickr.
Decidim meeting. Barcelona, Spain.

in how these bodies are regulated, though they do have some control over the use of certain ICT technologies within their respective jurisdictions, as highlighted in the discussion on connectivity scales in Section 5 below. One case in point is the use of ride-hailing applications like Uber, which are officially banned in some European cities and are strictly regulated by the TfL, **London**'s (UK) public transport agency, as well as by national governments in countries like Colombia and Germany.

Digital technologies offer the promise of more open, and wider, democratic participation at the city scale. One such example is *Decidim* (*We Decide*, see more information in Chapter 9, *Democratizing*), an open-source platform used in over 100 cities, in 20 countries, for a range of processes involving civic participation, such as strategic planning, participatory budgeting and citizen consultations.[109] A similar platform is *Consul*, which describes itself as "the most complete citizen participation tool for an open, transparent and demo-cratic government".[110] Despite their flexibility, these platforms share the same problems that have plagued citizen participation for many years. These include the self-selection of participants, who often have a partic-ular interest to defend, and insufficient incentives for other views to be represented. As a result, those who feel less confident may be put off participating by online technologies, however good their user interfaces may be. On the other hand, some observers believe that the application of artificial intelligence may eventually help to increase participation and moderate the dominance of more vocal participants.[111]

Box 6.6
Community-backed telecommunications services

In the absence of state and federal government action to tackle the question of inequality of access caused by the concentration of power in the hands of four major corporations, 800 US municipalities decided to set up high-speed broadband networks using fibre optic cables. They did this using local, publicly-owned multiutilities and, in some cases, operated in cooperation with inter-municipal consortiums. In this way, they were able to exploit synergies and economies of scale which were especially significant for the smallest and poorest centres. **Thomasville** (Georgia), **Tullahoma** and **Chattanooga** (Tennessee), **Wilson** (North Carolina), and **Mount Washington** (Massachusetts) are just a few of the municipalities in which local author-ities, local communities organized in cooperative networks and public utilities have joined forces to establish their own telecommunication infrastruc-ture in the common interest. They could not do this, however, without having to overcome legal hurdles such as "pre-emption" laws that were pushed for by corporate lobbyists and passed in 19 US states in 2020 with the aim of preventing municipal authorities from establishing and operating their own local public broadband services. Out of the 800 local systems, 500 are now publicly owned. This approach has rapidly paid off: in Tullahoma, job growth has doubled Tennessee's state average, and in Chattanooga, the network has been credited with being responsible for the creation of 2,800 new jobs and for adding 1 billion USD to the local economy.

Source: Thomas M. Hanna and Christopher Mitchell, "United States: Communities Providing Affordable, Fast Broadband Internet," Transnational Institute Working Paper, 2019, https://bit.ly/3LPjv9q.

109 Alejandra González, Sivan Pätsch, and Katja Henttonen, "Decidim. Free Open-Source Participatory Democracy for Cities and Organizations," 2022, https://bit.ly/3z4ISSS.

110 IDB et al., "Consul Project," 2022, https://bit.ly/3MMrDbU.

111 Almirall, "Redefining Connectivity - Implications for LRGs."

4.3 Smart cities and furthering urban and territorial equality

In recent years the notion of "smart cities" has become increasingly popular in urban literature. Although there is no widely agreed definition of this concept, it has been relentlessly promoted by international corporations in the ICT sector. Spurred on by the growing volume of data regularly collected by public and private bodies, and with the promise of providing greater efficiency in the management of their daily operations, LRGs around the world have committed to large-scale investment in digital infrastructure projects, often under the guise of creating a smart city. However, there are concerns that such projects often fail to deliver their promised, and expected, outcomes. This has also given rise to a certain apprehension regarding the lack of transparency and privacy in the use of the data collected when individuals, private firms and/or governments use digital technologies.[112]

A smart city has been defined as "the application of various ICTs with the aim of creating a better living experience for a city's population".[113] This, and similar definitions, place the use of "smart" digital technologies at the core of the smart city concept, in what some commentators regard as the result of an aggressive push by commercial corporations to gain greater market shares and improve their branding, through actions associated with new cities and/or extensions to existing cities. Some would argue that an excessive focus on technology bypasses more pressing needs of residents and small firms in established cities, and particularly of those unable to access such technologies. The fact that the Sustainable Development Goal 11, speaks of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities, but

makes no mention of smart cities, has prompted some academics to propose cities first adopting this goal as a general one and then looking for ways to use innovative technologies in order to meet it.[114] **There is nothing intrinsically wrong in seeking to make the most of digital technologies and the big data arising from their use, but LRGs need to be wary of the potential for exacerbating existing inequalities as a result of uncritically engaging in large ICT projects.** There are several areas of concern: inequalities in access to technologies; potential misuse of data; cybersecurity; and algorithmic politics. Regarding cybersecurity, it is worth noting that the more an institution, such as a city government, depends on the Internet for the delivery of services, the greater the cybersecurity risks.[115]

The notion of "algorithmic politics"[116] arises from the observation that technologies are not neutral tools but are, instead, the product of applying societal values and decisions to the collection and processing of data. In cities, vast amounts of information are collected about pedestrian and motorized vehicle traffic on a daily basis. This is done through the use of interactive sensors, the digital tracking of mobile phones, street gantries and other means. The more sensors a street has, the more effective the feedback system is likely to be. This can be used to monitor traffic flows and to respond to bottlenecks and emergency situations. However, responses arising from the use of new technologies depend both on the availability of information and also on who collects the data and in what form. LRGs may use these data to reprogram traffic lights so that traffic can flow more freely, or to modify transport routes. It is, however, important for LRGs to remain conscious of the need for public transport systems that service all sectors of the populations and not to base their decisions solely upon questions of economic efficiency. At times, big data collection may indicate that servicing particular stops is not cost-effective, as not many people embark on public transport there. However, removing such stops from transport routes could actually worsen inequalities.

There may also be biases inherent to how the data are collected and in what form this is done, as well as how they are processed. It has been shown, for example,

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112 Igor Calzada, Marc Pérez-Batlle, and Joan Batlle-Montserrat, "People-Centered Smart Cities: An Exploratory Action Research on the Cities' Coalition for Digital Rights," *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3wlmagP.

113 Abbas Shah Syed et al., "IoT in Smart Cities: A Survey of Technologies, Practices and Challenges," *Smart Cities* 4, no. 2 (2021): 429–75.

114 Zaheer Allam and Peter Newman, "Redefining the Smart City: Culture, Metabolism and Governance," *Smart Cities* 1, no. 1 (2018): 4–25.

115 European Union Agency for Cybersecurity, "ENISA Threat Landscape 2021," 2021, https://bit.ly/3yV80KG.

116 Monica M. Brannon, "Data-Driven Divides: Smart Cities and Techno-Racial Segregation," in *Handbook of Emerging 21st-Century Cities,* ed. Kris Bezdecny and Kevin Archer (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2018), 342–63.

that similar types of data collected on the use of public spaces in a downtown area of **Kansas City** (USA) undergoing a costly commercial regeneration, and in the city's largely black east neighbourhoods, provoked different responses from the city's authorities, including the police. **The algorithms used to process a mass of similar data collected via sensors in different parts of the same city can result in profiling some people as either "law-abiding consumers" or "criminals".[117]** Biases that exist in administrative procedures (e.g. against semi-literate people who are unable to correctly fill out an official form, or against women who are heads of households in societies that assume that only men should have this role) are reproduced when such procedures are translated into digital code. This means that they will tend to be consistently and universally applied whenever a machine is allowed to make, or instructed to follow, a certain decision (e.g. issuing a fine).

Greater awareness of these risks can lead to improvements in the design of data collection and the processing of data that could help to achieve a particular goal, such as promoting more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities. The "forced experiment" brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of data in city monitoring tools, such as dashboards and public information systems. A 2021 UCLG survey of 35 city governments in 20 countries showed that when the pandemic struck, pre-existing digital tools allowed them to respond more effectively and efficiently to its consequences. Over one-third of these cities stated that their mobility and transport sectors were already highly digitized. This contrasted with medium levels of digitization of their public utilities and internal operations, and low, or very low, levels of digital inter-organizational coordination and management of the same cities' economies.[118] To help control the spread of the virus by ensuring that social distancing was maintained, various LRGs installed sensors that enabled them to monitor the occupancy of public spaces, including squares and beaches. 86% of respondents said that they had authorized official procedures, such as basic utility payments and official transactions, to be conducted via the Internet, and two-thirds said that they had introduced new smartphone applications to make health services more accessible. Several cities created online platforms to help both citizens and their own employees to access a range of support services, including those related to mental health and financial aid.

Singapore has been praised for its digital-data-intensive whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach, which gives the public access to information about public health, community mobilization and even telemedicine. **Seoul** (Republic of Korea) has produced near real-time updates for its trackers and dashboards; this forms part of its "citizens as mayors" philosophy. Monitoring the well-being of populations has also become important for cities like **Turin** (Italy), which has opened a crowdsourced platform called *Torino, come stai?* (*Torino, how are you?*), where residents were able to post updates. Meanwhile, **Detroit** (USA) supported a digitally-enhanced food delivery programme aimed at people who were self-isolating as a result of a COVID-19 infection, as well as an interactive map to help locate nearby sources of provisions. Modelling, predicting and guiding spatial movements has also become a focus of activity for some city governments, such as that of **Melbourne** (Australia), whose partnership with the University of Melbourne has provided real-time analysis of connectivity patterns to help monitor the spread of the virus among the local population. This has also led to the development of an agent-based modelling system that can help to combat a wide variety of future health crises. A similar set of tools was developed by the **Gauteng** City Region Observatory (South Africa), a public body that has monitored this conurbation of 12 million people for some years now and which has repurposed its tools to collect and apply evidence-based information to monitor public health throughout the pandemic.[119]

In 2015, the government of India launched an ambitious *Smart Cities Mission* aimed at promoting "cities that provide core infrastructure and give decent quality of life to their citizens, a clean and sustainable environment and application of smart solutions".[120] In addition to the aim of investing in basic infrastructure, services, housing (for the poor), safety and security, the programme also has a technological focus and stresses the importance of providing infrastructure that can facilitate digitalization in governance and market transactions. A "special purpose vehicle" was created to implement this, along the lines of a public–private partnership model. However, when the first deadline of the programme was approaching, in 2021, only about a quarter of the budget had been spent and some 49% of the scheduled tasks remained incomplete, with several cities notably lagging behind. The programme has

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117 Brannon.

118 UCLG, "Smart Cities Study 2021" (Barcelona, 2021).

119 Acuto, "Digital Connectivity and the COVID-19 'Forced Experiment.'"

120 Habitat International Coalition, "'Smart Cities' for Whom? Addressing Digital Connectivity in India," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022).

Source: Ben Brophy. Flickr.
Cyber cafe in Valladolid. Yucatan, Mexico.

been criticized due to its high dependence on foreign investment and financialization, and the corresponding external debt. It has also been criticized for not tapping enough into the country's domestic capacity for technological innovation and for by-passing the democratic process. Furthermore, research conducted in 2018 concluded that only 22% of India's population was likely to benefit from the mission, with some fearing a rise in forced evictions and a consequent gentrification of areas receiving investment, on top of concerns relating to data privacy and digital marginalization.[121]

Despite their growing availability in large cities and rich nations, making digital technologies available to peripheral or marginal populations continues to be a major challenge. This is even the case in some of the largest cities of the world, such as **Mexico City**

(Mexico), where many of the residents of Iztapalapa, the city's largest district, with 1.8 million inhabitants, lack regular access to the Internet and the skills needed to use it. In order to address this problem, in 2017, a project called *Aldea Digital Iztapalapa* (*Iztapalapa Digital Village*) was set up through a collaboration between the local government, a local philanthropic organization and two private telecommunications firms. The project's main aim, which was to promote greater digital inclusion, led to the creation of an area of 865 m2 offering free Wi-Fi, educational activities, advice about entrepreneurship and the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises. It is open seven days a week for people of all ages and offers over 120 courses and workshops every year.[122]

Offering access to digital technologies in remote and relatively inaccessible rural areas is arguably an even bigger challenge. The case of **Tusheti** (Georgia), a remote mountain area that mainly attracts tourists in summer, offers another example of a multi-stakeholder partnership which led to digital connection that was even operative in winter, when the local roads become virtually impassable, and residents are effectively cut-off from the rest of the country. This was the product of a collaboration between an international non-profit organization and several local Internet firms. The result was a high-speed fixed-wireless Internet system (using radio waves instead of cables) jointly managed, on a not-for-profit basis, by the Tusheti Development Fund and local residents. The system operates on solar energy, a source that cannot be guaranteed in winter, due to long nights and low temperatures that could potentially damage its batteries. Reliable access to the Internet has helped attract more tourists to the area, while broadening access to markets for local producers. Local residents now enjoy access to online health and education services that were previously unavailable to them. Improving transport infrastructure in remote locations can be costly, but this case shows that, even in the short-term, providing digital connectivity can serve as a viable substitute for many activities. It can also serve life-saving functions that would otherwise require costly, and seasonally vulnerable, infrastructure, such as better-quality country roads.[123]

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121 Habitat International Coalition.

122 UCLG Digital Cities, 'Digital Villages: Guaranteeing Digital Connectivity in Peripheral Areas', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022).

123 UCLG Digital Cities.

5 Connectivity scales, connectivity enablers and the scope for LRG action

As shown in Chapter 3 of this Report, on average, LRGs are responsible for over a third of all public sector investment carried out across the world. In rapidly growing cities, a substantial share of this accounts for expenditure on items related to transport connectivity, such as roads, bridges, public transport and public space. Although national highways that cut across cities are usually the responsibility of national authorities, LRGs are generally responsible for planning and maintaining this type of infrastructure at the city scale; they are also responsible for drafting urban development plans, including land-use plans, which help guide the development of cities. Such plans, which may have a metropolitan scale, lay out a physical vision of a city's future development, usually over a period of five, ten or more years, based on projections of growth and forecasts of economic change that are often guided by social and environmental goals.

In addition to running public transport services, LRGs are also generally responsible for allocating public transport routes and for regulating and, if necessary, penalizing transport providers that fail to comply with official regulations. In larger LRGs, the running of mass transit systems may be partially contracted out to private firms, with the local authorities being responsible for monitoring performance. This responsibility for both decisions concerning which parts of a city should be served and controlling what types of services should be offered lies at the heart of promoting greater equality within local territories. Similar decisions must be taken concerning the planning, designing and maintenance of public spaces such as parks and squares. These also have implications relating to those in the city who will have access to them, and how they will be used. User security is also often, at least partially, the responsibility of the local police, who also have the discretion to restrict their use. This may apply, for example, to
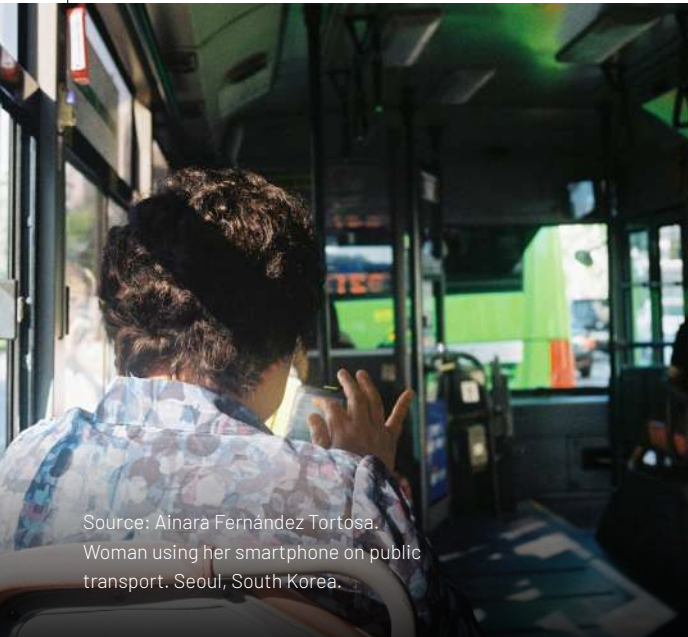
Source: Ainara Fernández Tortosa.
Woman using her smartphone on public
transport. Seoul, South Korea.

informal street vendors, who may be harassed or evicted, with consequences not only for their livelihoods, but also for their customers, who may not have any other viable ways of doing their daily shopping.

In many countries, LRGs are also responsible for local economic development and have legal powers to offer incentives (such as tax breaks or subsidized rents on local industrial estates) to investors. In some cases, as in Vietnam, and more recently in Cuba, they may also be responsible for collecting taxes on the profits made by companies under their jurisdiction. Many LRGs have discretionary powers to support small enterprises, including home-based operations. This is a particularly relevant function in terms of the potential for promoting digital connectivity to increase equality. Given the right conditions, LRGs may also offer support in kind to small and medium-sized enterprises that otherwise would lack the means to pay for services such as website design and product marketing, and they may even host local companies on dedicated LRG web portals.

This section examines how LRGs can intervene, at different scales, through policies and planning, in accordance with their competences, to promote a *Connecting* pathway that contributes to greater urban and territorial equality. The scales at which LRGs operate range from the household, to the neighbourhood, the city, and the metropolitan region. For each scale, **a series of connectivity enablers can be identified**. These are not intrinsic to individuals or organizations, but external to them, and they can be made available by the market, the state or other individuals or organizations.

The main principles underpinning this approach are those of striving to offer "equality of opportunity" and allowing each actor to decide what is best for them under certain specific circumstances. This is, with regard to "equality of outcomes", an approach that assumes that certain activities (such as paid work and shopping) are intrinsically more valuable than others (e.g. visiting an older relative or voluntary work). It is an approach that is normally used to justify large investments in transport infrastructure that may mainly, or even exclusively, benefit certain sectors of the population, such as private car drivers or male salaried workers.[124]

In connectivity terms, it is possible to identify actor-specific **drivers of inequality** at each scale. These are features which are intrinsic to each actor or group of actors and that are related to characteristics such as age, gender, disability, ethnicity and skills, in the case of members of a household. These are also the defining characteristics of small businesses, including home-based ones, as small business owners generally lack the resources needed to buy in additional capacities to complement their own. In so far as businesses and organizations are run by individuals (albeit with the help of machines, including digital devices), such characteristics are also found at other scales. However, above the household scale, other drivers of inequality appear. These include factors such as the availability of financial capital, which is essential if businesses are to operate or expand, and real-time information and skills, in the case of city-level organizations, including LRGs.

The third element in the conceptual framework consists of identifying the individual **potential for each actor to reap the benefits of increased equality** related to connectivity. These are areas that have been identified by LRG practitioners and non-government organizations (NGOs), in academic literature, as being essential for broadening access to opportunities. They are also areas in which national and local governments have some potential for action. Not all of them are applicable to all city sizes and typologies within a given urban region, but it is hoped that identifying each of them in its context could help LRGs to gauge their room for manoeuvre in fostering greater equality. This should then enable them to engage in their own scoping exercises and to explore how connectivity within their own jurisdictions and regions can contribute to promoting equality.

124 Schwanen, "Inequalities in Everyday Urban Mobility"; UN-Habitat, "Planning and Design for Sustainable Urban Mobility: Global Report on Human Settlements 2013" (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

5.1 The household

The household scale is a key entry point for interventions that advance equality through a *Connecting* pathway. Households may range from multigenerational groups of individuals living under one roof to individuals living on their own (which is a growing demographic trend, especially in richer nations). At the household scale, there are two main enablers of connectivity that shape a *Connecting* pathway to urban and territorial equality: access to communication infrastructure and technologies, and the legal and spatial characteristics of the place where the household is located. It is also crucial to recognize that these enablers are experienced in different ways by socially diverse members of the same household. As a result, building a *Connecting* pathway requires leveraging enabling factors in such a way that they can help to redress inequalities both between and within households.

A household's access to good quality communication infrastructure and technologies enables its individual members to interact with each other and with the world outside. This thus allows them to establish social bonds, conduct transactions, access educational opportunities, acquire social and technical skills, and contribute to the community. For a small share of workers, the pandemic turned homes into remote workplaces, but for many it made them the main location for the productive activities of different generations, some of which were informal, escaped official registers, and rarely benefited from targeted government policies.[125] Quantifying and recognizing this function of the home can have social, fiscal and planning implications for city policies and also for digital and physical connectivity.

In the case of factors that facilitate connectivity that are associated with household locations, having a recognized, fixed address and its proximity to essential services, livelihood options and transport infrastructure all have a direct impact on the capabilities of the different members of diverse households to live a flourishing life. Without a recognized address, individuals and households are often excluded from the labour market, social benefits, education and political participation. This is the case of millions of people who live in informal settlements around the world. It also applies to newly arrived migrants and refugees who have yet to be formally recognized by governments. In countries that have undergone rapid urbanization, the World Bank estimates that up to half the city streets have no formal name or address.[126] The proximity of a household to essential services and its access to them and also to other livelihood options and transport infrastructure can influence the distribution of opportunities within a city. Women tend to engage in shorter and more diverse travel journeys than men. They also tend to be more involved in care-related mobility than other household members. This is particularly true of women from lower-income groups, who often spend more time caring for vulnerable household members, such as young children or older parents. For many residents of informal settlements in rapidly urbanizing cities, life at a peripheral location means that working-age adults live far from most of the sources of employment.[127] The location of a household and the need to travel long distances to access services and gain a livelihood have a disproportionate impact on people with mental and physical disabilities, who tend to be systematically excluded from access to inclusive transport systems.[128] As highlighted in research from around the world, this has further implications for the way in which public transport infrastructure should be planned and run on a daily basis, which is an area in which LRGs have plenty of scope for action.[129]

125 Nkeiru Hope Ezeadichie et al., "Integrating Home-Based Enterprises in Urban Planning: A Case for Providing Economic Succour for Women of Global South," *Berkeley Planning Journal* 30, no. 1 (2018); Charlotte Wrigley-Asante and Peter Mensah, "Men and Women in Trades: Changing Trends of Home-Based Enterprises in Ga-Mashie, Accra, Ghana," *International Development Planning Review* 39, no. 4 (2017): 423–41.

126 Catherine Farvacque-Vitkovic et al., *Street Addressing and the Management of Cities* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2005), https://bit.ly/3z1AEtK.

127 Oviedo and Guzmán, "Should Urban Transport Become a Social Policy? Interrogating the Role of Accessibility in Social Equity and Urban Development in Bogotá, Colombia"; Lucas, "Transport and Social Exclusion: Where Are We Now?"; Daniel Oviedo Hernandez and Julio D. Dávila, "Transport, Urban Development and the Peripheral Poor in Colombia — Placing Splintering Urbanism in the Context of Transport Networks," *Journal of Transport Geography* 51 (2016): 180–92.

128 Eurostat, "Disability Statistics - Poverty and Income Inequalities," Statistics Explained, 2020, https://bit.ly/3MU5Uiv; US Department of Labor, "Disability Employment Statistics," Office of Disability Employment Policy, 2022, https://bit.ly/3atk4ZB.

129 World Bank, "Closing the Gap: Gender, Transport, and Employment in Mumbai. Mobility and Transport Connectivity," Policy Note (Washington, DC, 2021), https://bit.ly/3GusgVw; UCLG, "Decalogue for the Post COVID-19 Era" (Barcelona, 2020), https://bit.ly/3uW330C.

5.2 The neighbourhood

A neighbourhood should offer all of its residents and local workers access to basic services (health, education, housing, social services, safe public spaces) and shopping (in particular, for access to fresh, good quality and affordable food), as well as a sense of belonging, trust, security and tolerance. It is the spatial scale from which opportunities beyond the home can be accessed, enabling people to participate in city life and to enrich their individual lives. Although connectivity is central to this, a neighbourhood marked by crime, insecurity, mistrust, pollution and stigma can also be a place of fear, intimidation and thwarted individual opportunities. At the scale of the neighbourhood, LRGs can advance in the construction of a *Connecting* pathway towards greater urban and territorial equality by promoting mixed land uses, fostering inclusive urban regeneration, upgrading and developing neighbourhoods, and promoting the use of digital technologies to enhance democratic engagement in local area-based deliberations and contestations.

At the neighbourhood scale, it is now widely accepted that **promoting mixed land uses that combine residential uses with retail and leisure activities, instead of having highly segregated zones, encourages a more diverse local economy and reduces the need to travel long distances. This also entails other positive consequences, such as lower energy use and less time spent travelling**. Mixed land use development combined with appropriate mobility infrastructure, which encourages walking and cycling, can help to turn neighbourhoods into more vibrant, dynamic and inclusive areas. This also applies to their spatial properties, such as the provision of good street lighting, tree cover (to protect pedestrians from the sun but also to help reduce car speed), smooth pavements, low levels of air and noise pollution, and proximity to local parks, which are all key components of neighbourhoods with good quality of life. Other LRG actions that can positively impact life quality in a neighbourhood would include: land use policy and regulations that support small independent businesses; adapting zoning by-laws to allow small shops to open longer hours in certain areas; and providing grants to local independent shops to set up businesses that

employ local residents. These types of LRG actions can all help to ensure that a broader range of services are available to local residents and workers and within walking distance.

Secondly, neighbourhood development initiatives need to be accompanied by an inclusive strategy of digital and physical connectivity if they are to build a *Connecting* pathway towards greater urban and territorial equality. LRGs can achieve this through urban regeneration or by upgrading informal settlement schemes and making sure that inclusive transport interventions and improvements to communications infrastructure and new technologies form an integral part of such schemes. This also requires paying special attention to the potential uneven distribution of such transport and digital inclusion interventions within neighbourhood development processes; for example, as new modes of transport emerge, particularly in wealthier and more densely populated parts of large cities and in high and middle-income countries. This may take the form of e-scooters and bicycle hire schemes that use satellite positioning technology and operate via smartphones. As they do not pollute, and have relatively low energy requirements, these solutions offer an acceptable alternative to motorized transport over relatively short distances (though the risk of accidents has yet to be appropriately quantified). With few exceptions, such as the free *EnCicla* programme in **Medellin** (Colombia), such alternatives tend to be commercial, profit-making, operations authorized by local authorities. Despite their welcome arrival, LRG policies towards these new, more flexible and potentially more sustainable modes of transport should take equality of opportunity as a criterion when negotiating concessions. In the case of **Santiago de Chile** (Chile), for example, the design and operation of its profit-driven bike-hire system has led to services being mainly concentrated in the most affluent parts of the city, with it having little or no presence in equally densely populated but less prosperous neighbourhoods.[130]

Thirdly, a *Connecting* pathway can promote equality by playing a crucial role in deepening democratic practices at the neighbourhood level. Public deliberations concerning mobility plans at the neighbourhood level can help to promote the recognition of marginalized voices and open the way for innovative experiences in urban and territorial decision-making processes. At the same time, access to digital technologies has been used

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130 Veronica Saud and Nikolas Thomopoulos, "Towards Inclusive Transport Landscapes: Re-Visualising a Bicycle Sharing Scheme in Santiago Metropolitan Region," *Journal of Transport Geography* 92 (2021): 103004.

by grassroots groups to oppose evictions, to promote information sharing within neighbourhoods, and to call for more inclusive forms of neighbourhood transformation (see Box 6.7). LRGs can play an important role by engaging with, and supporting, the capacity-building opportunities created by these initiatives at the neighbourhood level.

5.3 The city

At the scale of the city, it is important to reflect on the influence that connectivity has on equality. This is not only for individuals who work, or simply travel, outside their neighbourhoods or districts to different parts of the city, but also for businesses and other city-level organisations. At the city level, physical and digital connectivity has the potential to lock-in particular urban development trajectories. It can intensify urban sprawl and encourage car dependency, which increases a city's carbon footprint while also reinforcing social and spatial segregation. Interventions to improve physical and digital connectivity interventions can promote higher density and greater spatial integration. This, in turn, redistributes opportunities and resources in the city while, at the same time, contributing to its decarbonization. LRGs have the capacity to influence and shape the development of these strategies, particularly through instruments associated with mobility policy, spatial planning and digital inclusion policies and programmes.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, **city-wide mobility policies and programmes have the potential to build a *Connecting* pathway that can distribute opportunities and resources within the city**. Table 6.2 outlines a series of instruments that LRGs can use to build a *Connecting* pathway towards equality. It should be noted that the impact of using these instruments also depends on whether they are used in isolation or in combination. The table below recommends that certain instruments be used as part of policy packages.[131]

Apart from these mobility instruments, **LRGs can also advance a *Connecting* pathway through spatial planning mechanisms that focus on disrupting socio-spatial fragmentation and encouraging greater**

Box 6.7

Civic urban media: Creating and sharing bottom-up knowledge to shape urban policy

Citizens and urban dwellers connect, communicate and tell stories by using different types of media such as radio, photography and video. These can be used to increase the recognition of their local neighbourhoods and to promote social justice, greater civic participation and the right to the city. Civic urban media initiatives have emerged in a variety of places and contexts, where they have exploited their potential for promoting the representation of the urban poor and urban residents, and enhancing collaboration between citizens and helping them to voice their claims. These initiatives also have a strong capacity-building component that seeks to provide a platform for residents and to provide them with the skills needed to use media technologies. This will enable marginalized groups to engage in shaping urban politics and urban planning by producing (counter-)narratives belonging to both neighbourhoods and the whole city. Such initiatives include Slum Dwellers International's youth media programme *Know Your City TV* in Uganda, Ghana and South Africa, which has been followed by Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Namibia, Botswana and Malawi. Other similar examples include Bristol Cable, which is a community-owned local media cooperative in **Bristol** (UK), and the citizen media initiative called *RioOnWatch*, in **Rio de Janeiro** (Brazil). These initiatives help to create grassroots, bottom-up knowledge of cities, with the aim of shaping urban policies and politics. They can also be used to showcase alternative ways of making and managing media to encourage more cooperation and community control.

Source: Slum Dwellers International and CoHabitat Network, "Civic Urban Media: Creating and Sharing Bottom-up Knowledge on Cities to Shape Urban Policies," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022).

Table 6.2

Mobility instruments and motivations

Category	Instrument	Motivation
COMMAND AND CONTROL	City-centre low emission zone	Popular, especially in Europe A feasible intervention over which many LRGs have discretion, especially in Europe and Asia
	City-wide bans on rickshaws and moto taxis	Popular in Asia and Africa
	City-centre *ciclovía*/open street programmes	Popular in the Americas
	Strict standards governing the availability of public parking within the city [to be implemented as part of a policy package only]	One of the most effective interventions to reduce car use but this generally meets with low acceptability if it is implemented on its own
ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS	City-wide congestion fees (time-invariant rate/km)	Popular among planners and academics but this has low public and political acceptation Capable of generating substantial change in people's quality of life
	City-wide purchase tax on sport utility vehicles (25% of the purchase price)	An experimental idea that was included because of the marginalization of non-users and the damage to the environment and the social life of cities caused by sport utility vehicles
	City-wide fare-free public transport	Popular in intermediary cities in Europe, the USA and Brazil
	Temporary fare-free public transport [policy package only]	Commonly coupled to personalized travel planning, as an incentive to make "trying out" public transport more attractive
PLANNING AND DESIGN	Cycle-lane network	Popular across the Global North
	BRT construction (one line)	Popular across the planet and widely seen as particularly attractive when institutional capabilities are constrained
	Densification at public transport nodes	Popular across the planet, harnessing the advantages for accessibility that stops in public transport networks generate, and offering opportunities for land value capture
	Formalization of rickshaw and moto/minibus taxi services [policy package only]	Popular across the Global South Often justified with reference to the role that these services could play in providing access/egress facilities for BRT or urban rail systems
	Public bicycle sharing scheme [policy package only]	Popular across the planet
INFORMATION AND EDUCATION	Personalized travel planning	Widely used in Europe and effective in triggering changes in behaviour

Source: Tim Schwanen, "Inequalities in Everyday Urban Mobility," *GOLD VI Working Paper Series* (Barcelona, 2022).

permeability and integration between different parts of the city. As outlined earlier in this chapter (in Box 6.1), LRGs can deploy a series of instruments and mechanisms to intervene in land and property markets and to influence their dynamics. In this way, they can control urban sprawl; create incentives (through taxation and subsidies) that redistribute opportunities within the city rather than concentrating wealth; and deepen democratic practices in decision making processes throughout the city.

Spatial planning instruments can also be used to build a *Connecting* pathway to equality that involves combating the increased privatization of public spaces and safeguarding their potential to redistribute opportunities; disrupt socio-spatial fragmentation; encourage bonds of solidarity between different groups; and democratize the use, appropriation and management of spaces in the city. NGOs and pressure groups have been active around the world to make city streets and public spaces safer, friendlier and more accessible to a broad range of citizens. The main principle underlying such initiatives is to regard the city as a common good and to focus on enabling citizens to produce and transform their own cities. Examples of this include **Nairobi**'s (Kenya) *Public Space Network*, **Sao Paulo**'s (Brazil) *Ruas Abertas* (*Open Streets*) initiative, and Chile's *Rutas Bakanes* (*Kool Routes*), which fosters active mobility among children. Through the *Safe Cities for Women* campaign, the international NGO Action Aid seeks to address women's safety concerns through publicly provided services, including transport and street lighting. This has led to action such as the local government of **Ho Chi Minh City** (Vietnam) installing CCTV cameras on public buses. Similarly, in India, the *Safetipin* initiative uses free smartphone applications to collect data on the safety of streets and public spaces for female users, while in Indonesia, the NGO Kota Kita has implemented a cycle mobility pilot project for women. These efforts have been complemented by others, such as the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy's *Pedestrians First* programme, to improve street design and walkability. Similar initiatives seeking to ensure that specific groups of people are not discriminated against are currently being developed in several other cities. In **Ontario** (Canada), this takes the form of a technical guide for designers to help create more accessible public spaces. Meanwhile, in **New York City** (USA) the *Audre Lorde Project* and *FIERCE* promote community-based approaches to combating police violence and discrimination against racialized LGBTQIA+

communities, in order to ensure their safe access to public spaces.[132]

Finally, **developments in digital technologies and infrastructure have created opportunities that LRGs can draw on to promote a more equitable distribution of services and social protection within the city.** For example, during the pandemic, LRGs delivered social welfare through novel methods and technologies in a way that had not previously been done, or only at a modest scale. During the worst stages of the pandemic, national-level and local governments in several middle- and high-income countries distributed food parcels and provided financial support to the individuals and businesses worst affected by the enforced lockdowns and the consequent loss of income (this was at a high cost to public finances, which have become heavily indebted as a result). In countries with a relatively low penetration of formal banking, governments had to rely on mobile technology to deliver emergency cash payments to large numbers of mainly informal workers, many of whom had not been previously registered with the city.[133]

5.4 The metropolitan and urban scales

The metropolitan region and the urban region that lies beyond it are key scales of intervention via which a *Connecting* pathway can address regional territorial dynamics that reproduce inequalities. Urbanization processes often lead to the concentration of most job opportunities, key services and cultural assets, as well as of the largest number of government functions. This makes travelling from peripheral locations a regular need for those living in the more outlying areas.

132 Global Platform for the Right to the City, "Active Mobility and Public Spaces," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Connecting (Barcelona, 2022).

133 Glen Robbins and Tasmi Quazi, "Informal Economy Budget Analysis: EThekwini Metropolitan Municipality (Durban, South Africa)," WIEGO Working Paper (Cambridge, 2015), https://bit.ly/3z3Uuo4; Nicholas Adamtey, "Informal Economy Budget Analysis: Accra Metropolis," WIEGO Working Paper (Cambridge, 2015), https://bit.ly/3asYXGQ.

Source: Ainara Fernández Tortosa.
Public space and older people in South Korea.

Connectivity interventions can reinforce and drive these processes of centralization of investments and productivity. These interventions may also push those who cannot afford to live in central areas, and who are in need of social assistance, towards neighbouring municipalities. This, in turn, implies that many of these neighbouring municipalities, which are often resource-constrained, will need to provide the assistance that these displaced populations need in order to live under dignified urban conditions. Moreover, for both legal or financial reasons, mass public transport systems may also stop at the boundaries of larger, richer municipalities, leaving residents and workers residing in surrounding municipalities to have to use various modes of transport to reach their final destinations. This has consequences in terms of the travel time and financial expenses involved. In other words, connectivity can drive territorial inequalities, as central and wealthier municipalities absorb the benefits of connectivity integration, while smaller and neighbouring municipalities are left with the burden of increased demand for public resources. **For a *Connecting* pathway to advance in the promotion of urban and territorial equality, they need to also promote a more equitable distribution of benefits and responsibilities between different municipal authorities within metropolitan regions.**

Increased metropolitan connectivity needs to be accompanied by an equitable strategy of polycentrism if it is to share opportunities across territories, **rather than concentrate them in a limited area.** From the perspective of promoting equality, polycentrism highlights the importance of enhancing the endowments of areas that are often territorially and socially excluded. Being connected must be synonymous with having access to a wide range of facilities, services, infrastructure and opportunities for social, employment and economic development. LRGs can achieve this by promoting metropolitan connectivity in combination with an equitable strategy of polycentrism that fosters proximity and looks to ensure that all inhabitants, including those living on peripheries and in poor neighbourhoods, have close access to essential infrastructure, services, shops and cultural assets. This also involves creating instances of metropolitan governance that allow the equal participation of people and territories in the making of decisions that affect them all. An equitable strategy of polycentrism should also play an important role in redressing the spatial dynamics of gender disparities by promoting transport networks based on itineraries, stops and schedules that are linked to networks, services, centres and everyday facilities.[134]

For metropolitan connectivity to help bring about more equitable outcomes, it must be approached from a needs-based perspective and target transport and digital poverty while promoting more affordable

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134 Muxí and Arias, "Social and Territorial Connectivity. Towards a Paradigm Shift in Mobility and Accessibility for Gender Equality."

and sustainable systems of connectivity. A needs-based approach to the analysis of connectivity and data at the infra-municipal scale is crucial for exploring inequalities and identifying the territories that most suffer from isolation and connectivity-related injustices. At the same time, it should be noted that LRGs are most effective at generating strategic connectivity policies, planning and making interventions when they act through metropolitan institutions that foster common, rather than bilateral, agreements between municipalities. From the perspective of mobility, "the metropolitan scale has also been shown to be the most suitable when it comes to redistributing the resources inherent to the transport system".[135]

In parallel, looking beyond the metropolitan area, adopting a strategy that actively seeks to increase urban and territorial equality implies paying specific attention to ensuring more balanced territorial development based on more balanced urban systems. Here, an important entry point is to **acknowledge, and target, intermediary cities as regional connectivity nodes. This is crucial for facilitating connections with surrounding municipalities, towns, and villages, and for reinforcing rural-urban linkages.** Indeed, due to their size, intermediary cities play a pivotal role as guarantors of services of proximity and also as social reconnectors that strengthen alliances with youth, women, other spheres of government and the international community. They can also play a vital role in helping to rethink life systems and basing these on care and healthy living. This can be achieved, firstly, by thinking about and planning more sustainable working patterns (increasing livelihood opportunities in intermediary cities reduces the need to commute to metropolises). Secondly, and in combination with the above, it can also be achieved through the protection of biodiversity and natural resources by embedding the principles of care and justice in cities' relations with their rural hinterlands.[136]

Intermediary cities are increasingly heterogeneous and, in some cases, their functional specialization has actually accentuated inequality as they have replicated the dynamics of socio-spatial exclusion, but on a smaller scale than in the metropolis. The accessibility of these cities to "physical connectivity" (hard infrastructure) has traditionally been considered one of the key indicators for determining their importance within their respec-

tive territories. However, the progressive deployment of technology and "digital connectivity" has made it possible for many intermediary cities and rural areas[137] to generate economies of scale capable of allowing them to compete at both the regional and global levels. Thus, reducing certain income gaps associated with the main functional polarities of their urban systems.

This process is, nevertheless, still at an embryonic stage. For many intermediary cities in both the Global North and Global South, direct participation in national and global trade flows[138] still represents an opportunity to improve their local economies and help to generate sustained revenue with which to improve their provision of basic urban services and increase the well-being of their populations. Noting, of course, that inclusion in national and global trade flows does not inherently imply improved equality outcomes: these must be actively sought (see Chapter 8 for a more detailed discussion). The role of LRGs in advancing equality through a *Connecting* pathway in intermediary cities varies in relation to a number of different conditions. Whatever the case, this process requires empowering LRGs so that they can actively, and meaningfully, participate in territorial planning frameworks to improve both physical and digital connectivity. This involves the promotion of imaginative solutions for greater territorial cohesion through sustainable and inclusive development models. Furthermore, planning, implementing and monitoring mobility can serve as an important driver for designing socio-spatial cohesion policies to help unite different urban fabrics and strengthen rural-urban linkages.[139]

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135 Floridea Di Ciommo, "Rights and Claims for Metropolitan Mobility," Metropolis Observatory (Barcelona, 2020), 14, https://bit.ly/3lQ0jEo.

136 UCLG World Forum of Intermediary Cities, "Kütahya Declaration of Intermediary Cities of the World," 2021, https://bit.ly/3zb84pl.

137 See the case of China's Taobao cities, towns and villages in Xubei Luo and Chiyu Niu, "E-Commerce Participation and Household Income Growth in Taobao Villages," Poverty & Equity Global Practice Working Paper (Washington, DC, 2019), https://bit.ly/3ND4WXR.

138 However, there are also a growing number of voices warning about the negative impacts that transnational corridors may have on the widening of inequality: "Cross-border corporate network-based organisation of production has contributed to both economic integration and to isolation: rising spatial (and individual) inequality due to the concentration of power and value creation in certain cities and regions in advanced economies in the Global North has been coupled with the widespread diffusion of low-tier activities (as well as increasingly higher-value-added ones) towards certain regions and cities in emerging and developing areas of the Global South". In Simona Iammarino, Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, and Michael Storper, "Why Regional Development Matters for Europe's Economic Future," European Commission Working Papers, 2017, https://bit.ly/3wS9KD6.

139 Iglesias, "Challenges and Opportunities of Regional Connectivity and Local Accessibility in Intermediary Cities in the Global North and South."

6 Concluding comments

Source: Hugh Han, Unsplash.
Tokyo metro, Japan.

As observed at the beginning of this chapter, "being connected implies having access to a wide range of facilities, services, infrastructure and opportunities that contribute to a decent life and the possibilities for social, employment and economic development." As a result, suffering a lack of connectivity, whether physical or digital, tends to be associated with mechanisms that cause exclusion and inequality. These inequalities are multidimensional: poorer populations with less access to safe and sustainable physical connectivity and, in particular, to public transport suffer from exclusion, limited access to public services and means of gaining a livelihood. They also suffer from more transportation-related pollution and traffic congestion and higher rates of road accidents and fatalities. The chapter shows that depriving communities of connectivity tends to particularly affect those people who have historically been most marginalized and discriminated against by urban development processes, largely due to intersecting social identities, which may be based on their gender, race, age or other factors. Indeed, the extent to which populations can access physical and digital connectivity is a powerful indicator of social, functional and structural inequalities, with these intersecting and being aggravated when access is limited or inexistent. Interventions related to mobility and both spatial and digital connectivity must therefore not be exclusively guided by concerns regarding efficiency. Instead, they should be understood as social policy. It is also important to note that for a *Connecting* pathway to facilitate progress towards greater urban and territorial equality, they need to be guided by an intersectional perspective. This effectively implies strengthening proximity in order to ensure satisfying aspirations and daily life needs of

residents while, at the same time, taking into account the overlapping structural inequalities that they may face according to their gender, race, class, ethnicity, disability, or sexuality, among other factors.

The chapter has shown how LRGs can intervene at different scales and use connectivity to reduce inequalities by identifying and breaking down barriers to connectivity with other city actors, such as residents, NGOs and local businesses. In particular, it has focused on the roles that LRGs can play to address inequalities related to mobility, socio-spatiality and digital connectivity, understanding a *Connecting* pathway as cutting through them. In every case, the chapter has examined existing inequalities that affect people's ability to access safe, just and sustainable physical and digital connectivity, and also how issues related to connectivity and urbanization patterns can produce and reproduce inequalities.

Regarding physical connectivity, the chapter has shown how transportation and urban growth are strongly related and that they often worsen existing social and spatial inequalities. Many cities have adopted development patterns that favour individual motorized transport and have often done so instead of prioritizing mass public transport systems and proximity and easy access to jobs, services and amenities. Development patterns based on individual motorized transport modes have, in turn, favoured urban sprawl, suburbanization and socio-spatial fragmentation, as well as congestion and pollution. This tendency has been observed in cities throughout the world. **For many inhabitants, particularly in the Global South, informal transport systems are the only viable way to access areas that concentrate livelihood opportunities and services.** Informal transport systems are, in many cases, the ones that are most accessible and, in some cases, the only transport options available to populations with lower incomes, other than walking. Moreover, and as the chapter has shown, the COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted how informal transport systems can offer a lifeline in emergency situations; this is equally applicable to people employed in informal transport systems and to those who rely on them for access to their livelihoods.

In many countries, urbanization has involved the separation of activities according to land use. This has often led to the concentration of key economic activities in urban cores and in the main industrial areas on the peripheries of cities. Furthermore, as larger cities continue to concentrate innovation, often to the detriment of smaller ones, connectivity has reinforced pre-existing differences in territorial attractiveness and exacerbated territorial inequalities. In particular, the chapter has noted how the political allocation of public resources and the planning of transportation infrastructure can reproduce spatial fragmentation. This may effectively lead to lower income groups and marginalized populations having to relocate to neighbourhoods with less infrastructure and livelihood opportunities and to them also becoming more dependent upon access to transportation systems in order to live.

These urbanization and development patterns entail limited transport options and usually result in effective exclusion from transport, as they often limit people's ability to access opportunities, social networks, goods and services. This implies that it is essential to coordinate policy and planning for mobility with those for the development and organization of urbanized spaces. Development decisions lock in development models for generations and are costly to change, as it is difficult to retrofit new policy decisions that actively seek to advance equality. Nevertheless, **LRGs can promote a *Connecting* pathway that can significantly help to redress the spatial and digital factors that tend to drive urban inequalities**. This can be done, for example, by promoting a well-integrated, efficient, equitable, safe and sustainable multimodal urban and regional transport system. This should acknowledge the crucial importance of both formal and informal transport services to the functioning of cities and regions and also recognize them as important sources of employment.

LRGs can promote urbanization patterns different from splintering urbanism. These can include schemes, such as transit-oriented development, to regenerate urban areas, especially in cities with high motorization rates and decaying central areas. However, LRGs must be wary of the risk of gentrification and the exclusion of some sectors of the population that such interventions may cause. In order to prevent these interventions from reproducing inequalities, LRGs can promote participation, including that of hitherto marginalized populations, in transport and land use policy, and seek to build consensus and to attune development patterns so as to meet the needs of all sectors of the population. Indeed, spatial planning and regulatory instruments are important mechanisms with which LRGs can promote a *Connecting* pathway and work to remedy socio-spatial fragmentation. These instruments include master plans which, if drawn up in meaningful and democratic ways, can help to recognize marginalized voices in the city and to redistribute spatial investment and opportunities.

Source: Carl Campbell. Unsplash.
Public space in Mexico City, Mexico.

LRGs can also employ land-use zoning, building standards and codes, and permissible density regulations. If used flexibly, these can be applied to different types of human settlements and can particularly be used to regularize and upgrade informal settlements.

There are also several development-management instruments available to LRGs that can be used to manage growth and raise local revenue. These include regulatory instruments like zoning policies, development moratoria and growth-rate controls. There are also fiscal instruments, like taxes levied on developers, property taxes and land-value capture instruments.

These can help LRGs regulate land and property markets and to seize the financial benefits generated by investments in public infrastructure. Lastly, LRGs can also deploy incentive-based instruments, which can be used to steer investment towards improving a *Connecting* pathway. Examples of this would include subsidies, tax credits and development rights. These spatial planning and development-management instruments can be applied at different scales and would allow LRGs to apply a more equitable distribution of public resources. Fiscal instruments, in particular, can be used to increase the capacity of LRGs to invest in improving connectivity in marginalized urban areas and to directly address the problem of social-spatial fragmentation. This chapter has also explained how focusing on proximity when planning the provision of services and infrastructure in territories can enhance connections between the different spheres of life, such as the productive and reproductive spheres at the personal level, and community cohesion at the collective level.

On the subject of digital connectivity, the chapter has explained how it is crucial for LRGs to engage with digital technologies if they are to be successful in using a *Connecting* pathway to foster greater urban and territorial equality. Digital technologies can help to make development more inclusive, efficient and innovative. They can do so by overcoming barriers to information, by allowing people to communicate with each other over long distances, by creating commercial opportunities, and – as shown by the COVID-19 pandemic – by allowing remote access to education, health, administrative services and to work from home (with the latter sometimes substituting travel needs). All of these are also associated with potentially beneficial impacts for the environment. Nevertheless, as the chapter has explained, there is a large and widening digital divide and this is a phenomenon that, far from being purely technological, is also deeply social, political and spatial.

In contemporary societies, the digital divide is an important determinant of how different individuals, households and businesses can access digital technologies for a wide range of uses. These may be related to education, employment, socialization and commercial opportunities, among others. This chapter has analyzed how access to such opportunity-enabling digital technologies is unequally distributed between different geographic areas, with rural areas suffering from more limited access than urban ones, and socio-economic levels. There is also the problem of this intersecting with the layers of discrimination faced by many different sectors of the population (which may relate to factors such as their gender, race, ability or sexual orientation, among others). This shows how, despite their rapidly increasing availability, digital technologies also have the potential to effectively exclude certain members of society. This may be due to a lack of basic underlying infrastructure, a lack of financial resources, limited technological skills, or cultural norms. Whatever the case, in the face of limited accessibility, there is a tendency to prioritize access for certain household members, who are often men of working age, over that of women, older people and children (particularly girls).

This chapter has also raised awareness of the necessity for LRGs to critically engage in the debate over smart city investments. A purely technocratic approach to this issue could lead them to take decisions based only on efficiency-related concerns. This could in turn provoke situations regarding smart mobility, for instance, in which less profitable areas would be left without services, which would effectively deprive the populations residing there of access to mobility services. **A rights-based approach to policy concerning the design and implementation of both mobility and digital connectivity is the necessary first step towards recognizing exclusionary practices that are currently limiting the opportunities available to many people and threatening the sustainability of the planet.** Frontrunning LRGs have already shown how this approach can focus on fundamental rights and freedoms, such as privacy, participation and citizen control, and incorporate the digital dimension into the sphere of universally recognized rights, such as those to education and care. Moreover, since the pandemic has accelerated what were already ongoing transformations relating to the remote and online provision of public services, it is increasingly important that rights-based approaches to a *Connecting* pathway also incorporate the democratic regulation of emerging technologies. As emphasized in this chapter, promoting LRG-led rights-based approaches and encouraging their widespread adoption is a matter of critical importance. This is particularly so because digital technologies have become an increasingly widespread means of accessing opportunities. In consequence, not offering access to them increasingly implies the risk of populations being prevented from accessing basic rights such as those to work, health, quality education and equality of opportunity.

07 ↓ Renaturing
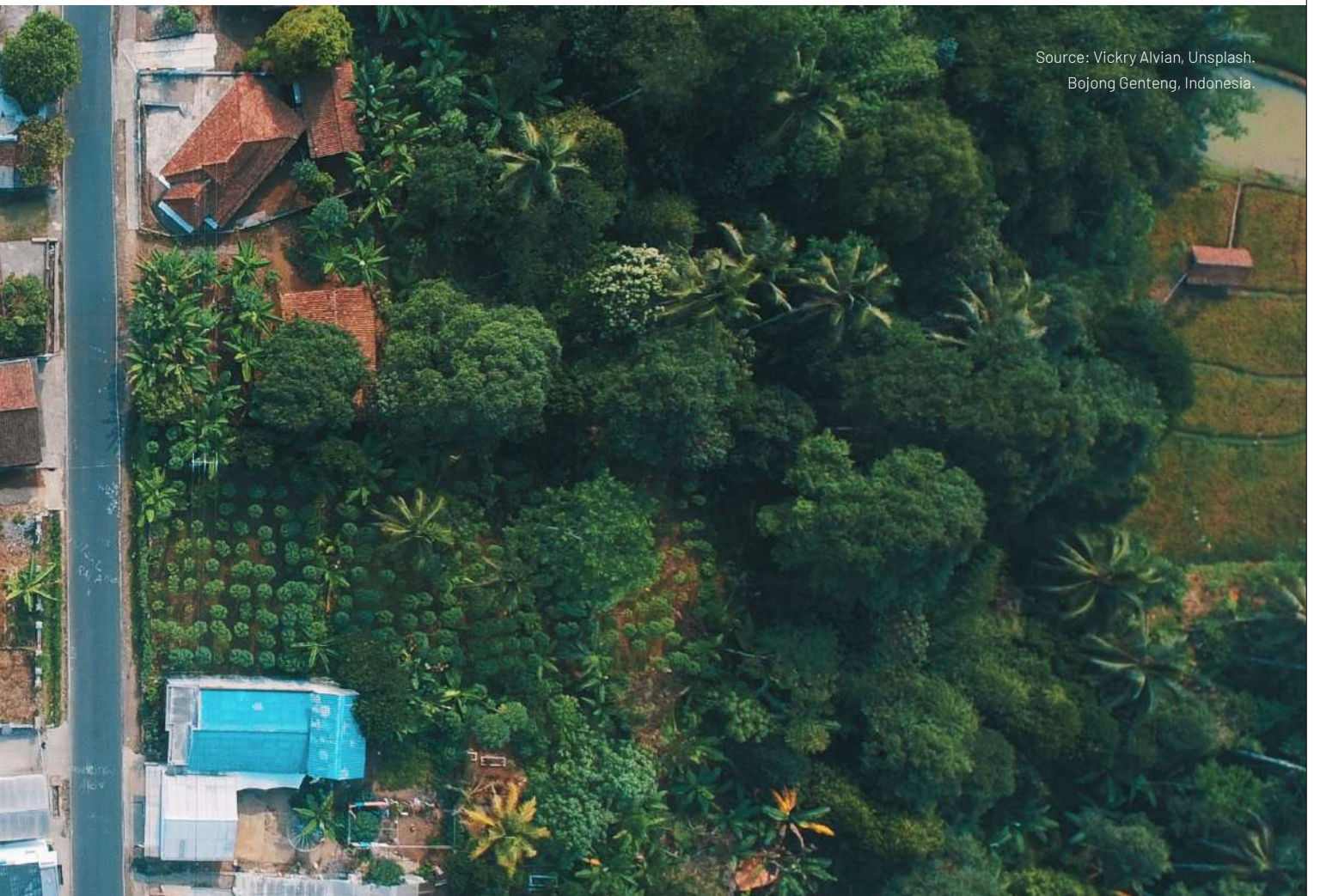
Source: Vickry Alvian, Unsplash.
Bojong Genteng, Indonesia.

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Abstract

This chapter highlights the need to consider urbanization and nature as an integrated whole. Historically, cities started off as minor insertions within wider robust ecological landscapes. Today, cities are the consumers of the bulk of the resources extracted from nature, and the source of almost all negative environmental impacts. If the relationship between cities and nature does not change, nature's life-support systems will be unable to sustain a global population of over nine billion by 2050. Renaturing is thus about reimagining how this can be done in just and practical ways. Achieving territorial and urban equality will depend on the reembedding of urban systems within natural systems in ways that restore the vitality of both, while supporting the needs and identities of historically marginalized groups.

"Renaturing urbanization" means addressing the spatial manifestation of multiple global societal challenges to generate benefits for all. These include the enhancement of health and well-being for everyone, the protection of ecosystems, sustainable (and more circular) resource use, and just resilience to climate change. This will require a critical examination of unwanted impacts, such as the commodification and undermining of vital ecological systems and services, processes of green gentrification and spatial exclusion, and the externalization of risk to particular social groups and geographies.

A transformation pathway that renatures urbanization will require transcending the economic dependence on natural resource extraction and carbon intensive development that currently exacerbate socio-economic inequalities and cause socio-environmental injustices. As resource scarcities and climate impacts intensify, problems associated with colonial, patriarchal relations and their expression, particularly at the intersection with gender, class, race, age and mental and physical ability have become more difficult to address. Likewise, the increasing commodification of urban life, the inadequacy of planning systems, and prevailing approaches that neglect "informal" city-making processes become increasingly intractable.

In response to the intersection of urbanization and climate challenges, more and more municipalities in the Global North and Global South are adopting ambitious interventions to "renature the city". Many are designing and offering improved environmental amenities to urban residents while addressing climate goals. They, together with other local and regional governments, do so by strengthening vital systems for food and water security, increasing neighbourhood attractiveness, creating recreational opportunities, revitalizing local economies, and improving the health of their residents. While real world examples of substantial urban transformations are not always easy to identify and cities remain confronted with acute socio-ecological challenges, this chapter examines how transformational pathways are being crafted in practice and why they matter.

In doing so, the aim is neither to provide prescriptive measures for what should be done, nor to glorify the initiatives undertaken in specific contexts. Instead, the experiences examined allow for inspiration and learning from current and ongoing approaches and initiatives, while casting a critical eye on both their potentials and shortcomings. Furthermore, our aim is to acknowledge the diverse factors that might converge in triggering renaturing actions, programmes and policies, as well as the actual conditions that might enable cities to become transformative in different contexts in order to address deeply entrenched and destructive trends.

Why renaturing?

Global impacts of climate change

3.3 to 3.6bn people live in contexts that are highly vulnerable to climate change.[a]

Structurally discriminated people and systems are the most vulnerable.

Uneven distribution of climate change risks and impacts

At least 896m people lived in a low-elevation coastal zone in 2020.

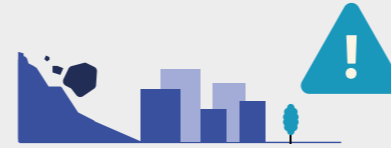**By 2050, 1 bn people** and their development and coastal ecosystems will face escalating climate-compounded risks.[b]

Urban land exposed to both floods and droughts will increase by **more than 2.5 times**[b]

90% of the 300m people who will be exposed to super- and ultra-extreme heatwaves in the Middle East and North Africa will live in urban centres.[c]

48m people are exposed to landslide risk in Europe alone, with the majority in smaller urban centres.[c]

2.9m deaths a year are attributed to household air pollution, associated with cooking and heating, particularly in poor households.[d]

In 2018 2.3bn people lived in water-stressed countries. By 2050, 350m more people living in urban areas will be exposed to water scarcity from severe droughts at 1.5°C warming and 410.7m at 2°C warming.[e]

+ 350m (+1.5°C)
+ 410.7m (+2°C)

6,500,000

6.5m deaths a year, equivalent to one every five seconds, can be attributed to exposure to air pollution.[f]
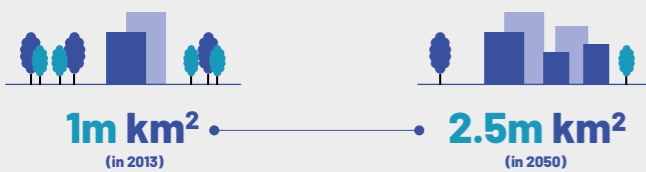
95% of the global population live in areas where ambient PM2.5 exceeds the WHO guideline of annual average exposure of 10µg m-3.

Unsustainable urban growth and its pressure on natural resources

If the de-densification of urban settlements continues, urban land use will increase from:[k]

1m km² (in 2013) → **2.5m km²** (in 2050)

If the global urban population doubles by 2050, the annual resource requirements of the world's urban settlements will increase[k]

40bn tonnes (in 2010) → **90bn tonnes** (in 2050)

Need for climate finance

Investment in urban adaptation is limited. Of the 3.7bn USD investments in adaptation projects in 2017–2018 , only 3–5% had an urban component.[i]

Urban climate finance, estimated at 384bn USD anually in 2017/18 is insufficient to meet the 4.5-5.4 trillion USD annual investment needed for urban mitigation across key sectors.[j]

3-5%

4.5 trillion USD

Annual investment needed

384bn USD Urban climate finance

384bn USD
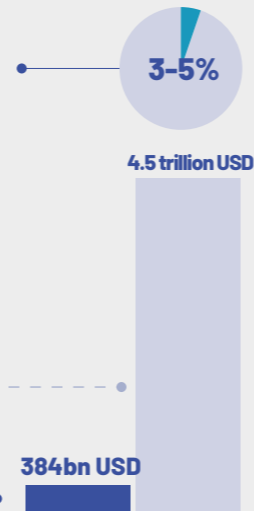
Unsustainable infrastructure

In 2019, **developing countries** had **219 watts per capita** of renewable energy capacity [g]
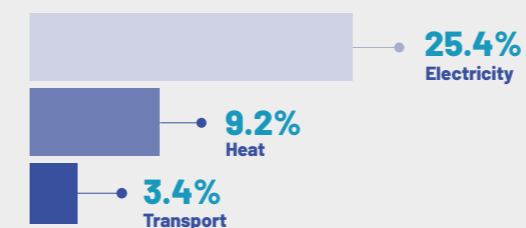
and **developed countries** had **880 watts per capita** (four times higher) [g]

Accelerated action on modern renewable energy is needed, especially in transport and heating sectors. In 2018, modern renewable share of final energy consumption was:[h]

25.4% Electricity
9.2% Heat
3.4% Transport

Adapting low-carbon transport infrastructure will be crucial to ensure resilience to climate change impacts, whilst simultaneously delivering mitigation goals.

If proactive interventions are made, the greatest benefits from adaptation of the global road network will be in low- and middle-income countries where reductions in flood risk are typically between[h]

↓ **40-80%** ↓

Renaturing pathway

A just ecological transition

Towards urban and territorial equality

- Just and sustainable forms of urbanism
- Territorial economic development decoupled from natural resource extraction
- Integrated urban and natural systems
- Enhanced health, rights and well-being of current and future generations
- Protected ecosystems
- Buildings and infrastructure resilient to climate change

Decoupling urban development from environmental degradation, promoting more symbiotic relations between urban and rural territories to reduce resource flows, and decoupling improvements in well-being from rising resource use.

Addressing mitigation and adaptation through integrated planning and multisectoral policies, fostering proximity, improving health and well-being for all and promoting regulatory interventions that increase affordability and reduce green gentrification and the negative impacts of urban sprawl.

Improving urban governance to enable just and sustainable transitions. This involves setting up progressive political coalitions to create governance modalities that deal with complexity – i.e. "collibration" – to facilitate democratic decision-making and forward-looking planning responsive to social and environmental diversity.

Shifting from economic dependence on natural resource extraction to less carbon-intensive development to reduce the human impact on the environment, while alleviating socio-economic inequalities and socio-environmental injustices.

Promoting interconnected interventions at intra-, inter-urban and regional scales, for better management of natural resources, energy and food systems, as well as improved adaptation and resilience. Interventions include, amongst others, equalization mechanisms and the promotion of solidarity and territorial cohesion.

Adopting and promoting a rights-based approach with purposeful actions, fostering the social and health benefits of renaturing and the protection of the urban commons.

Revising local taxes and adopting innovative financing tools to create incentives to support environmental improvements, protecting disadvantaged groups from negative impacts. Local, regional and national partnerships to fund climate mitigation and adaptation are critical.

How can urban systems be reintegrated into natural systems, sustainably including the "green" in the urban and the urban in the "green"?

How can territorial economic dependence on natural resource extraction be transcended while also tackling the uneven distribution of risks for marginalized groups, such as displacement, gentrification and commodification?

Explicitly promoting the social production of housing and infrastructure, protecting the rights of everyday city-makers and their livelihood practices that can renature cities. This involves providing administrative, technical and financial support to civic-driven practices.

Responding to long-term inequalities through intersectional and inclusive renaturing actions. Just transitions call for tackling maldistribution and misrecognition. Participatory planning can accelerate transformative adaptation and reduce the uneven distribution of risks for marginalized groups.

1 Introduction

The Renaturing pathway demonstrates how urbanization and nature can be seen as an integrated interdependent whole. Historically speaking, cities started off as minor insertions within wider robust ecological landscapes. Today, urban regions are the consumers of the bulk of resources extracted from nature, and the source of the most negative environmental impacts. If the relationship between cities and nature does not change, nature's life-support systems will be unable to sustain a global population of over nine billion by 2050, of which 66% will live in urban areas. Renaturing is about reimagining how this could be done in just and practical ways. **Achieving territorial and urban equality will depend on the reembedding of urban systems within natural systems in ways that restore the vitality of both, while supporting everyone's Right to the City and, in particular, guaranteeing the needs and rights of those who have been historically marginalized.**

"Renaturing urbanization" can be defined as a set of urbanization processes and dynamics that are seen as being embedded within wider ecological systems. Drawing on several strands of urban studies,[1] this chapter approaches renaturing as: a way of seeing, restoring and enhancing urban-nature relations; a representation of a complex empirical reality; a vision towards a better future; and a means of guiding and inspiring transformative practices. For well over a century (despite Ebenezer

Howard's original influential, and potentially radical, conception of the "garden city") urbanism has, both in theory and in practice, mainly been about seeing towns and cities as entities disconnected from ecological systems and which destroy them. Ecological systems have typically been treated as sources of material resources cities required to access and extract, and as the sinks into which waste was disposed. In recent decades, the largely negative impact of urban systems on ecological systems has fully come into focus. Even so, this "environmental impact" paradigm (which forms the basis for the environmental impact assessments that have now become mandatory for the property development sector) still sees urban systems as being somehow external to ecological systems. According to this anthropocentric point of view, the environment is, at best, something that should be "protected" so that it can continue to meet the resource demands that urban systems place upon it. Examining the embeddedness of urban systems within wider ecological systems brings into focus the integrated interdependencies of our urban-ecological system and the fact that it is inseparable from the wider evolutionary web of life. Expressed in a more colloquial way: **it is not a matter of including "green" in what is urban; instead, it is a question of sustainably incorporating the urban into what is "green".**

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1 Nik Heynen, Maria Kaika, and Erik Swyngedouw, *In the Nature of Cities. Urban Political Ecology and the Politics of Urban Metabolism* (London: Routledge, 2006); Adriana Allen, Liza Griffin, and Cassidy Johnson, *Environmental Justice and Urban Resilience in the Global South* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Timothy Beatley, *Biophilic Cities. Integrating Nature into Urban Design and Planning* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2010); Joan Clos, "Introduction," in *The Quito Papers and the New Urban Agenda*, ed. UN-Habitat (London: Routledge, 2018); Paul Klugman Currie, "A Resource Flow Typology of African Cities" (Stellenbosch University, 2015), https://bit.ly/3MlwLmX; Peter M. Allen, "Cities and Regions as Evolutionary Complex Systems," *Journal of Geographical Systems* 4, no. 1 (1995): 103–30; Mike Hodson et al., "Reshaping Urban Infrastructure: Material Flow

Analysis and Transitions Analysis in an Urban Context," *Journal of Industrial Ecology* 16, no. 6 (2012): 789–800; George Martine et al., *The New Global Frontier. Urbanization, Poverty and Environment in the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2008); Mohsen Mostafavi, "Why Ecological Urbanism? Why Now?," in *Infrastructure Sustainability and Design*, ed. Spiro Pollalis et al. (London: Routledge, 2012); Joe Ravetz, *City-Region 2020: Integrated Planning for a Sustainable Environment* (London: Routledge, 2000); Mark Swilling and Maarten Hajer, "Governance of Urban Transitions: Towards Sustainable Resource Efficient Urban Infrastructures," *Environmental Research Letters* 12, no. 12 (2017): 125007.

In the past, towns and cities were never, in reality, completely divorced from ecological systems; that was just how we perceived them. As a result, we were able to blindly build highly unequal towns and cities, which are now home to the majority of the people on the planet. And we did it in a way that completely disregarded the impact they had on the web of life on which we humans depend, and which is effectively our life support system. In this way, urbanization became the way in which a small elite of a dominant species managed to steal the natural commons from all the other species for the sake of material wealth and the power to control nature using scientific knowledge. Today we face the consequences. Hence the notion of "renaturing urbanization"; this implies returning to what empirical evidence clearly shows to be true: urban life cannot be disconnected from nature. There is, however, a normative dimension: urban-ecological systems can be more or less equitable across their spectrum (poverty, inequalities, exclusion), and also more or less ecologically sustainable (carbonization and natural resource use). Today, most cities are both unequal and unsustainable: 75% of the world's cities are now more unequal than they were 20 years ago (as explained in Chapter 2).[2] **The great danger facing human society is that, as decarbonization and "greening" set in, cities could be "greened" and yet still remain unequal. Similarly, they could become more equal at the expense of their ecological systems.** This Report is about both problems, which have clear implications for local and regional governments (LRGs), which feel pressure, and have the responsibility, to choose and follow both more equitable and more ecological sustainable pathways. A just urban transition to a more equitable and sustainable world must restore the balance that was lost when urbanization became a socio-economic process that benefitted the few and destroyed the global commons.

"Renaturing urbanization" means addressing the root causes of the many global and local challenges that currently threaten the well-being of all human and non-human species. The solutions are well-known: (a) improving human health and well-being; (b) protecting the ecosystem health and services; (c) promoting a more sustainable (and more circular) use of resources; and (d) building infrastructures that are resilient to climate change. Renaturing therefore also requires a critical examination of unwanted impacts, such as: the commodification of vital ecological systems and

services; processes of green gentrification, displacement and spatial exclusion; the over-consumption of resources by the few; and the externalization of risk to particular social groups and geographies.

A transformative pathway that renatures urbanization implies **transcending the current economic dependence on natural resource extraction and carbon intensive development, which exacerbate**

Source: Diego Ibarra Sanchez, The New York Times.
"Agricultural Jihad": To cope with the complex crisis in Lebanon, Michel Zarazir, a filmmaker, turned his roof in Antelias into a garden to grow food.

2 Clos, "Introduction".

socio-economic inequalities and socio-environmental injustices. As resource scarcities and climate impacts intensify, so do problems with long-term trajectories, such as: racism and patriarchal relationships; the financialization of housing and land; the commodification of nature and urban life; the neglect for what are often called "informal" processes, which provide dwellings and livelihoods for the vast majority of the urban population; and the inadequacy of current planning systems.

LRGs around the world are currently experimenting with ambitious interventions to renature the city and the wider territorial systems on which they depend. Some of these interventions seek to offer improved environmental amenities to urban residents while also addressing climate goals. They do so by strengthening vital systems for food and water security, increasing neighbourhood liveability, creating recreational opportunities, revitalizing local economies and improving the health of local residents. **While real world examples of substantial change are not always easy to identify, this chapter examines how transformational approaches are being crafted in practice and why they matter.** In doing so, the aim is neither to provide prescriptive measures for what should be done, nor to glorify the initiatives undertaken in specific contexts. Instead, the 28 experiences from the Global North and Global South that are briefly examined here should provide inspiration

and help people to learn from both past and ongoing approaches and initiatives, while casting a critical eye on both their potentials and shortcomings. The aim is also to acknowledge the diverse factors that may converge and help to trigger renaturing actions, programmes and policies, as well as those that could perhaps enable cities to become more transformative, within their many and varied contexts.

Renaturing urbanization is useful for LRGs because it helps them to understand their current pathways if all else remains equal: where they may be heading as a consequence of the *status quo*, and what would need to change for them to achieve an optimal balance between greater social equity and ecological sustainability. References to a "just transition" essentially refer to the top-right quadrant of Figure 7.1: a pathway to more socially just and ecologically sustainable towns and cities. However, an unjust transition is always a distinct possibility. This could entail decarbonizing the urban system and making it more resource efficient but without reducing any inequalities (green urbanism). On the other hand, an inclusive, redistributive focus (inclusive urbanism) may work in the short term, but over the longer term the contradictions of climate change and resource depletion could undermine what had previously been achieved and could be sustained into the future. Renaturing urbanization is about framing the challenges that LRGs will face if they commit to a pathway towards a just and sustainable form of urbanism. It also helps to reveal the tensions potentially associated with other pathways.

Building upon the considerations outlined above, this chapter explores three different, but complementary, approaches through which transformative action towards more just and sustainable urban and territorial development can be put in practice. These approaches could be triggered by forward-looking city strategies, reactions to local or global crises, measures taken to adapt to chronic stresses, or a combination of these factors.[3] The next section starts by examining the wider recalibration of governance required to sustain renaturing as a transformative pathway. The following sections then explore the opportunities and precedents that have emerged from different approaches and specific experiences. The final section recaps on why and how a social justice perspective is crucial for consolidating such approaches, and for ensuring that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Figure 7.1
Pathways for local and regional governments
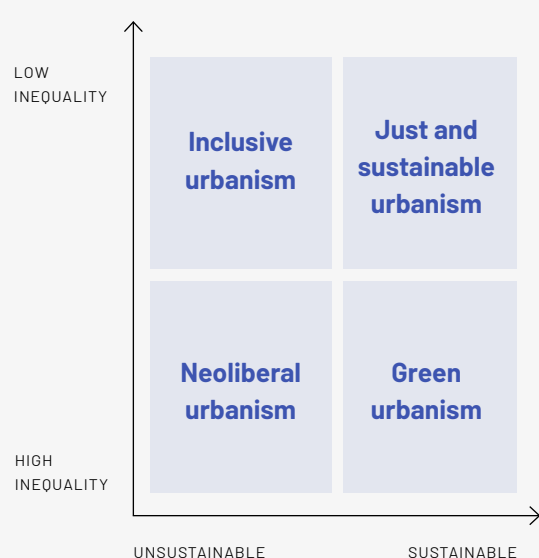
Source: authors

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3 Caren Levy et al., "Unlocking Urban Trajectories: Planning for Environmentally Just Transitions in Asia," in *Sustainable Cities in Asia*, ed. Federico Caprotti and Li Yu (London: Routledge, 2017).

2 Towards collibratory urban– nature governance

Accelerated urbanization has resulted in highly complex urban systems that are challenging to govern. At the same time, the interlinked environmental crisis and the challenge of inequalities have resulted in an urgent need for directionality, as outlined in SDG 11. However, complexity and directionality are not easily reconciled: while complexity implies emergent outcomes that are not easily controlled,[4] directionality implies mission-oriented governance to achieve particular goals.[5] As a result, those who appreciate complexity tend to underplay the need for directionality, and those who desire directionality to address the crises that cities face while under-emphasizing complexity. These stances can, however, be reconciled if a relational conception of governance is deployed.[6] **To reconcile complexity and the need for directionality, new capabilities are required that can facilitate goal-oriented change without reducing complexity.** As discussed in Chapter 3, one of the ways in which this has been approached is through "collibration": the "governance of governance",

which relies on establishing a form of meta-level governance capable of facilitating mission-oriented partnerships with which to achieve incremental change. This is particularly important when it comes to dealing with the complexities of renaturing urbanization and the challenges inherent to seeking just urban transitions.

Urban governance holds the key to just and sustainable urban transitions and transformative change. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, urban governance is by no means uniform across world regions. In some regions, LRGs have the legal, financial and institutional capacity to intervene and influence the directionality of urban development, while in others they have very limited capacity for intervention. As a result, urban policies do not always translate into actual programmes and projects. This leads to a divergence between proclaimed policy commitments and the actual experiences of urban dwellers, and particularly those of the urban poor. There is, of course, sufficient evidence (especially in Latin America) to show that progressive urban political coalitions can promote just urban transitions. The underlying causes of this shift in the balance of power vary; in some cases, new movements and parties emerge as a result of disruptive crises (e.g. water shortages, mobility breakdowns, forced removals), while in others, new urban actors emerge in response to longer-term trends (e.g. housing shortages, technological change or rising food prices). The presence of champions of progressive change (attached to

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4 Rika Preiser et al., "Social-Ecological Systems as Complex Adaptive Systems: Organizing Principles for Advancing Research Methods and Approaches," *Ecology and Society* 23, no. 4 (2018).

5 Mariana Mazzucato, *The Value of Everything: Making and Taking in the Global Economy by Mariana Mazzucato* (London: Allen Lane, 2018); Mariana Mazzucato, Mzukisi Qobo, and Rainer Kattel, "Building State Capacities and Dynamic Capabilities to Drive Social Change: The Case of South Africa," UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose Working Paper Series (London, 2021), https://bit.ly/3vF9vtp.

6 Mark Swilling, *The Age of Sustainability. Just Transitions in a Complex World* (London: Routledge, 2020).

NGOs, universities, labour federations, new political parties, social movements or international movements) often plays a key supportive role in constructing and mobilizing the narratives of these coalitions. If these new coalitions achieve electoral victory, they often initiate ambitious programmes that seek to reorient unsustainable and unjust urban trajectories.

Where there is a progressive political coalition in power governing a city, which is committed to sustainability-oriented and socially just directionality, there is a tendency to establish a range of institutional tools and capabilities for facilitating transitional dynamics without reducing complexity. When the goal of these arrangements is to facilitate partnering in order to achieve a shared proposal that can benefit the whole of society, this tends to become the focus of urban governance and to translate into fairer and more effective outcomes. Nevertheless, through their emphasis on "balancing" interests and "partnering", these curators of urban collibration may also fall short in their aims to tackle deep-seated disparities relating to power. They may tweak certain components and modify the edges of governance systems to make them more responsive to environmental challenges, but they often do so through

green transitioning and innovations that may not fully address key questions relating to social justice.

The discussion thus far, and the case studies that follow, focus on the internal localized dynamics of city governance. However, resource flows through cities are made possible by global systems of resource extraction[7] which are, in turn, premised on the colonization of the commons. This is something that was largely made possible by the way in which the Western world colonized the rest of the world over a period of five centuries, through an imperialist and extraction-obsessed logic that still persists today.[8] Various forms of global governance are emerging to address planetary crises (e.g. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – or UNFCCC – processes, High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere programme reserves, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, among others). However, in practice, these platforms continue to be captured by the biases and preferences of powerful economic and/or political interests that can easily influence the dynamics of global governance. The same collibratory principles and obstacles to tackling global crises apply to renaturing governance, as they are all attempts to reconcile complexity and directionality that meet with greater or lesser degrees of success.

As global poly-crises (including pandemics that are often rooted in disturbances of nature) get worse, it is often assumed that these global governance processes will be strengthened. However, history tells us that this is not a linear process. At the centre of the response to each crisis lies the capacity (or lack thereof) to facilitate collibratory governance. Nevertheless, in parallel, processes of post-colonial imperialism are likely to persist, while levels of violence may escalate as more fragile and failed states emerge. There are already two billion people living in failed states. The connections between these forms of global governance and national responses to the breakdown of the planetary commons that we all depend on need to be kept in mind when considering the renaturing of urbanization. This is crucial in order to reframe the way in which urban regions are configured to become the consumers of global resources. That said, it is worth looking at the granular dynamics of urban collibration in cases such as **Cape Town** and **Melbourne**.

Source: Samuel Ikua.
A woman selling her own vegetables from a *kibanda*, a small makeshift kiosk, Kenya.

7 Heinz Schandl et al., "Global Material Flows and Resource Productivity: Forty Years of Evidence," *Journal of Industrial Ecology* 22, no. 4 (2017): 827–38.

8 Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Empire, Global Coloniality and African Subjectivity* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013).

Cape Town (South Africa)

° "Day Zero", as it came to be known, in early 2018, was the day on which the taps in Cape Town were supposed to run dry. However, after a remarkably collaborative campaign driven by a partnership between the City of Cape Town, business and civil society, water consumption was halved in three months without the need for a technological solution. The drought was the result of three consecutive dry winters (2015-17). The catchment areas that supplied the city suffered their driest period since the 1930s. The drought made the city vulnerable because of its almost exclusive reliance on surface water. Using a mixture of price-driven and non-price mechanisms, the city rallied households, businesses and citizens to respond to the drought. Citizens responded by replacing lawns and water-sensitive plants with alternatives that required less water; they also greatly reduced their personal water use and used greywater for toilet flushing. Investments in water-saving devices, such as low-flow taps, water-efficient shower heads, and smaller toilet cisterns, were also adopted by the commercial and business sectors. However, the harsh reality was that many residents of informal settlements have to live with chronic water deficits, suffer inequities in water infrastructure and must cope with flooding events during winter. Supported by an effective coalition of community groups that did not always get the support that they needed from the local authorities, poorer households managed to adapt to the drought without having to reduce what little water they used. Due to its systemic and cross-sectoral impacts, during the lead-up to Day Zero, partnership-based responses to the drought crisis had to be strategic and inclusive and have a major impact. Intermediary actors played a key role in this, with the most significant of these being the Western Cape Economic Development Partnership. This publicly funded organization carefully brokered an agreement between all three levels of government, which had hitherto run separate campaigns, with separate messaging. This organization also facilitated the formation of a broad coalition of business and civil society groups which was transformed into an effective, albeit unstable, partnership. Unsurprisingly, this systemic shock triggered awareness amongst water managers that climate-induced droughts had come to stay and that this would require changing the way in which the precious resource of water was managed. Furthermore, although the drought ended, consumers did not then return to their previous levels of water consumption. If their response can be sustained, this combination of a change of behaviour and technological innovation could well result in a new system of water governance in Cape Town in the future.

Melbourne (Australia)

° In 2003, the city of Melbourne decided that it wanted to be carbon neutral by 2020. It therefore adopted a strategic document called *Zero Net Emissions by 2020 – A Roadmap to a Climate Neutral City*. It then assembled a city-wide partnership to drive this strategy which resulted in radical improvements in energy efficiency, reductions in energy and water consumption, and also improved waste management in city operations. Given the prolonged droughts that Melbourne often experiences, water consumption was reduced by 40% by 2020. Direct action included: the gradual introduction of drought tolerant grasses in city parks and sports grounds; the use of reclaimed water for irrigation purposes; and the use of extensive mulching to improve water retention. In addition, a free showerhead exchange initiative reduced the amount of water used per person per year by 13,500 litres and citizens were encouraged to collect rainwater for garden irrigation. These water restrictions were introduced with enforced compliance. Without the help of partnerships organized through a unit of City of Melbourne, achieving such city-wide support and commitment, and changes in resource flows would not have been possible.

In short, renaturing urbanization is all about framing just urban transitions in ways that reconcile complexity and directionality. The two experiences cited above show that relational governance is most suited to respond to situations with increasing levels of complexity. LRGs and other key actors that can help drive urban change need a "compass" that will help them to navigate and adapt to the rhythm, dynamics and ever-changing patterns of real-world complex adaptive systems. Such a compass needs to be created in context-specific ways which will depend on where the appropriate capabilities and networks are located within each particular city (whether in LRGs, universities, or NGOs, etc.). However, in general, this usually calls for a group, and/or network, that can comprehend the complexities while, at the same time, enabling interactions that result in commitments to particular pathways to action.

3 Building just transitions both within and beyond cities

Seeking just transitions requires addressing the negative impacts of cities on distant "elsewheres" that provide resources. The colonization of the global commons by urban elites effectively created a resource base for wealth accumulation and inequalities within towns and cities. These then mushroomed across the planet, in just over a century.[9] A just urban transition implies addressing persistent inequalities both within and outside city boundaries because of the way in which urban systems and property markets consistently reproduce social exclusion as urbanization progresses. **To achieve urban and territorial equality, it is necessary to consider the multiple ways in which networked infrastructures conduct resource flows captured from natural systems through urban systems in spatially unequal ways.** From the 1980s onwards, the traditional model for municipal governance, of publicly managed networked infrastructures, was replaced by the neoliberal model that brought into play a new set of urban elites, including powerful property developers, (often) globalized financial institutions, owners and operators of privatized infrastructure services, and a vast range of translocal interests. What is now needed are new forms of urban governance that can manage alternative, decentralized and distributed networked infrastructures, which are potentially more inclusive and ecologically sustainable. Examples of this would include popular struggles against privatized water systems in countries like Tanzania and Bolivia, which resulted in the reversal of privatized water service delivery. Another example would be the mushrooming (and subsequent reversal) of cooperatively owned renewables in Denmark and Germany, with 50% of renewables in Germany being owned by cooperatives or municipalities by 2012.

LRGs are well aware of the changing dynamics in urbanization. In many places in the Global South, the challenge is about coping with the rapid expansion of the urban population. Meanwhile, in some parts of the Global North (and especially in parts of Europe), the challenges relate more to population decline and reduced revenues. For LRGs in the Global South, the key implication of the *World Urbanization Prospects 2018* data was the harsh reality that just under 50% of the urban fabric that is expected to be required by 2050 still has to be produced.[10] A significant proportion of the additional urban population, of nearly four billion people,

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9 Neil Brenner, *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization* (Berlin: Jovis Verlag, 2014).

10 UNDESA, "World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision" (New York, 2019), https://bit.ly/3L7nEWT.

will end up in developing country cities, and particularly in Asian and African cities. If we then include the more than one billion people who currently live in informal settlements, it follows that material infrastructure of one kind or another will need to be assembled by LRGs in the Global South for the additional 3.4 billion new urban dwellers who will exist by 2050. To use a statistic that perfectly illustrates the point: Chinese cities used more cement in its urbanization boom between 2011 and 2013 than the USA used in the entire twentieth century. This raises obvious questions: What will the resource requirements of future urbanization be if business-as-usual, socio-technical systems are deployed throughout the world's built environment? What are the resource implications of providing more just and sustainable socio-technical systems? For LRGs to tackle these questions, it will mean considering both the quantitative and qualitative challenges that must be faced along the pathway towards a more just urban transition.

Several reports are useful to grasp the extent of resource flows through urban systems. These resource flows originate in the natural commons that have been inherited from evolution; they are then extracted by industrial and infrastructural systems that are owned, financed, and managed by urban elites. The International Resource Panel's *Weight of Cities* report[11] launched in 2018 was the first empirical analysis of total resource flows through urban systems, projected forward to 2050. These resources included biomass (including food, materials, forest products and fuel), fossil fuels, building materials (mainly sand and cement) and metals and minerals. The report revealed that if the global urban population almost doubles by 2050, and if urban development continues to be planned and managed on a business-as-usual basis, the annual resource requirements of the world's urban settlements will increase from 40 billion tonnes in 2010 to 90 billion tonnes by 2050. Furthermore, if the long-term historic trend of the de-densification of urban settlements, which is currently running at minus 2% per annum, were to continue, urban land use would increase from 1 million km^2 to over 2.5 million km^2 by 2050. It should be noted that this expansion would be into the most productive farmland in the world (with the most negative impacts being in Asia and Africa) and would thus threaten food supply systems and the overall food sovereignty of millions of small farmers.[12]

The *Weight of Cities* report also explored alternatives. Overall, if a material consumption target of six tonnes per capita were to be achieved (to align resource consumption with the Net Zero 2050 target), this would imply halving total resource consumption in urban settlements by 2050. Some would argue that this is not enough: it is equivalent to what was consumed in 2010, but with an extra 3.5 billion urban consumers. Furthermore, although it assumes no informal settlements, unequal resource use would still remain. Nevertheless, even halving resource consumption in this way would require a massive reduction in resource consumption for the developed world in order to make increased resource consumption possible in the developing world, where this is required. In low-density, developed economies (North America, Australia), resource consumption is 25-35 tonnes per capita, while it is 15-18 tonnes per capita in high-density developed economies (Europe, Japan). However, this assumes that the resources that are used to produce the goods imported into rich countries (the so-called "resource rucksack") are allocated to the exporting and not to the importing countries. If this methodological error is corrected, using the "material footprint" approach, the picture changes quite dramatically.[13] As the map below reveals, the material footprint of nations is profoundly unequal, with that of North America, Europe and Australia being 20-50 tonnes per capita, while that of most of Africa and India is 1-5 tonnes per capita. The majority of the resources extracted from nature are sunk into the built environment and consumed via urban systems. Therefore, the map presented in Figure 7.2, which shows the national material footprint per capita (MF/cap, in tonnes per capita or t/cap), effectively represents the resource flows of an urban-centred global economy. These flows are made possible by the global extraction and deployment of natural resources for the benefit of the two billion urban dwellers who consume 86% of the world's manufactured goods.[14]
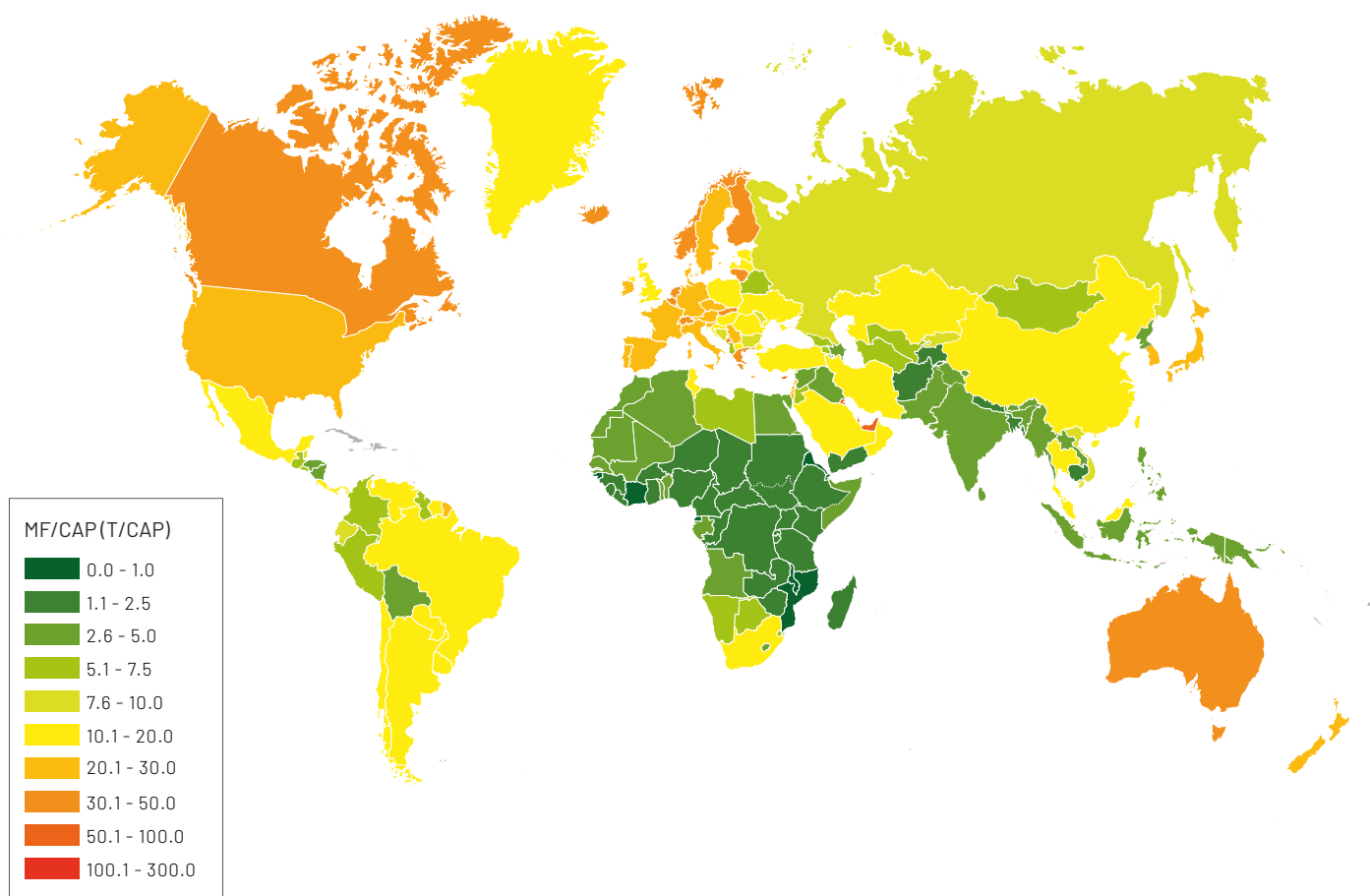
That said, based on life cycle assessments of district energy systems, green buildings and mass transit in 84 cities, the report shows that resource efficiencies of between 36% and 54% of current use could be achieved in each of these sectors.[15] If this is true for these sectors, it is assumed that it is more than likely also valid for

11 Mark Swilling et al., "The Weight of Cities. Resource Requirements of Future Urbanization" (Nairobi, 2018), https://bit.ly/39b2NUq.

12 Christopher Bren D'Amour et al., "Future Urban Land Expansion and Implications for Global Croplands," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 114, no. 34 (2016): 8939–44.

13 Thomas O. Wiedmann et al., "The Material Footprint of Nations," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112, no. 20 (2013): 6271–76.

14 UNDP, "Human Development Report 1998" (Oxford, 1998), https://bit.ly/38aJ6eS.

15 Swilling et al., "The Weight of Cities. Resource Requirements of Future Urbanization." Life Cycle Assessment is a methodology for calculating the total quantity of direct and indirect resources that are used in a given system, which could be anything ranging from an entire city or industrial sector to an individual factory or household.

Figure 7.2

Material footprint of nations

MF/CAP (T/CAP)

- 0.0 - 1.0
- 1.1 - 2.5
- 2.6 - 5.0
- 5.1 - 7.5
- 7.6 - 10.0
- 10.1 - 20.0
- 20.1 - 30.0
- 30.1 - 50.0
- 50.1 - 100.0
- 100.1 - 300.0

Source: Wiedmann et al., "The Material Footprint of Nations."

others, such as industrial and commercial energy use, fossil fuel use, water and sanitation systems, solid waste systems and road infrastructure. These are essential considerations for LRGs seeking to drive a renaturing pathway. Nevertheless, although improving resource efficiency would result in a less extractive relationship between urban systems and nature, it would not reduce inequalities or change the distribution of the ownership of these resources.

It is only if interventions to achieve greater resource efficiency correlate with social justice goals that deeper transformations become possible. This is particularly true for interventions that promote much greater densification of increasingly socially mixed neighbourhoods. Urban sprawl in certain parts of the city tends to favour the rich (especially if it means escaping

high property taxes to cross-subsidize the poor), rather than the urban poor, who get pushed out into peri-urban areas and into other parts of the city. Densification can reverse both trends, if pursued according to a social justice agenda. This may, of course, call for bold interventions in the property market, but these tend to be severely constrained in many jurisdictions, with well-organized urban property-owning classes being backed by financial institutions that use urban property to secure debt extension.

Scientific research and policy debates on urban resource flows have mushroomed in recent years. This emerging body of knowledge offers empirically detailed case studies that underpin normative conclusions about how to reduce resource consumption in cities. Research on urban infrastructure has a much longer

tradition and draws upon a wide range of disciplines. In recent years the focus of this research has been on financing infrastructure, governance, social inclusion, and technological innovations. Quite significantly, and with few exceptions, the urban infrastructure debate tends to ignore resource flows, while the resource flow debate tends to ignore the infrastructure that is required to conduct resource flows through urban systems. **The renaturing of cities will mean designing, building, operating and maintaining urban infrastructures that conduct resource flows through urban systems in ways that decouple improvements in well-being from rising resource use over time.** Decoupling stems from the assumption that a sustainable world can only be achieved if more renewable, and less non-renewable, resources are used ("resource substitutability") in more efficient ways ("resource efficiency"), and far more equitably ("resource sufficiency"). This combination of substitutability, efficiency and sufficiency challenges the three pillars of mainstream urbanism that evolved during the course of the twentieth century: natural resources are unlimited, market prices determine the allocation of these resources, and inequalities are unavoidable. As the three pillars that sustain economic growth as the primary goal, they have also become synonymous with "development".

Resource sufficiency involves promoting a more equitable use of resources. It refers to the need to reduce the resource consumption of the wealthiest urban dwellers from between 16-35 tonnes per capita to 6-10 tonnes per capita, and to increase that of the poorest urban dwellers from 1-3 tonnes per capita to 5-8 tonnes per capita. **Unequal resource use tends to be financed by cross-subsidies of the infrastructure accessed by the wealthiest sections of urban society. A more equitable use of resources in more densely occupied and socially mixed neighbourhoods would cost less per capita over time and result in greater social harmony than in divided and unequal cities.** As densification tends to result in increased safety levels (due to the "multiplicity of eyes in a space" phenomenon), much less would have to be spent on personal security measures.[16] Densification should also be approached as a profoundly relational mode of living: it typically involves access to neighbourhood-level public spaces, pedestrianized streets, non-motorized mobility, efficient and affordable mass transit, street-based retail activity rather than malls, 4-6 story buildings, and a greater number of intersections per hectare to promote

porous throughflows. The value of individual urban properties within such neighbourhoods is a product of their relational dynamics and of complex interactions between social norms, market transactions, collective awareness and therefore local voices. Many examples exist of socially mixed environments of this sort in cities in both developed and developing countries.[17] From a resource perspective, this is the kind of living environment that is compatible with the principles of resource efficiency and resource sufficiency.

The vignettes that follow illustrate the diversity of contexts within which reconfigurations of infrastructure have taken place, including the implications for resource flows. They demonstrate how these implications occur even though there is a lack of an explicit link between sustainable resource use and social equity outcomes.

Beijing (China)

° China's capital city, Beijing, has faced water shortages for many years due to a combination of a diminishing supply and an increasing demand. A combination of successive years of below-average rainfall, high population growth, and the pollution of surface and groundwater resulted in the city's per capita freshwater availability falling from 1,000 m^3 in 1949 to less than 230 m^3 in 2007. As the city has expanded, demand has shifted from agricultural and industrial uses to residential use, with domestic water consumption more than doubling in the ten years up to 2005; it has subsequently continued to increase at a slightly lower rate. To make matters worse, policies have reduced the supply options by allowing Beijing's watersheds to be degraded. They have also supported wasteful water consumption by favouring large-scale engineering projects to increase the water supply at little or no additional cost to consumers. In one of Beijing's early efforts to address water shortages (in 1987), the local government introduced regulations that required all hotels with a constructed area exceeding 20,000 m^2, and all public buildings exceeding 30,000 m^2 (such as schools, universities, train stations and airports), to install on-site water treatment facilities in order to be able to recycle and reuse water. When well-implemented and operated, this type of decentralized water treatment system can be a useful model for other cities. It allows a more efficient management of water resources, can

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16 Jan Gehl, *Cities for People* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2010).

17 Maarten Hajer et al., *Neighbourhoods for the Future: A Plea for a Social and Ecological Urbanism* (Amsterdam: Valiz Trancity, 2022).

reduce the pollution of surface and groundwater systems, and can help overcome many of the limitations of centralized wastewater treatment plants. These smaller plants are quicker to plan and install and are better able to cater for rapidly changing capacity requirements in fast-growing cities like Beijing. By reusing grey water and partially treated wastewater on site, for non-potable uses such as toilet flushing, irrigation or street cleaning, the demand for potable water and centralized water treatment facilities can be reduced; this saves resources and cuts costs.

Durban (South Africa)

° About 450 tonnes of waste arrives daily at the Mariannhill Landfill Site, located 20 km from Durban. The project began with an environmental impact assessment, making Mariannhill the first landfill in South Africa to undergo such a study. This assessment found a need to restore the local ecosystem, to minimize the loss of biodiversity, to connect the site to other nature reserves, and to support natural migration patterns. The Mariannhill landfill had to be designed to prevent environmental pollution and to restore the damaged areas. The key aims of the project were to collect and treat harmful landfill emissions using natural, robust, and low-cost methods, and to rescue soil and indigenous vegetation removed during construction of the site and to store it in a nursery, on site. Other objectives were to help mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to provide income for the city through the sale of electricity and carbon credits generated from the captured methane. As a result, this landfill site pioneered an ecological approach to containing, treating and reusing leachate. Methane gas is captured and used to generate between 450,000 kWh and 650,000 kWh of electricity per month. Furthermore, indigenous plant species, which would otherwise have been destroyed by the landfill site, have been propagated and extended in a special purpose nursery. As a result, the wider area within which the landfill site is located was declared a nature reserve in 2002; this was a first for a landfill site in the South African context.

There are no comprehensive city-wide examples of socially inclusive, ecologically designed, urban systems. City-wide projects like **Masdar** (United Arab Emirates) and **Songdo** (Republic of Korea) are examples of elite green enclaves and effectively the poster children for an unjust transition. Examples tend to be found at

the neighbourhood level; the Lynedoch EcoVillage, in **Stellenbosch** (South Africa), is an insightful initiative in this regard.[18]

Stellenbosch (South Africa)

° The Lynedoch EcoVillage in Stellenbosch was created by a non-profit organization called the Sustainability Institute and by Stellenbosch University, in 1999. The explicitly stated goal of the Lynedoch EcoVillage development was to create a socially inclusive, ecologically designed, local economy and community. It aimed to demonstrate, in practice, that it was not only possible for a racially and class diverse community to live together in post-apartheid South Africa, but that they could also do so in an ecologically sustainable manner. The main objectives were: (a) to be a socially mixed community (both in terms of race and class), organized around a child-centred learning precinct; (b) to strive to be a working example of a liveable, ecologically designed, urban system; and (c) to be a financially and economically viable community that would not require external funding to sustain itself over time. Over the next twenty years, a socially and ecologically mature village emerged. This included organic vegetable gardens and landscaped areas planted with indigenous plants; a primary school for up to 400 children, drawn mainly from the families of local farmworkers and surrounding poor communities; and a preschool for 45 children, with an upstairs roof space used by the "Changes Youth Club" (aftercare for school children and teenagers). It also included a large multi-purpose hall serving various functions, including use for school activities, conferences, community meetings, etc.; offices and classrooms for the Sustainability Institute and Stellenbosch University. In terms of housing units, it included the conversion of an old country hotel and an existing house to provide accommodation for students (although this was later converted into offices), and 42 new residential sites (of between 80 m² and 130 m²) for a mixed income group. The latter included 15 sites earmarked for purchase at less than 10% of the market price, who qualified for a government housing subsidy and which constituted a break from the usual South African urban design practice of spatially segregating government subsidised *erven* (plots of land) from commercially priced *erven*. Commercial spaces for offices, small manufacturers and crafters were

18 "Sustainability Institute," 2022, https://bit.ly/393Zm1A.

developed and an organic land-reform project on municipal commonage was established. Traffic was restricted and a limit was set on the number of cars circulating in the village. This limit was reinforced by restrictions placed upon designated communal parking areas, which also secured specific spaces for children and pedestrians. The urban design included: reducing water consumption in each house; treating all waste water (black- and grey-water streams) on site and reusing the treated water for toilet flushing; reducing household energy consumption by including solar-powered hot water heating and later solar photovoltaic systems; eliminating the need for solid-waste removal from the site; increasing housing densities by shrinking the average size of the *erven* in a way that did not discriminate between rich and poor; and maximizing the economic benefits of socially mixed development. The urban infrastructure was also designed to operate in ways that required residents to cooperate with each other rather than depend on professional managers commanding high salaries. The end result is a highly affordable, ecologically designed, space located within a wider urban area in which property values are normally so high that even middle-class people cannot afford them.

Urban infrastructures have, to date, been mostly designed on the assumption that there is an unlimited supply of cheap natural resources. Whereas the large majority of people in developed countries can access urban infrastructure services, this is not true for most urban dwellers in African cities or for up to half of urban dwellers in many other cities in developing countries. Urban infrastructure in the Global South has tended to reinforce inequalities by facilitating access to reliable energy supplies, waste services, water and sanitation for the minority who can afford to pay for them. As resource scarcities kick in (e.g. insufficient water, limits to landfill space, increasingly costly fossil fuel-based energy and rising food prices), this translates into higher prices, which further exacerbate existing inequalities. Fossil fuel-based energy infrastructure is becoming increasingly unaffordable, even in the Global North. New renewable energy infrastructure is now cheaper than the cost of keeping coal-fired power stations operating.[19]

Unsurprisingly, the design, construction and operation of a lot of urban infrastructure is currently being

fundamentally reimagined in all world regions. This is particularly true of renewable energy, which attracted over 300 billion USD of investment in 2020: twice what was invested in new fossil fuel and nuclear power, combined. Major initiatives to electrify urban systems are now underway, coupled to connecting these urban systems to a wide range of embedded and utility-scale renewable energy sources. Similarly, new solutions in the field of sanitation are arising as biogas solutions proliferate. Massive increases in investment in electrified mass transit are currently taking place, and a revolution in building design has been underway for at least the last two decades. All of these initiatives are changing the relationship between urban and natural systems.

The challenge is, of course, how to ensure that these opportunities for fundamentally rethinking urban infrastructure can be coupled to a social justice agenda. Left to its own devices, mainstream investment will focus on market-led and technology solutions that will not result in a just transition. Appropriate state interventions are therefore urgently required to influence the directionality of the transition towards more equitable outcomes. This includes ensuring the capacity to facilitate shared missions and to build partnerships for implementation.

Source: Municipality of Chefchaouen.
Installing solar panels on buildings Communale in Chefchaouen, Morocco.

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19 Modesta Tochi Alozie et al., 'Sustainable Energy Access in Urban Areas', GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

4 Seeking just transitions through multisectoral renaturing

The 2015 Paris Agreement, which was adopted during the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (or COP 21) resulted in a commitment to keep average global temperature increases to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Subsequent expert reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have demonstrated that a 1.5°C scenario would be sufficient to prevent further extreme climate impacts, which would require net zero global CO2 emissions by the mid-century. According to the 2021 IPCC *Sixth Assessment Report*, cities play a central role in intensifying human-induced warming at the local level. Future urbanization trends will, therefore, correlate with more frequent cases of extreme heat and with the severity of heatwaves getting worse. Urbanization has also been linked to increases in mean precipitation and heavy rainfall events, both over and/or downwind of cities, resulting in the intensification of surface runoff. For coastal cities, more frequent extreme sea events (with rises in sea level and storm surges), combined with extreme rainfall and river flow events, are expected to increase the probability of flooding.[20] As is well known, historically marginalized groups, such as racialized minorities, migrants, working-class residents, female residents, older people and children, are the ones who tend to be most exposed to, and affected by, the impact of such events; they are also normally the ones with fewest resources to cope with them.

In response to the climate emergency, and as part of the 2020 *Race to Zero* global campaign,[21] 700 cities have committed to fulfilling a list of conditions. These include a pledge: to reach net zero emissions by 2050; to meet a mid-term target which is considered to cover a fair share of the 50% global reduction in CO2 by 2030; and also to increase their adaptation and resilience to the climate threats and their impacts. **With regard to adaptation and resilience, in particular, urban renaturing and green infrastructure are being increasingly integrated into urban policy, as central tools for the management and mitigation of urban environmental and climate risks.[22]** Such policies

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20 IPCC, "Summary for Policymakers," in *Climate Change 2021 The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, ed. Valérie Masson-Delmotte and Panmao Zhai (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2021).

21 Rodrigo Messias (UCLG Ecological Transition), 'Cities and Regions Race to Zero – Local Decarbonization Pathways', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

22 Sara Meerow and Joshua P. Newell, "Spatial Planning for Multifunctional Green Infrastructure: Growing Resilience in Detroit," *Landscape and Urban Planning* 159 (2017): 62–75.

Source: Samuel Ikua/Mazingira Institute.
Francisca selling locally produced food at the roadside, Kenya.

include stormwater management and the mitigation of flooding,[23] mudslides and landslides.[24] For example, green belts,[25] rain gardens, permeable pavements and green roofs all enhance urban nature and natural processes while, at the same time, protecting residents from the urban heat island effect and/or stormwater flooding.[26] Related to this point is the fact that green infrastructure also has the benefit of requiring less investment and lower running costs when compared to traditional grey infrastructure systems. This is often seen as a "no-regrets option" or a win-win solution,[27] in the cases of both small-scale and large green projects. As part of this process, cities and metropolitan areas

are therefore using the principles of green urbanism to remake their urban fabric and landscapes. They are doing this following a vision of global planning and financing that focuses on creating a green, sustainable, resilient and healthy city (see Box 7.1). On the pathway towards decarbonization and resilience, the *Cities Race to Zero* campaign considers equality to be a fundamental principle. As a result, cities joining the campaign are required to plan at least one "inclusive and equitable climate action" from a list of suggested actions.

This section on multisectoral renaturing examines urban plans and initiatives to address the goals of mitigation and adaptation while, at the same time, achieving those goals associated with equity and justice. It moves from broader planning scales and visions to more site and/or neighbourhood-specific initiatives and domains, and finally zooms in on the micro-scale of buildings, paying particular attention to the goals of equality and justice. Finally, the section reflects on recent and emerging challenges related to urban green equity and justice.

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23 Li Liu and Marina Bergen Jensen, "Green Infrastructure for Sustainable Urban Water Management: Practices of Five Forerunner Cities," *Cities* 74, no. 126–133 (2018).

24 Isabelle Anguelovski, Clara Irazábal-Zurita, and James Connolly, "Grabbed Urban Landscapes: Socio-Spatial Tensions in Green Infrastructure Planning in Medellín," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 43, no. 1 (2019): 133–56.

25 Anguelovski, Irazábal-Zurita, and Connolly.

26 Isabelle Anguelovski, James Connolly, and Anna Livia Brand, "From Landscapes of Utopia to the Margins of the Green Urban Life," City 22, no. 3 (2018): 417–36; Teresa Zölch et al., "Using Green Infrastructure for Urban Climate-Proofing: An Evaluation of Heat Mitigation Measures at the Micro-Scale," *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening* 20 (2016): 305–16.

27 Heleen L.P. Mees et al., "Who Governs Climate Adaptation? Getting Green Roofs for Stormwater Retention off the Ground," *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 56, no. 6 (2013): 802–25.

Box 7.1
Local finance for renaturing

Several mechanisms can be suggested for financing renaturing in cities and territories.

Own source revenues (including pollution taxes and other "green" revenues)

In the context of local climate finance, own source revenues play a dual role. First, they serve as a source of funding for the city government's green infrastructure and services. Second, local leaders can use revenue instruments to regulate and to incentivize residents and businesses to make climate-smart decisions. Although higher motor fuel and other energy-related taxes would be one of the most promising ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, carbon taxes at the city level are currently uncommon. One exception can be found at **Boulder** (USA), which instituted a "carbon tax" on the use of electricity generated from fossil fuels in 2006. Its residents and commercial and industrial customers pay a differentiated tax rate per kWh.

Local regulatory initiatives and financial incentives in support of environmental improvements

LRGs may enact laws, or introduce ordinances, to enforce environmental regulations that are stricter than national standards, or that encourage higher-density development and reduce transport-related pollution. LRGs can make green mandates more attractive to local taxpayers by providing local tax credits. Green tax credits are often provided by central governments, but there are also examples at the local level. For instance, if a property follows green building guidelines imposed by a subnational government, the tax credit may be deducted from the property tax, in accordance with the degree of compliance. One example of this is **Quezon City**'s Green Building Ordinance, in the Philippines. The city provides a Green Building Credit incentive to taxpayers for the construction or rehabilitation of green buildings.

Climate mitigation and adaptation grants

Local taxpayers and city leaders are less likely to use their own source revenues to fund climate mitigation efforts that are seen to benefit people from outside their city jurisdiction. As such, the majority of these investments are funded through intergovernmental fiscal transfers from central government. In addition, emerging funding modalities, such as the City Climate Finance Gap Fund[28] or the UN Capital Development Fund's Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility,[29] are innovative mechanisms to integrate climate change adaptation into LRG planning and budgeting systems. Such initiatives increase awareness of, and responses to, climate change at the local level and also increase the amount of finance available to LRGs.

Source: box developed by Paul Smoke and Jamie Boex for GOLD VI

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28 World Bank, "City Climate Finance Gap Fund," Brief, 2021, https://bit.ly/38nVBE5.

29 UNCDF, "Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility," 2022, https://bit.ly/3KdzgGj.

4.1 Planning visions and models

At the broad strategic planning scale, municipal visions and scenarios for decarbonization and renaturing have increasingly developed around the creation of 15/30-minute neighbourhoods (also called "complete streets"), in which residents are able to satisfy most of their needs within walking or biking distance. Many of those visions are linked to a transit-oriented development plan, urban development plan, or land use plans and are mainly led by the C40 Cities network, as part of their climate action planning work. In **Paris** (France), Mayor Anne Hidalgo built much of her 2020 re-election campaign around the *Ville du quart d'heure* (15-minute City). In **Boulder**, Colorado (USA), the local authorities have created "a 15-minute neighbourhood [which] allows people to […] access their basic needs (parks, food, etc.) within 15 minutes of walking, biking, or transit".[30] Such a model is meant to reduce congestion, break car dependence, and minimize air pollution when accessing daily resources and amenities. It has also promoted the principles of equality by encouraging a diverse mix of housing options that aims to cover the various needs and socio-economic possibilities of residents, regardless of their social class, while avoiding gentrification and displacement. C40 Cities has even proposed a guide for developing a 15-minute city vision and interventions for a green and just recovery from COVID-19;[31] this has largely been inspired by Paris, but also by **Bogota**'s (Colombia) *Barrios Vitales* (*Vital Neighbourhoods*), **Portland**'s (USA) *Complete Neighbourhoods*, **Melbourne**'s (Australia) *20 Minute Neighbourhoods*, and **Shanghai**'s and **Guangzhou**'s (China) *15-Minute Community Life Circles*.

In fact, the deployment of the 15-30-minute neighbourhood model has accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the crisis, urban residents and LRGs have (re)discovered people's dependence on neighbourhood stores, public spaces, parks, health centres,

and other amenities, and started to value a closer, less stressful, and more connected version of urban life.[32] In response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 confinement and restrictions, LRGs have looked to strategic urbanism, and its measures, in order to make neighbourhoods more liveable and accessible, and they have later institutionalized those measures. In **Lagos** (Nigeria), for example, the municipality initially closed schools to transform them into markets and ensure that residents could buy food and medicine without traveling far from their homes. This also prevented central markets from becoming excessively crowded. **Lisbon** (Portugal) and **Mexico City** (Mexico) have helped essential workers to reach their workplaces by shared, public and private, bicycle-rental systems, which are often free or operate at subsidized rates. Overall, **the 15-30-minute neighbourhood model is meant to make neighbourhoods more resilient to climate impacts and other health and climate crises.**[33] This model also makes both cities and individuals more resistant to shocks by increasing their sense of belonging and mutual support, and allowing more time to be spent with families and friends. It has also led to people (re) discovering local recreational, civic and environmental activities: as a result, when accessible, safe and inclusive, cities can help to alleviate the impact of the pandemic and other crises on people's mental health, through anxiety, depression and trauma.[34]

Paris (France)

° Mayor Hidalgo's vision is anchored around four principles – proximity, diversity, density, and ubiquity. It entails "a city of proximities," where liveability must be established not only between structures but also between people. The intention is to allow residents to be able to access amenities within 15 minutes, by foot and bicycle. According to this vision, each neighbourhood should be able to serve six social functions: living, working, supplying, caring, learning and enjoying. To put this into practice, the city's agenda is to build bicycle lanes on every street and bridge in the city. This will be done by converting 70% of the streetcar parking space to other more social uses. Furthermore, office spaces and coworking

30 Growing Up Boulder, "15-Minute Neighborhoods" (Boulder, 2015), https://bit.ly/398GcYt.

31 C40 Cities, "Green & Just Recovery Agenda," What we do, 2022, https://bit.ly/3vDDn9C.

32 Jordi Honey-Rosés et al., "The Impact of COVID-19 on Public Space: An Early Review of the Emerging Questions – Design, Perceptions and Inequities," *Cities & Health*, 2020, https://bit.ly/3EHfHVM.

33 Peter Yeung, "How '15-Minute Cities' Will Change the Way We Socialise," *BBC News*, 2021, https://bbc.in/3rRgnmq.

34 Mark Shevlin et al., "Anxiety, Depression, Traumatic Stress and COVID-19-Related Anxiety in the UK General Population during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *BJPsych Open 6*, no. 6 (2020): 125.

hubs will be made accessible in neighbourhoods that currently lack them. This will expand the possibilities for how infrastructure and buildings can be used outside business areas, thereby also encouraging local neighbourhood businesses and shops. This initiative entails creating small parks in school playgrounds which will be open to residents outside school hours, in order to increase the provision of public green spaces.[35] Green is thus not only related to mobility and public amenities, but also to more accessible workplaces, cultural activities, and social connections. Overall, the strategy is meant to improve quality of life, to strengthen the social fabric, and to improve how people coexist. Some of the most emblematic interventions to date have included the restriction of the *Quais de Seine* riversides to cyclists and pedestrians, the transformation of 40 school playgrounds into green "oasis yards", and the delivery of 50 km of newly built bicycle routes. Mayor Hidalgo has also committed 1 billion EUR per year for the maintenance and beautification of streets, squares and gardens.

Barcelona (Spain)

° In the municipal *Superilles* (*Superblocks*) initiative,[36] networks of nine urban blocks (containing 400 m²) are helping to reorganize the transit infrastructure of the city, while – at the same time – freeing space for new green and public spaces. Eight superblocks are also being developed following a vision of *Superilles de les cures* (*Superblocks of Care*),[37] with the aim of bringing residents closer to important care resources, including day care centres, schools, and centres and caretakers for older residents. From a health standpoint, a 2021 study by the Public Health Agency of Barcelona reported that superblocks could contribute to increased well-being, a quieter environment, less noise, better sleep quality, reduced pollution, increased social interaction, and improved active mobility.[38] It is estimated that the Superblock model should be able to prevent almost 700 deaths per year by reducing harmful exposure to negative aspects of the urban environment (e.g. air, noise and heat pollution), while

increasing access to recreational amenities and green spaces and improving physical activity.[39] In the Sant Antoni superblock, for example, NO2 emissions and PM10 have decreased by 25% and 10%, respectively. In addition, participants in the study reported that they can now rest and sleep better than before due to lower noise levels and that their socialization has increased. In the most recently built superblock, in the Horta neighbourhood, 60% of female residents and 66% of male residents report increased walking comfort. However, some participants, and especially those with children, also noted that there was a false sense of security due to the continued proximity of cars. Lastly, a growing number of citizen's groups and researchers have reported increased gentrification around the superblocks, and especially those in the Sant Antoni and Poblenou neighbourhoods, with large new real estate housing and hotel developments around the Poblenou superblock, in particular.[40] Such testimonies reveal the difficulty of balancing the goals of environmental and social equality within this new urban scheme.

Despite their numerous benefits, criticism and concern are indeed growing about the risk of creating two-speed, 15-minute, cities if the needs of working-class districts are not prioritized. To date, most funding is going to the city-centre districts, which tend to receive the most funding for new amenities, such as: pedestrianization, bicycle lanes, health care centres, and green spaces. In the previously cited case of Barcelona, superblocks have been deployed throughout the city, giving attention to providing public space, neighbourhood improvement, economic regeneration, sustainable mobility and public housing.[41] Although this plan has potential, much of the first phase of funding for superblocks has gone to centrally located projects in neighbourhoods like Poblenou and Sant Antoni. Under-investment in working-class districts has only increased urban inequalities and territorial stigmatization. Such models are also much easier to implement in high-density environments with mixed uses, mass transit systems and social diversity. In much more sprawling, segregated, and unequal cities, like many of those in North and South America, including

35 Feargus O'Sullivan, "Paris Mayor: It's Time for a '15-Minute City," *Bloomberg*, 2020, https://bloom.bg/3KeHz4S.

36 Urban Ecology Agency of Barcelona, "Superblocks," 2020, https://bit.ly/38q4RHS.

37 Barcelona City Council, "Care Superblocks Recognised for Their Comprehensive Assistance," *Info Barcelona*, 2020, https://bit.ly/3vKdgO4.

38 Barcelona Public Health Agency, "Superilles," *Salut als carrers*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3MuGes0.

39 Natalie Mueller et al., "Changing the Urban Design of Cities for Health: The Superblock Model," *Environment International* 134 (2020): 105132.

40 Christos Zografos et al., "The Everyday Politics of Urban Transformational Adaptation: Struggles for Authority and the Barcelona Superblock Project," *Cities* 99 (2020): 102613.

41 Barcelona City Council, "Barcelona Superblock," 2022, https://bit.ly/3vEgD9f.

Lima (Peru), **Mexico City** (Mexico), and **Houston** and **Miami** (USA), the challenges will be far greater.

Chengdu (China)

° Since 2012, Chengdu has focussed on its *Great City Masterplan*[42] for a green car-free city for 80,000 people. According to the polycentric urban development approach adopted by the planning team, it is preferable to create smaller satellite cities around the periphery. There, all amenities and services are meant to be within a 15-minute walk from new pedestrianized centres or by mass transit rides from a central hub to the current urban centres. Li Chuncheng, the former Mayor and a top party official, first promoted the idea of Chengdu as a "World Modern Garden City" in the early 2000s: it was referred to as the *gongyuan chengshi* (*park city*). According to this new urban model, 15% of land is dedicated to green space, 60% to construction, and 25% to roads and walkways. Some compare this approach to England's Garden City Movement, which emerged in the 1890s to counteract urban crowding and pollution.[43] The Great City model is meant to consume 48% less energy and 58% less water than in a comparable city. The green buffer zone surrounding the city integrates pedestrian and bicycle pathways that also weave in and out and bring residents back to the city centre. However, many residents express their regret of being displaced by both new urban green amenities and the housing constructions around them. In 2019, in Fujia village, in the southern part of Chengdu, part of the district was earmarked for demolition to create space for a new greenway. Some residents reported their eviction and the destruction of informal gardens to be replaced by sports grounds, skyscrapers, and large parks.[44]

Fulfilling green and social justice goals therefore often means finding a complex balance between access to new formal green spaces and support for informal green amenities. It also implies striking a balance between protecting leisure, recreation, informal and active sports facilities and avoiding what some have called an urbanism of "good behaviour" and "sports performance".[45]

4.2 Green space, blue space and landscape ecology

Green infrastructure has become a focus for the attention of many planners and government officials who are increasingly recognizing the value of urban green (and blue) spaces. **LRGs and planners are currently incorporating the principles of landscape ecology into environmental protection, climate mitigation and adaptation, and their benefits into narratives about public health, place-making and social cohesion.** As a result, many have turned to renaturing and green infrastructure for answers to many significant contemporary urban challenges related to post-industrial redevelopment, neighbourhood and downtown revitalization, public health, environmental sustainability, and resilience to climate change. Environmental amenities now include parks, gardens, greenways, ecological corridors, green resilient shorelines, community gardens and farms. These green amenities tend to be deployed either on vacant, post-industrialized, and demilitarized land or in denser, historic urban centres. Some cities, including **Nantes** (France) and **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), have adopted committed targets for increasing universal green access. In Buenos Aires, the city has pledged to increase the coverage of access to green areas for all its residents by 2025. In Nantes, both the municipality and the metropolitan area (Nantes Métropole) are actively committed to strengthening their "green and blue identity" and to develop greater social cohesion around urban nature.[46] After three decades of green space development, from the early 2020s onwards, all the residents of Nantes will live within 300 m of a green area, with the city offering 57 m² of green space per capita and a total of 100 municipal parks. In Nantes, an equality approach guarantees that no district will be left behind and another equity-driven approach has led to the investments in green spaces in marginalized districts, including in the Dervallières neighbourhood.

42 Leonardo Márquez, "'Great City': A primeira cidade para pedestres do mundo estaria na China," *ArchDaily*, 2012, https://bit.ly/3OWZdxC.

43 Oliver Wainwright, "The Garden City Movement: From Ebenezer to Ebbsfleet," *The Guardian*, 2014, https://bit.ly/3rRjjiW.

44 Lily Kuo, "Inside Chengdu: Can China's Megacity Version of the Garden City Work?," *The Guardian*, 2019, https://bit.ly/38n7hXm.

45 Guillaume Faburel, *Les métropoles barbares : démondialiser la ville, désurbaniser la terre* (Paris: Le Passager Clandestin, 2019).

46 Nantes Métropole et Ville, "Espaces verts et environnement," 2022, https://bit.ly/3MkaoOK.

Iloilo (Philippines)[47]

° The *Iloilo Local Climate Change Action Plan* and the *Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan* include strategies for the rehabilitation of the Iloilo River, the protection of mangrove swamps, and the incorporation of rainwater harvesting systems.[48] The main goal is to address the risk of flooding throughout the area, 90% of which is built on floodable land. The first strategy was the *Iloilo River Esplanade Development Project*, which began in 2012 and sought to rehabilitate the 8.1 km-long river and to thereby avoid developing roadways for motor vehicles. While developing the project, the municipality heard civic calls for public spaces in the area and incorporated green walkways, landscaping, recreation spaces and bicycle lanes. The implementation of the project was conditioned by a zoning ordinance relating to the network of green and open spaces, yet faced several challenges associated with the pollution of the river and the eviction of informal settlements. These were addressed through clean up campaigns and the resettlement of 1,000 residents to safe housing locations. This intervention is not without challenges, as renaturing has also triggered displacement and dispossession processes. The city now plans to resettle informal settlers, possibly through detailed master plans implemented by either the city itself or private developers, although this poses new risks of possible exclusion. Resettlement areas should also provide employment or business opportunities for resettled families. Most recently, the *2021-2029 Iloilo City Comprehensive Land Use Plan* and the *Zoning Plan* have included density bonuses as an incentive for projects incorporating climate change action, disaster risk reduction, and management technology and systems. In a city that has become a gateway tourism destination, the needs and rights of socially marginalized residents, and those of informal settlements, must take precedence over those of developers and visitors.

The creation of new environmental amenities and green infrastructure has also been accompanied by broader neighbourhood redevelopment initiatives. The focus of these initiatives is on providing **low-carbon infrastructure as part of a broader effort to limit and discourage the use of private cars and in favour of active and sustainable mobility as well as improving residents' health**. Green space and improved mobility infrastructure are meant to address climate mitigation and adaptation goals while responding to urban health imperatives for urban residents. These imperatives include issues that range from reducing air pollution to combating obesity and promoting physical activity. This "Healthy City" approach[49] is built around providing adequate and affordable housing, strong public transportation, quality health care, and safe spaces in which to exercise and play, as proposed by the World Health Organization back in 1987.

Portoviejo (Ecuador)[50]

° Since its inauguration in 2018, after the devastating 2016 earthquake, the 10.7 ha Las Vegas Park[51] illustrates the concept of "building back better" at an urban scale. It has achieved this by addressing deficits in green areas as well as cultural and economic activities. Part of its budget has come from central government funds. These have been used to reconstruct the city and help its economic revitalization by creating a large multipurpose park in the city centre. This redevelopment is part of an interconnected system of natural parks and reserves that form part of the *Corredor del Rio Master Plan*. The design of the park has incorporated several ecosystem-based adaptation solutions. These include the recovery and repurposing of riverbanks as floodable recreational areas and the regeneration of an abandoned meander as a wetland with a stormwater retention tank where numerous species of native and tropical fauna have rapidly settled. As a result of this rehabilitation project, many species of insects, amphibians, reptiles and birds have settled in the wetland area, which now has a retention basin that absorbs water runoff from hard surfaces. In addition, safe and inclusive public spaces have been developed throughout the park, revitalizing cultural, recreational, and economic activities. The park redevelopment also includes cycle paths and activities, such as the *Ciclopaseo Familiar* (*Family*

47 Carrión, Valeria (UCLG Learning). "Building Resilience with Nature: Restoring ecosystems and communities through public policies". GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (2022). United Cities and Local Governments.

48 USAID, "Urban Development Capability Profiles of CDI Cities," 2017, https://bit.ly/3vzXFRe.

49 Helen Cole et al., "Can Healthy Cities Be Made Really Healthy?," *The Lancet Public Health* 2, no. 9 (2017): 394–95.

50 Valeria Carrión, 'Building Resilience with Nature: Restoring Ecosystems and Communities through Public Policies', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

51 Gustavo González, "Parque Las Vegas," Archivo BAQ, 2018, https://bit.ly/39h8T5J.

Cycling) activity, which are family routes that run through the park and over the bridges of Porto Viejo. Overall, the project has created a high-quality, welcoming, accessible, public green space that addresses various health and environmental needs while offering new meeting and cultural spaces for local residents.

Catalonia (Spain)

° Catalonia's 2017 Climate Law set a carbon neutrality target for 2050 which includes interim targets of a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and 65% by 2040, relative to a 2005 baseline. The law has resulted in the creation of a group of experts that has defined five-year carbon budgets and established a tax on CO_2 emissions from vehicles which feeds into a climate protection fund. Tax rates were initially set at around 10 EUR per tonne of CO_2 emitted, with this rate set to automatically increase every two years, up to around 30 EUR per tonne by 2025. In addition, the Catalan government also established "low emission zones", early in 2020, which limited the circulation of high-emission and older vehicles within Barcelona's metropolitan area. The measures applied involve fines for vehicles that enter restricted zones, which cover part of the built-up areas of a number of Catalan cities. These areas include low-income suburbs, whose residents are likely to be particularly hit by the measure, especially if they depend on motorized private or commercial vehicles for their jobs. On the other hand, a high-income district of Barcelona called Vallvidrera is exempt from such fines, which has created concerns about social justice and how measures differentially affect car owners and especially small businesses and industries. A total of 50,000 polluting vehicles are now prohibited from entering the low emission zones.[52] The revenue obtained from the climate change tax is subsequently assigned to one fund for promoting natural heritage and another for the protection of the environment. These resources are expected to be used for: climate mitigation and adaptation policies; accelerating renewable energy projects; and encouraging the self-consumption of electricity, more energy efficient housing, sustainable mobility, water saving, and improved production processes.

In cities of the Global South, and also some in the Global North, **environmental amenities play a particularly important role in food security and food sovereignty for structurally discriminated residents through urban agriculture projects**. In informal settlements, in particular, when urban agriculture is prohibited, as it was in Kenya prior to the constitutional reform of 2010, restrictive laws tend to contribute to increased costs, excessive market dependency, waste, and environmental degradation. Legal restrictions also hamper the development of circular economies, biodiversity, the optimum use of human and natural resources, economic opportunities and nutritional diets. In Kenya, these deficits were partially addressed, in 2015, when **Nairobi** City County passed a law supporting urban agriculture. It then joined the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, the following year. In this way, the LRG committed itself to developing inclusive and sustainable food systems that provide healthy and affordable food for everyone.
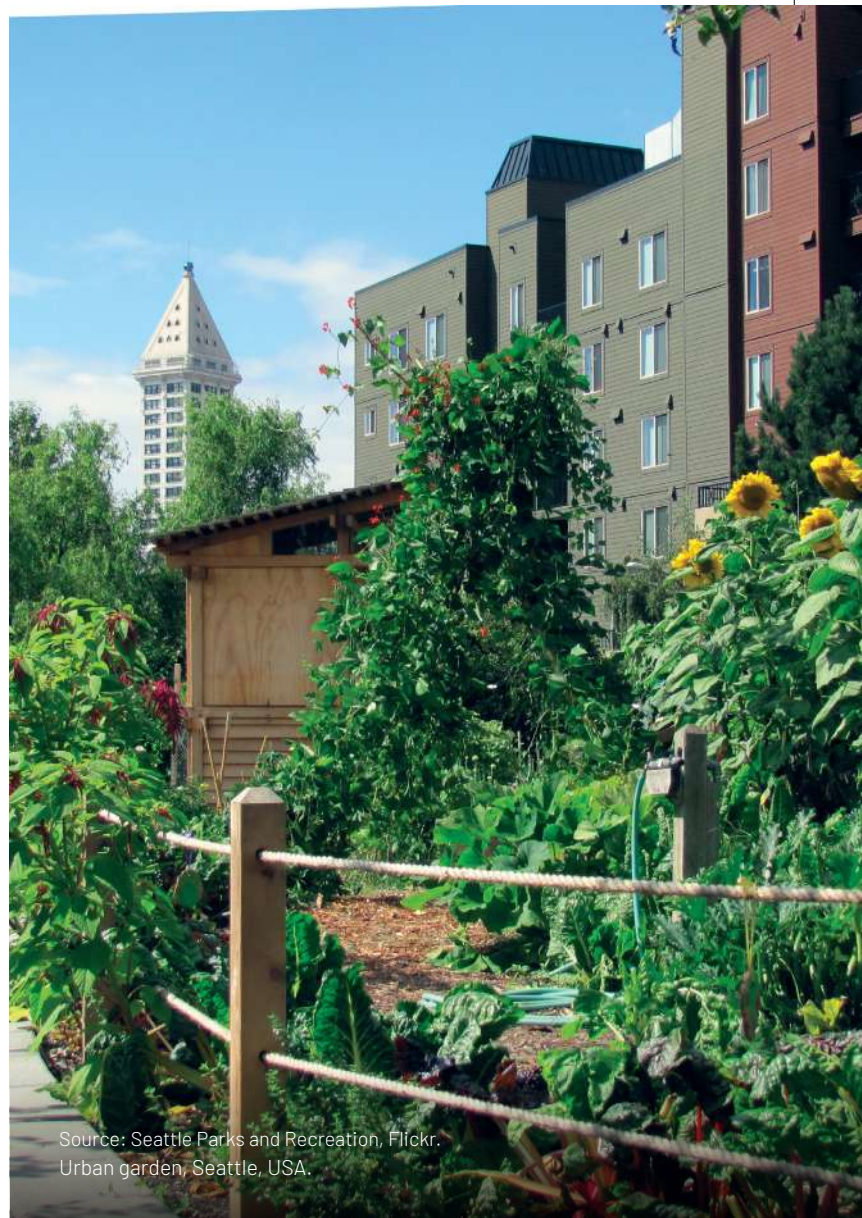
Source: Seattle Parks and Recreation, Flickr. Urban garden, Seattle, USA.

52 Government of Catalonia, "Barcelona Low Emission Zone," News, 2022, https://bit.ly/3xNH3rW.

Nairobi (Kenya)[53]

° Almost half of the trade in the city's informal sector involves food. Farmers, processors and traders sell food that is either locally produced or brought in from the outlying areas, with an estimated 250,000 households producing food within the city limits. This system of daily production, distribution and consumption plays a vital role in supplying healthy fresh fruit, vegetables, dairy products and livestock to Nairobi's 4.5 million residents. Municipal legislation adopted in 2015, relating to the promotion of urban agriculture,[54] provided a framework for public participation in the management, protection and conservation of the environment through the recycling of organic waste.[55] The County government has also established partnerships to set up facilities that add value to various waste streams, especially in areas with vulnerable individuals. The Umoja estate is one area where the County has provided land for the local community to turn organic waste into clean biogas energy; this has benefitted around 5,000 local households and restaurants.[56] In a related innovation, Nairobi City Council has conducted a collaborative review of supply chains adopting a gender-based perspective. This has been particularly aimed at engaging children and young people of all genders in farming, as well as at providing women with training in negotiating skills.

Some municipal revitalization and renaturing initiatives combine greening, food security and housing rights through community land trusts (CLTs), a rights-based approach examined in Section 5.2.

4.3 Greening buildings

At the microscale of buildings, cities are currently working to reduce emissions and to increase energy efficiency, while also making them more resilient to extreme weather impacts such as floods and heat waves. Many of the leading cities are members of the C40 Cities and ICLEI networks, with some of these cities approaching the challenge from the perspective of equality.

Boston (USA)

° Boston's buildings account for approximately 70% of the city's carbon emissions; they are therefore a key target for policies seeking to reduce emissions. City-owned buildings account for nearly 75% of carbon emissions from local municipal operations. As a result, in 2019, the Department of Neighbourhood Development established a set of zero-emission building standards and specified the most relevant actions to be taken, such as replacing windows, installing air-tight sealing, insulating roofs, upgrading mechanical and lighting systems, and considering the carbon emissions resulting from the production of different construction materials. Following the adoption of the plan, the Mayor of Boston also issued an executive order requiring any new public buildings to follow the city's zero emissions standards. The municipal order was also followed by new zoning rules that are meant to promote complementary strategies to help reduce emissions: energy efficiency programmes, on-site renewable energy generation, and clean energy procurement.[57] In March 2021, the city announced that it would earmark 34 million USD to support 14 affordable-housing projects, including 608 new housing units and the conservation of an additional 233 units of income-restricted housing stock. Combining home ownership and accessible rental programmes, for the first time, these projects included a requirement to follow zero-emissions building standards. Projects are also required to

53 Habitat International Coalition, 'Reviving Urban Agriculture', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

54 Nairobi City County, "The Nairobi City County Urban Agriculture Promotion and Regulation Act" (2015), https://bit.ly/3LjBfdC.

55 Nairobi City County, "The Nairobi City County Solid Waste Management Act" (2015), https://bit.ly/3KeR0kw.

56 C40 Cities, "Umoja Estate: Nairobi Turns Organic Waste Into Clean Energy Biogas," Case Studies, 2019, https://bit.ly/3kcuyhq.

57 Sarah Shemkus, "Boston Zoning Change Would Require Net-Zero Emissions from New Buildings," *Energy News Network*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3MupBg9.

set aside a number of housing units for homeless individuals and families, senior citizens, and people recovering from substance use. The funding for the affordable housing projects will come from both federal and municipal sources, as well as from resources derived from the city's linkage fee. The latter extracts funding from newly-built commercial projects and from the *Community Preservation Action*: a 1% increase in the property tax that was approved by voters in 2016.

Chefchaouen (Morocco)[58]

° Chefchaouen, and particularly its old medina, has a high urban density which is responsible for a particularly marked heat island effect; this makes residents more vulnerable to heat stress caused by climate change. Since 2013, the Municipality of Chefchaouen has been committed to systematically and transversally integrating energy management into its territorial planning and to heating municipal buildings using solar energy. Chefchaouen is also one of the first municipalities in the country to insist that its new constructions comply with the new *Thermal Regulation for Construction in Morocco*. The city has also applied the principles of bioclimatic architecture to buildings subject to renovation (such as the Mediterranean Diet Museum) and has trained local architects in the use of these principles. Since 2018, throughout the country, a total of 1,500 architects have received training in compliance with the new thermal regulations and requirements. Training topics include: energy data management, the creation of an inventory of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, electric mobility, building energy efficiency, eco-driving, waste management, installations for solar energy production, and energy communication. The city's decentralized, multistakeholder approach and its unique system of cooperation between state services, development agencies, associations and the private sector is also an important policy lever. This has opened up opportunities for different actors to contribute to, and engage in, existing programmes and projects. In addition to being aimed at improving access to affordable renewable energy and energy efficiency, the city's energy policy is also geared towards creating opportunities for young people, increasing their employability, and promoting the installation of solar energy infrastructure.

58 Hajar Khamlichi and Karim Elgendy, 'Energy Transition of Chefchaouen City', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

Source: MotleyVids.
Urban farming in Thailand: the Small is Beautiful project.

Despite the greater understanding of the benefits that greening can bring to an urban landscape, it is also important to recognize that **not all local governments give priority to (or manage to prioritize) equality in urban renaturing**. In many cases, greening cities does not form part of a socially, or politically, balanced sustainability project. It is often embedded in historic, or new, socio-spatial inequalities that are underpinned, or created, by continuing urban growth, land speculation, and social segregation.

First of all, many cities start from a green equity deficit. It is challenging to address such situations due to the legacy of past planning decisions that often reinforce inequalities and due to commitments that are not necessarily translated into new equality-centred renaturing. Historically speaking, **working-class neighbourhoods and informal settlements have tended to benefit less than privileged areas from access to green space, healthy food, and other natural amenities, and many marginalized communities suffer from a historic and enduring green deficit**. Numerous studies have identified historic intersectional inequities, based on race, class and gender, in park acreage/surface, park quality, and formal park maintenance and safety, in cities in the USA, France, Germany, and

Australia.[59] Place-based race/ethnicity and poverty have been shown to be important correlates of poor spatial access to parks and other greenspaces.[60] For example, in **Baltimore** (USA), historically black, centrally-located neighbourhoods are the ones with the highest prevalence of smaller, more crowded, poorly funded and undermaintained parks.[61] In contrast, in white neighbourhoods, property owners have been able to benefit from more, and larger, parks, and a higher share of tree planting.[62] Such green inequalities stem from a deep legacy of environmental racism and racial segregation, with historic environmental neglect for minority neighbourhoods and greater investment, funding, and overall attention being destined to predominantly white areas.[63]

Secondly, while some neighbourhoods, including working-class ones, have recently become greener, **others have been increasingly excluded through processes of what is known as "ecological" or "green gentrification"[64] and their residents have been displaced and/**

or exposed to **"browner" or more climate-insecure neighbourhoods**. Renaturing may contribute to the displacement of working-class and racialized residents through rent increases, inflated property taxes, and the loss of traditional socio-cultural practices.[65] Such displacements can happen despite the best environmental planning intentions and, in many cases, in processes in which green neighbourhood rebranding and green revitalization have been planned despite awareness of the risk of causing displacement. A large study conducted in 28 medium-sized cities (with from 500,000 to 1.5 million residents), in the EU, Canada and the USA, found that in 17 of them, earlier green space projects played a relevant role in explaining gentrification in the 2000s and 2010s.[66]

Displacement is particularly prevalent in greening and development projects undertaken without either prioritization or the continued participation of existing local communities. In such cases, communities may be "greened", but perhaps only for aesthetic or elite-driven economic development purposes, as opposed to as the result of efforts to directly address acute crises in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, residents living in neighbourhoods that have undergone greening may find that they no longer recognize, or feel at home in, their neighbourhood; as a result, they may become socially displaced from their community or remain in place, but without a strong sense of belonging.[67] Many green infrastructure approaches have therefore been criticized for potentially producing unequal ecological areas and divisive green landscapes to the detriment of alternative forms of urban greening. **Some of this green infrastructure is even referred to as "GreenLULU", or Green Locally Unwanted Land Use, in planning literature.[68]** In **Copenhagen** (Denmark), for example, new green spaces created in the 1990s and 2000s contributed to green gentrification during the 2010s. These patterns could be explained by investment-oriented green infrastructure and urban liveability initiatives attracting "talented" people,

59 Christopher G. Boone et al., "Parks and People: An Environmental Justice Inquiry in Baltimore, Maryland," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 99, no. 4 (2009): 767–87; Alessandro Rigolon, "A Complex Landscape of Inequity in Access to Urban Parks: A Literature Review," *Landscape and Urban Planning* 153 (2016): 160–69; Jennifer R. Wolch, Jason Byrne, and Joshua P. Newell, "Urban Green Space, Public Health, and Environmental Justice: The Challenge of Making Cities 'Just Green Enough,'" *Landscape and Urban Planning* 125 (2014): 234–44; Charlotte Liotta et al., "Planning for Environmental Justice - Reducing Well-Being Inequalities through Urban Greening," *Environmental Science & Policy* 112 (2020): 47–60; Henry Wüstemann, Dennis Kalisch, and Jens Kolbe, "Access to Urban Green Space and Environmental Inequalities in Germany," *Landscape and Urban Planning* 164 (2017): 124–31; Suzanne Mavoa et al., "Area-Level Disparities of Public Open Space: A Geographic Information Systems Analysis in Metropolitan Melbourne," *Urban Policy and Research* 33, no. 3 (2015): 306–23.

60 Christopher G. Boone et al., "Landscape, Vegetation Characteristics, and Group Identity in an Urban and Suburban Watershed: Why the 60s Matter," *Urban Ecosystems* 13 (2010): 255–271; Alessandro Rigolon, Matthew Browning, and Viniece Jennings, "Inequities in the Quality of Urban Park Systems: An Environmental Justice Investigation of Cities in the United States," *Landscape and Urban Planning* 178 (2018): 156–69; Isabelle Anguelovski and James Connolly, "Three Histories of Greening and Whiteness in American Cities," *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* 9 (2021): 621783; Amalia Calderón-Argelich et al., "Tracing and Building up Environmental Justice Considerations in the Urban Ecosystem Service Literature: A Systematic Review," *Landscape and Urban Planning* 214 (2021): 104130; Francesc Baró et al., "Under One Canopy? Assessing the Distributional Environmental Justice Implications of Street Tree Benefits in Barcelona," *Environmental Science & Policy* 102 (2019): 54–64; Kirsten Schwarz et al., "Trees Grow on Money: Urban Tree Canopy Cover and Environmental Justice," *PLoS ONE* 10, no. 4 (2015): e0122051.

61 Boone et al., "Parks and People: An Environmental Justice Inquiry in Baltimore, Maryland."

62 Boone et al., "Landscape, Vegetation Characteristics, and Group Identity in an Urban and Suburban Watershed: Why the 60s Matter."

63 Isabelle Anguelovski et al., "New Scholarly Pathways on Green Gentrification: What Does the Urban 'Green Turn' Mean and Where Is It Going?," *Progress in Human Geography* 43, no. 6 (2019): 1064–1086.

64 Sarah Dooling, "Ecological Gentrification: A Research Agenda Exploring

Justice in the City," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, no. 3 (2009): 621–39.

65 Anguelovski et al., "New Scholarly Pathways on Green Gentrification: What Does the Urban 'Green Turn' Mean and Where Is It Going?"

66 Isabelle Anguelovski, "Urban Greening and Gentrification: Quantitative Evidence from 28 Global North Cities," n.d. (forthcoming).

67 Isabelle Anguelovski et al., "Expanding the Boundaries of Justice in Urban Greening Scholarship: Toward an Emancipatory, Antisubordination, Intersectional, and Relational Approach," *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 110, no. 6 (2020): 1743–69.

68 Isabelle Anguelovski, "From Toxic Sites to Parks as (Green) LULUs? New Challenges of Inequity, Privilege, Gentrification, and Exclusion for Urban Environmental Justice," *Journal of Planning Literature* 31, no. 1 (2016): 23–36.

especially to recently redeveloped areas such as the district of Norrebro. At the same time, throughout the city, social protection and housing affordability policies (such as protective tools against gentrification) were dismantled. As a result, Copenhagen changed from being the greenest and reputedly the most liveable city in the world[69] – as well as, historically speaking, being a socially inclusive city and one with affordable housing – to being considered a green city built for elites and visitors.[70] Some civic groups are now organizing moves to resist displacement; these include the *Almen Modstand* (*Common Resistance*), which is a coalition of residents who have mobilized to fight against speculation and the sale of non-profit housing.

Such trends are not limited to the Global North. In **Rio de Janeiro** (Brazil), the upgrading of *favelas* has also been associated with racialized discrimination. This has led to the displacement of people from public spaces typified by Afro-Brazilian cultural and social practices into new green public spaces, as in the case of the Babylonia favela, which has been closely surveilled, controlled and even criminalized. For favela residents, upgrading has been experienced as a process of securitization and restriction, which has involved a clean-up of the local environment, but accompanied by property enclosure, police violence, and new exclusionary forms of investment.[71]

In cities such as **Medellin** (Colombia), green space projects have also been found to contribute to new processes of exclusion and gentrification.[72]

Metro Medellin (Colombia)

° In Medellin, up to 50% of the city's residents live in "high-risk" zones, including self-built *Comuna* communities in the hills around the city. These are mostly poor, rural-to-urban migrants, internally displaced indigenous groups, and others who have fled decades of armed conflict. Since 2012, Medellin has been building what should eventually become a 72 km^2 *Cinturón verde* (*Greenbelt*) to control metropolitan growth and improve the climate

resilience of the entire metropolitan area. Original ideas have also included greater urban and rural integration, the conservation of the local ecology, and comprehensive territorial planning. However, recent research has revealed that the project is largely beautifying working-class neighbourhoods while, at the same time, turning their land into green landscapes of privilege and pleasure. Within this process, the local government is reconfiguring community land and turning it into new, aesthetically "controlled" forms of nature and projecting the image of a new and vibrant green Medellin, but largely for middle- and upper-class visitors and tourists.

The project also faces the difficult challenge of managing both the transition between urban and rural areas and establishing connections with other parts of the country. Clear physical boundaries, such as those created by the *Cinturón Verde*, do not fully address this challenge. The rural-urban border is not homogeneous, and different conditions need to be considered and integrated into a comprehensive management plan for the whole territory. This must cover livelihoods and connectivity plans that include rural neighbourhoods that lie outside its municipal boundaries. In addition, there are many community gardens which are farmed by city residents. These reflect rural traditions and the fact that many people still rely on land for their livelihoods, but many of them have now been eradicated in favour of more formal urban agriculture projects. At times, the city's greenbelt also encroaches on traditional land uses, like livestock grazing, which undermines many people's identity and their relationship with their territory. Finally, although much of the greenbelt is zoned and classified as part of non-buildable areas, high-end housing complexes are currently being built within the greenbelt zone. This reveals the inequitable enforcement of land use regulations, which almost inevitably favours the interests of luxury developers and high-income residents.

69 John Wilmott, "Have You Been to the World's Greenest City?," *The Telegraph*, 2020, https://bit.ly/3rPYqEC.

70 Isabelle Anguelovski and James Connolly, *The Green City and Social Injustice: 21 Tales from North America and Europe* (London: Routledge, 2022).

71 Thaisa Comelli, Isabelle Anguelovski, and Eric Chu, "Socio-Spatial Legibility, Discipline, and Gentrification through Favela Upgrading in Rio de Janeiro," *City 22*, no. 5–6 (2018): 633–56.

72 Anguelovski, Irazábal-Zurita, and Connolly, "Grabbed Urban Landscapes: Socio-Spatial Tensions in Green Infrastructure Planning in Medellín."

5 Bringing justice to urban renaturing

A socially and environmentally "just" city can be defined as one in which all human residents and non-human species have an equal opportunity to thrive. This implies that health outcomes and environmental benefits are shared equitably, regardless of class, gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion and physical and mental abilities, while also considering the intersection of different discriminations based on these identities and experiences. However, while the need to articulate justice in the pursuit of greater urban environmental sustainability and resilience has been long acknowledged,[73] consideration of the need for equality for all occupants of cities, whether human or non-human, are often neglected by efforts to ensure more sustainable urban and territorial development.[74] Working towards this aim requires confronting the historical trajectories that have produced and continue to produce injustices. Such

trajectories include: a historical disregard for nature in urban and rural planning; the increasing financialization of urban land and housing; the commodification of urban life; and the misrecognition of the "informal" city and of the everyday city-making practices of ordinary people.[75] Here, there is a need to recognize the importance of territorial planning at the metropolitan and regional levels for the just protection and restoration of biodiversity, and especially in relation to such issues as land use planning, protected areas and ecosystem services. Likewise, it is of paramount importance to establish reciprocally just urban, peri-urban and rural linkages in order to renature urbanization (see Box 7.2). Some regional and provincial governments are already leading the way in the promotion and protection of biodiversity; these include: **Catalonia** (Spain), **Quebec** (Canada), **Gangwon** (China), and **Sao Paulo** (Brazil).[76]

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73 See for instance: David Schlosberg, "Reconceiving Environmental Justice: Global Movements And Political Theories," *Environmental Politics* 13, no. 3 (2004): 517–40; Julian Agyeman, *Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice* (New York: New York University Press, 2005); Susan S. Fainstein, The Just City (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010); Nik Heynen, "Urban Political Ecology I: The Urban Century," *Progress in Human Geography* 34, no. 4 (2014): 598–604.

74 For example, when confronted with competing priorities and interests, local authorities often struggle to align low carbon aspirations and the quest for equitable housing and ensuring that all households have equitable access to low carbon services through accountable mechanisms of

production and distribution. Ralph Horne, *Housing Sustainability in Low Carbon Cities* (London: Routledge, 2018); Harriet Bulkeley, Gareth A.S. Edwards, and Sara Fuller, "Contesting Climate Justice in the City: Examining Politics and Practice in Urban Climate Change Experiments," *Global Environmental Change* 25, no. 1 (2014): 31–40.

75 Adriana Allen, "Navigating Stigma through Everyday City-Making: Gendered Trajectories, Politics and Outcomes in the Periphery of Lima," *Urban Studies* 59, no. 3 (2022): 490–508.

76 Aichi et al., "Group of Leading Subnational Governments toward Aichi Biodiversity Targets," 2022, https://bit.ly/3OL8hFK.

Box 7.2

Restoring relations between urban and natural areas through urban-rural linkages: The example of integrated local food systems

Renaturing urbanization encompasses a broad range of complex relations that take place throughout a territory and often extend beyond the administrative boundaries of the city. Restoring urban-nature relations and the vitality of both systems implies the integration of the urban, peri-urban and rural worlds as a single continuum, with two complementary purposes. The first is to provide a strong link via which to sustainably reconnect cities with the landscapes and ecological systems that span the territory and which are usually exploited for their rich resources. The second is to tackle the problem of spatial exclusion in territories, disparities, and the lack of access to opportunities suffered by rural populations. These populations tend to concentrate a large number of informal workers, important pockets of poverty and also vulnerable groups, all of whom usually lack proper access to water, sanitation, digital services, and also their right to the city and other basic human rights.

Rural-urban linkages are, amongst others, the guardians of sustainable production and consumption. If the focus is placed on food, it should be underlined that conventional globalized food systems have been causing environmental degradation, poor health and food insecurity for a long time and that this is now occurring with increased intensity, and particularly in rural areas. The agri-food system is responsible for around 30% of GHG global emissions and is also a major driver of land degradation, the loss of biodiversity, and water, air and soil pollution.[77] The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the deep vulnerabilities and inequalities that were already present in our local and global systems[78] and spotlighted the territorial dynamics that support them.[79]

In seeking systemic change and transformational pathways towards greater equality, an innovative perspective of "urbanization" and of what is "urban" must take into consideration the interdependence of urban, peri-urban and rural areas. These interlinkages constitute the most appropriate scale for spatial and socio-economic analysis and for addressing these complex territorial relations. Local, and especially regional, governments need to apply territorial approaches[80] that build integrated and resilient systems within a context of accelerated climate change and increasingly frequent disasters. These approaches need to acknowledge the fundamental relations between urban and rural areas and their respective communities, workers and resources[81] and to strengthen the interaction between, and mutual support for, urban and rural stakeholders. In the case of food systems, this involves: (a) promoting local and shorter food and agricultural supply chains; (b) supporting small-scale rural entrepreneurship and family-run and agroecological businesses; (c) opting for and promoting nature-based solutions, local culture, traditions, knowledge and practices; (d) diversifying production systems;[82] (e) improving logistics and infrastructure; and (f) ensuring more equitable access to public services for rural populations in relation to health, education, access to energy, and waste and water management, etc. In order to promote an integrated rural-urban development and the restoration of relations between human-built environments and nature, planning requires several preconditions: promoting more participatory and inclusive governance arrangements; supporting locally-grounded interventions and balanced partnerships; and reinforcing the agency and capabilities of rural communities.

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77 Monica Crippa et al., "Food Systems Are Responsible for a Third of Global Anthropogenic GHG Emissions," *Nature Food* 2 (2021): 198–209.

78 These global problems are the consequence of supply systems that prioritize profit accumulation over an equal distribution of benefits across society: Bella Thompson, "Why Local Food Can Restore Our Failing Food System," Sustainable Food Trust, 2021, https://bit.ly/36L483g; MUFPP Secretariat, "Milan Urban Food Policy Pact," 2022, https://bit.ly/3EMmNbs.

79 In the first months after the outbreak of the pandemic, the measures implemented to control the spread of the virus limited international and domestic mobility, which had a negative impact on the supply and distribution of food.

80 UCLG World Forum of Regions, "Smart Territories in the Urban Era" (Barcelona, 2021), https://bit.ly/3OxvBGZ.

81 Intermediary cities play a particularly unique role as intermediation poles in their territories. This is key to enabling civic participation and a comprehensive approach to food systems, ecosystem services, tourism, migration and/or climate change. This was recently emphasized by the UCLG World Forum on Intermediary Cities, which led to the adoption of the Declaration of Kütahya, in October 2021.

82 IFAD, "Transforming Food Systems for Rural Prosperity" (Roma, 2021), https://bit.ly/3OEq2Xh.

Source: Sandra Cohen-Rose and Colin Rose, Flickr.
Urban garden in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Efforts to apply justice within the different approaches have shown that, while fair access to resources is a key component of transformative change, only focusing on access and distribution is not enough. For example, any attempts to address equitable and sustainable access to food in US cities requires first tackling policy-differentiated impacts in marginalized black communities, the exclusion of agro-ecological practices and the loss of biodiversity.[83] However, while the poor diets and individual behaviour of many African Americans have become the focus of many US urban policies, hardly any attention has been given to addressing the steady decline in the control over healthier and more sustainable food production. **Relating justice to urban renaturing therefore requires tackling processes of maldistribution and misrecognition in cities while, at the same time, seeking to achieve greater inclusion and parity of political participation in decision-making.** In short, this requires building bridges between planning actions

that promote justice, environmental sustainability and resilience, and those everyday planning and political practices. Concurrently, it requires casting a critical eye on historical urban trajectories and policies as well as anticipating any potentially unintended and/or undesirable consequences by scrutinizing the factors that tend to make them unjust.[84]

Building upon the above considerations, this section explores three distinctive approaches through which LRGs, working in close collaboration with social movements and organized civil society, are currently putting urban environmental justice into practice. The case studies highlighted in this section show how different initiatives and processes, when left to mature over time, have allowed room for reflexive learning and, in turn, helped to expand the scope for transformative change.

83 Samina Raja, Kevin Morgan, and Enjoli Hall, "Planning for Equitable Urban and Regional Food Systems," *Built Environment* 43, no. 3 (2017): 309–14.

84 Adriana Allen and Jeb Brugmann, "Achieving Urban Transformation: From Visions to Pathways," in *GEO for Cities - Towards Green and Just Cities*, ed. UNEP and UNHSP (UN-Habitat, 2021), 95–124, https://bit.ly/3KaT2SN.

5.1 Preventing green gentrification and displacement

As discussed in the previous subsection, one critical factor in most city renaturing experiences has been to anticipate potential gentrification effects before displacement occurs. **To prevent potential social injustices associated with the implementation of green infrastructure, LRGs need to put into place anti-displacement, anti-gentrification and green development policies while, at the same time, addressing potential problems of long-term pollution.**[85] Here they have a strong responsibility vis-à-vis polluters and developers. They must address both long-term industry-based threats of pollution and the risk of gentrification in marginalized, yet greening, communities. In the 2021 report entitled *Policy and Planning Tools for Urban Green Justice*,[86] researchers from the Barcelona Laboratory for Urban Environmental Justice and ICLEI analyzed 50 tools and regulations available to cities. These included rent controls and freezes, compulsory and ambitious levels of inclusionary zoning, density bonuses for developers, development taxes, freezes or cuts in property taxes in gentrifying neighbourhoods, rental vouchers, and community land trusts, among many others. The vignettes below examine some of these tools.

Johannesburg (South Africa)

° In 2019, in order to address some of the spatial design problems inherited from Apartheid, as well as acute social and racial inequalities, Johannesburg adopted an inclusionary zoning policy. This policy requires the provision of affordable housing units within multifamily developments of more than 20 units, while also granting additional density rights. In doing this, the city recognized that the urban poor live in predominantly residential areas on the periphery of Johannesburg and that there is very little mixing of households across the city. There is also a large backlog of housing for low-income households, which the LRG aims to tackle through a "pro-poor" approach. New municipal bylaws have established that any new developments must include a minimum of 20% of housing units reserved for "inclusionary zoning": destined for "low income and low middle-income households, or households who may not otherwise be able to afford living in those developments".[87] The city also hopes that this framework will facilitate land value capture in favour of the municipality and its residents rather than external developers. Finally, the new rules aim to enable LRGs to take maximum advantage of investment in state infrastructure and to ensure that this works to the benefit of a large portion of the population, and not just to that of elites.

Portland (USA)

° In what is supposedly one of the most sustainable cities in the USA, gentrification has been a pervasive problem over the past two decades and has exacerbated historical problems associated with earlier racial segregation policies. One example of this can be observed in the district of Albina, in the north-east of the city, where African Americans were historically confined to certain areas as a result of redlining and other discriminatory housing policies. As a result, by the 1960s, 80% of the city's black community called that area home. However, over the years, a succession of urban renewal projects, which have included a highway and hospital expansion programme, have razed to the ground the homes of almost 200, predominantly black, families. In response to the crisis caused by the displacement of Black and Latin residents, the city's "Right to Return" policy was implemented since approximately 2019. This policy has supported gentrification-displaced tenants and their families, most of whom belong to racialized minorities, and helped them to move back to their former neighbourhoods. The LRG has earmarked 20 million USD for affordable housing and included measures that seek to redress the impact of gentrification. It provides down-payment assistance to first-time buyers who were displaced, or at risk of displacement, due to urban renewal interventions, particularly in the city's northern and

85 Helen V.S. Cole et al., "Adapting the Environmental Risk Transition Theory for Urban Health Inequities: An Observational Study Examining Complex Environmental Riskscapes in Seven Neighborhoods in Global North Cities," *Social Science & Medicine* 277 (2021): 113907.

86 Emilia Oscilowicz, "Policy and Planning Toolkit for Urban Green Justice," *Green Inequalities*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3Kaes2F.

87 City of Johannesburg, "Inclusionary Housing Incentives, Regulations and Mechanisms" (Johannesburg, 2018), https://bit.ly/3kiS6RL.

north-eastern neighbourhoods. Priority is also given to residents whose property was expropriated or confiscated by the city via a compulsory purchase order. From an equitable mobility standpoint, such mechanisms are also accompanied by measures to support easy and affordable access to sustainable mobility infrastructure. However, current policy does not recognize the fact that gentrification and displacement did not happen in a race-neutral way, which has tended to limit its scope for serving as a race-specific reparation mechanism.

Vienna (Austria)

° In addition to a significant legacy of greenspaces which, to a large degree, formed part of the heritage of the city's imperial and monarchical past, Vienna's contemporary efforts toward building a green city began in the 1960s. They started with a four-decade megaproject development plan that included converting brownfield sites into parks, redeveloping empty spaces to make small green areas, and restoring more than a dozen parks. Some of these projects involved public participation and some were codesigned spaces destined for particular demographic groups, such as children, young people or older people. Today, Vienna is considered Europe's most liveable city, with housing rights playing a central role in its urban policy. Limited-profit associations receive government funding to cap rents and are obliged to invest any profits that they make in new housing projects. In addition, to ensure the construction of high-quality, affordable housing, the city also allows private developers to submit proposals to develop city-owned land. Proposals are evaluated based on their architectural quality, environmental performance, social sustainability, and a series of economic parameters. By combining equitable and participatory greening strategies, Vienna has been able to prevent large-scale housing displacement while ensuring environmental quality.[88]

What these experiences have in common is their emphasis on ensuring that environmental improvements are not pursued at the expense of equity, and that the right to affordable and safe housing is prioritized. This calls for a deep consideration of

natural and social diversity, and the prevention of green gentrification processes.[89]

5.2 Restoring the social function of renaturing

The previous discussion demonstrates that one factor which is key to the articulation of environmental and social justice goals is that of reclaiming the social function of cities; this is not just about housing, but also concerns the use of urban land and nature. In addition to the benefits discussed in Chapter 4, **community land trusts (CLTs) can also play a key role in articulating multisectoral efforts, while securing both the social and ecological functions of land**. CLTs enable municipalities to take land permanently out of the speculative market, while creating new, green, environmentally-protected areas. In some cases, the non-speculative tenure of land allows CLTs to develop urban agriculture facilities for small community gardens, or even large farms and open spaces, for greenhouses or animal farming, while also buying land out for affordable housing options. In others, CLTs are able to improve flood risk management through renaturing solutions, thus building resilience by restoring ecosystems and creating more protected housing.

The concept of "garden cities", as developed by Ebenezer Howard, in 1898, still offers a very inspiring alternative to the model of expansive urban development that transforms green areas into impermeable surfaces. Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City, which were built to the north of **London** (UK), applied Howard's ideas from planning, architecture, and local food production to the community ownership of all the land, through a trust, in an effort to prevent speculation and guarantee a harmonious and sustainable society for their citizens.[90] Unfortunately, this collective ownership of land has not been replicated on a large scale elsewhere, as most garden cities have been developed in other parts of Europe

88 Carmen Pérez-del-Pulgar, "Prioritizing Green and Social Goals: The Progressive Vienna Model in Jeopardy," in *The Green City and Social Injustice: 21 Tales from North America and Europe*, ed. Isabelle Anguelovski and James Connolly (London: Routledge, 2021).

89 Anguelovski, Connolly, and Brand, "From Landscapes of Utopia to the Margins of the Green Urban Life."

90 Wainwright, "The Garden City Movement: From Ebenezer to Ebbsfleet."

and in North and South America without addressing the need for social ownership of land. In these many other garden cities and garden neighbourhoods, increases in land value have typically benefitted individual landlords and thus generated traditional inequalities, in terms of access to land and housing, as those found in other cities and towns.

Since the 1970s, CLTs have gone beyond Howard's original idea by removing land from the speculative market, as per the **Commoning** pathway discussed in Chapter 4. The non-speculative tenure of land allows CLTs to develop urban agricultural facilities for small community gardens, or even large farms and open spaces for greenhouses and/or livestock farming.[91] CLT trustees, who typically include residents, community members and local officials, can effectively prevent green and agricultural land from being developed for real estate purposes. On the contrary, they can allocate it to the production of healthy locally-grown food, which generates job opportunities within the community. It is important to highlight that this urban agriculture does not clash with densification policy; instead, it reserves urban land for passive uses, which are essential for restoring the social and environmental functions of cities and towns, and serves as a means to counteract speculative land development.

Toronto (Canada), Boston (USA) and San Juan (Puerto Rico)

° Examples of urban farms on CLT land include the 650 m² Milky Way Garden plot stewarded by the Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust, in Toronto. In 2021, the CLT also secured 36 affordable housing units through a 8.5 million USD acquisition made in partnership with the Vancity Community Investment Bank. This allowed the trust to acquire an at-risk, low-rent, residential building to protect affordable rental stock at Parkdale. With this acquisition, the CLT has extended its community ownership in the area from 15 to 51 units of affordable rental housing: equivalent to an increase of 240%. In the case of the Dudley Neighbors Incorporated CLT, in Roxbury, Boston, the CLT received 12,140 hectares of vacant public land from the municipality, in trust, in 1988.[92] This was used to generate affordable housing and commercial development opportunities for the

members of this urban district community. From the very beginning, this CLT assigned plots of land to use as urban farms, community greenhouses and gardens, in order to revitalize the neighbourhood and to promote access to locally produced food. The land under the greenhouses was leased to The Food Project: a local non-profit organization, which trains young people to operate farms.[93] This food production initiative has helped to attenuate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis through the free distribution of food to those who lost their incomes due to the lockdowns and economic crisis.[94] Another valuable example, which has already been discussed in Chapter 4, is the CLT model adopted in San Juan. This has addressed the impact of a degraded channel and of land ownership disputes and enabled communities along the canal, and in the surrounding areas, to implement an environmental rehabilitation process.[95]

Other approaches to reclaiming the social and ecological function of housing, land and nature include experimentation with alternative modes of sustainable living and self-sufficiency, as well as multiple interventions to enhance circularity in the flow of the physical materials that cities use. The experiences of **Rennes** and **Karise** provide good examples of how this can be done in practice: by simultaneously enabling better access to food, energy, adequate housing and mobility while extending the life cycles of resources, as well as promoting biodiversity and both green and blue infrastructure.

Rennes (France)[96]

° When there is public will, the social and ecological function of urban land can be achieved even at the metropolitan scale. This is the case of the city of Rennes, in Brittany, north-western France. By 2020, half of the metropolitan population lived in what has been known for more than 30 years as the *ville archipel* (archipelago city), in the midst of a sea of green fields and natural spaces and protected from

91 Greg Rosenberg and Jeffrey Yuen, "Beyond Housing: Urban Agriculture and Commercial Development by Community Land Trusts," Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Working Paper, 2012, https://bit.ly/3kaKtx1.

92 CoHabitat Network, 'Fighting Climate Change in Cities', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

93 Harry Smith and Tony Hernández, "Take a Stand, Own the Land Dudley Neighbors Inc., a Community Land Trust in Boston, Massachusetts," in *On Common Ground: International Perspectives on the Community Land Trust*, ed. John Emmeus Davis, Line Algoed, and María E. Hernández-Torrales (Madison: Terra Nostra Press, 2020), 283–294.283–94.

94 Pierre Arnold and Nina Quintas, "Global Study: Community-Led Housing in the COVID-19 Context," 2020, https://bit.ly/37bV4ER.

95 Carrión, 'Building Resilience with Nature: Restoring Ecosystems and Communities through Public Policies'.

96 CoHabitat Network, 'Fighting Climate Change in Cities'.

urbanization by various spatial planning schemes.[97] Instead of spreading like an oil stain, the growth of the metropolis has been controlled by densifying the heart of Rennes and the surrounding small towns. These towns are connected to areas of employment and activity zones by an efficient, and affordable, metropolitan public transport system (served by trains, buses, metro and cycle paths). In 2016, the municipality came up with the idea of becoming a *ville nourricière* (feeder city). This involved promoting and investing in large and small-scale urban agriculture initiatives, based upon producing sustainable food and promoting biodiversity. In addition to its urban parks and forests, the city now has 225 hectares of urban agricultural land which contains: 27 large farms; six sites with agricultural institutes, or training farms for young people; over 1,000 family vegetable gardens; and over 70 communal gardens, all of which are located within the urban fabric.[98] The resulting network of urban farming areas, which is combined with parks, rivers and canals, contributes to the wider metropolitan "green and blue" corridors that connect the forests and fields of the surrounding countryside to the streets and backyards of the city. This network plays an essential role in protecting and developing the local fauna and flora.[99]

Partnering with non-profit and civil society organizations has promoted the dissemination of sustainable agricultural practices such as permaculture, composting, and vegetable growing on urban wasteland and rooftops. The LRG has encouraged these initiatives through its annual participatory budgeting process, specific land allocations, the free delivery of composters and various capacity-building programmes. With the help of collective mapping involving the municipality and the non-profit association Vert le Jardin, citizens can easily find the closest shared garden or collective compost sites and participate in renaturing the city and generating more cohesive communities.[100] Collaborations between various municipalities, the metropolitan administration

(Rennes Métropole) and local citizens have been key to driving a contagious renaturing process at different scales.

Karise (Denmark)[101]

° *Permatopia* provides an innovative example of how community-led housing can integrate sustainable practices by developing a cohousing and farming community with the values of permaculture and sustainability at its core. Participatively managed and run by 90 families, on 29 hectares of land located in Karise, about 60 km south of Copenhagen, the project is rooted in the values of permaculture, the circular economy and food sovereignty. *Permatopia's* housing and farming community is a sustainable, alternative system.[102]

The local housing was built using non-toxic and sustainable materials with a low-ecological footprint and designed to be expanded by self-construction, if needed. The buildings use an efficient energy grid based on an emission-free heating system powered by a wind turbine and with heat storage.[103] Sewage is treated on-site, within what seeks to be a closed, sustainable cycle that recovers nutrients that will later be used in on-site farming. This allows the residents to be largely self-sufficient in their organic food.[104] The community negotiated a modification of the local zoning system with the municipality of Karise and has dedicated 2 hectares of rural land to housing, as an extension of the village of Karise. This allowed the construction of the sewage and heating systems.[105]

Permatopia combines sustainable housing with affordable solutions through social rents (at under local market prices) which democratizes access to this innovative and self-sufficient project. Moreover, to promote diversity within the community, different housing quotas have been earmarked for families with children, middle-aged people, young couples without children and the elderly.[106] The project includes the provision of public rental housing (in

97 Jean-Yves Chapuis, *Rennes, La ville archipel. Entretiens avec Jean Viard* (Rennes: Librairie Durance, 2013).

98 Rennes Ville et Métropole, "Rennes, ville nourricière," 2017, https://bit.ly/3Mu6Byu.

99 AUDIAR Rennes, "SCoT du Pays de Rennes - Tableau de Bord" (Rennes, 2020), https://bit.ly/3EMDyDu; AUDIAR Rennes, "Modélisation des trames vertes et bleues" (Rennes, 2020), https://bit.ly/3KhJzt9.

100 Vert le Jardin, "C'est quoi Vert le Jardin ?," 2022, https://bit.ly/3veRDGA.

101 CoHabitat Network, 'Fighting Climate Change in Cities'.

102 Euroheat & Power, "Eco-Village 'Permatopia' Rolling out a Sustainable Future," Case Study, 2017, https://bit.ly/3rTcXzr.

103 CoHabitat, "Karise Permatopia," 2020, https://bit.ly/3xYBBmh.

104 Crippa et al., "Food Systems Are Responsible for a Third of Global Anthropogenic GHG Emissions."

105 Crippa et al.

106 Expat in Denmark, "Interview with Kennet from Karise Permatopia," 2017, https://bit.ly/3KexwfV.

Source: Pierre Arnold.
Green and affordable homes and neighbourhoods to fight climate change in cities. Urban agriculture area in the Landry Parc in Rennes, France.

which the housing is owned by a public housing organisation), cooperative housing and privately-owned housing.**[107]**

To effectively respond to the daunting challenges currently facing society, there is a need for systemic change that reaches beyond individual sustainable practices. LRGs have an important role to play in achieving this and particularly in the allocation of specific land uses that can guarantee the conservation of agricultural land uses despite the pressure on land as a result of the demographic growth of cities. The combination of densification and the interconnection of existing central areas to conserve green areas both within and around cities is a key lesion to be learned from the experience of the "archipelago-city" of Rennes. LRGs can also sell, or lease, public land to CLTs to take it out of the speculative market and ensure land uses that will benefit local neighbourhoods, as in the examples of urban agriculture and community gardens highlighted in Boston and Toronto. By participating in the governance of CLTs, LRGs can orient land management and purchases, working together with residents and community-based organizations. This collaborative land management model offers important potential that is yet to be fully explored by LRGs. Finally, community-led

initiatives, like that of *Permatopia* in Karise, are now emerging everywhere because of increased awareness of the possibilities offered by just urban renaturing. **LRGs have an essential role to play in encouraging and supporting similar citizen-led innovative initiatives elsewhere.** They can contribute to this by adjusting existing regulatory frameworks and providing land, opportunities, and funding to facilitate the shift towards more sustainable lifestyles and human settlements.

These experiences demonstrate that **for renaturing to help promote urban and territorial equality, it is essential to achieve greater balance and equality not only between society and the environment, but also within human *habitat* as a whole**. The dual problem of the pandemic and climate change has shown the urgent need to reembed urban systems within natural systems in a compatible way; this has become a question of survival, at both the local and planetary scales. Renaturing provides pathways to restore the vitality of both cities and the natural environment, while also supporting the needs and identities of historically marginalized groups. Protecting ecosystem services, fostering sustainable (and more circular) resource use, and resisting climate change call for a greater joint effort to rekindle our common and organic relationship with the land and nature, not least in the urban environment.

107 Karise Permatopia, "Oplev Permatopia," 2022, https://bit.ly/36LkSHG.

5.3 Crafting a rights-based approach to renaturing

A rights-based approach to social and environmental challenges has dominated much of the urban discussion in the first two decades of the 21st century, both in relation to the Right to the City and rights in the city. The call to arms of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and UN-Habitat III reflected this desire for inclusivity.[108] In recent years, social movements, thinkers and progressive local authorities have all called for a rights-based, ethical approach to planning and governance, as a means of cocreating transformative change through renewed social contracts that have socio-environmental justice as their core value (as discussed in Chapter 3).[109]

Several cities across the world have adopted a rights-based approach to articulating questions of environmental sustainability and social equity through their resource allocation, policies, programmes and projects. Such an approach needs to be sustained by large-scale participatory approaches and citizen engagement. The case of **Rosario** (Argentina) exemplifies how a city's rights-based approach can mature over time to give a voice to those who are typically marginalized and to protect common values across different spheres of urban life. Rosario has developed a broad vision of how to promote equity and sustainability and a democratically grounded process that drives the city's strategic planning for the whole metropolitan area. This has been fostered over 20 years by a continuous commitment to decentralization, transparency, accountability and participation.

Rosario (Argentina)

° Since 1989, successive city mayors have sustained a rights-based approach, building a unique example of progressive municipalism. Over the years, the democratization of municipal governance has involved the decentralization of resources and decision-making capacities to the district level. With over one million inhabitants living in six districts, each municipal district has undertaken a robust, well-grounded, participatory process not only to define urban projects and allocate municipal resources, but also to develop and update the strategic plan for the whole of Rosario.[110] The outcomes of this approach include a comprehensive climate change plan that seeks to integrate urban agriculture, food security and greening, temperature mitigation and stormwater management strategies, while promoting cost-effective solutions to improvements in building insulation and drainage infrastructure.

One essential component of Rosario's long-term approach to equitable and sustainable urban development is the *Integrated Programme for the Rehabilitation of Informal Settlements*, which was created in 2001.[111] A second key component has been its *Urban Agriculture Programme*.[112] Launched in 2002, this programme has expanded its scope over time to integrate urban agriculture into land-use planning. It builds on mechanisms such as the systematic identification of vacant land and giving official recognition to the rights to engage in farming through the peaceful usurpation of vacant plots. The *Urban Agriculture Programme* has a strong gender focus: it benefits disadvantaged women through the creation of new livelihoods at different points throughout the food chain.[113] By 2020, the programme had secured 75 hectares of land within Rosario destined to agro-ecological production and urban gardens and had conserved over 700 hectares more for the production of food in peri-urban areas. Over 2,500 tonnes of fruit and vegetables per year are currently produced and benefit more than 2,400 families.

108 UNDP, "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," Division for Sustainable Development Goals (New York, 2015), http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E.

109 Eva Garcia-Chueca and Lorenzo Vidal, *Advancing Urban Rights: Equality and Diversity in the City* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2022).

110 Florian Steinberg, "Strategic Urban Planning in Latin America: Experiences of Building and Managing the Future," *Habitat International* 29, no. 1 (2005): 69–93.

111 Florencia Almansi, "Regularizing Land Tenure within Upgrading Programmes in Argentina; the Cases of Promeba and Rosario Hábitat," *Environment and Urbanization* 21, no. 2 (2009): 389–413.

112 *Programa de Agricultura Urbana*.

113 Louise Guénette, "Rosario, Argentina — A City Hooked on Urban Farming," IDRC Case Study, 2010, https://bit.ly/3Lg6Igl.

The third key element of Rosario's strategy is its participatory budgeting. This was first introduced in 2003 and has now become a key redistributive mechanism, an instrument of rights-based governance, a communications tool, and a vehicle to help promote gender equality and citizenship capacities.[114] Between 2003 and 2011, the participatory annual budget amounted to roughly 9 million USD, representing about 22% of the municipal budget for investment.[115] After adopting a rights-based approach, Rosario has conducted a full-scale overhaul of its planning mechanisms, including the adoption of a clear set of rules and processes. The aim is to guide public and private urban development on reserved land in order to create public and community spaces. This is to be accompanied by the conservation of the city's historical and natural heritage, the application of density controls and a policy of land value capture. Although these redistribution mechanisms are not without their challenges, the fact that they remain operational across the city after several years is certainly significant.

One of the most significant achievements of Rosario, and of other cities that are committed to injecting more justice into their planning processes, has been their **capacity to reverse previously established municipal priorities and long-term trends towards disinvestment and to replace them with more just, renaturing solutions**. Such "reversals" imply a shift in political and governance priorities (to enable poor and impoverished women, and other structurally discriminated or marginalized groups to make decisions) and the redirecting of historical investment towards poor neighbourhoods and adjacent peri-urban areas.[116]

However, the adoption of a rights-based approach should not only be confined to cities, but also extended to protect the rights of indigenous people who have traditionally managed their territories in a sustainable way, but whose livelihoods have become increasingly threatened by economic extractivism. Indigenous peoples are renowned for their rich cultures, tradi-

tional knowledge systems and unique ways of life. In many countries, however, the legacy of centuries of colonialism is tangible. They have been dispossessed of their ancestral lands and territories and also deprived of the natural resources upon which they depend for their survival. Although their rights have been historically neglected and undermined, the adoption of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*,[117] in September 2007, was the culmination of over two decades of efforts and negotiations. It constitutes the result of the solidarity and close partnerships of indigenous peoples with governments, non-government organizations, academics, and parliamentarians, amongst others. LRGs do not only have the obligation, but also the mechanisms, to protect the rights of indigenous people. Even so, and as shown in the case of the Serra do Mar Complex in **Parana** (Brazil), their actual implementation and enforcement are still lagging behind expectations in most contexts.

Parana, Serra do Mar Complex (Brazil)[118]

° The Atlantic Forest territory, located between the states of Parana and Sao Paulo, is part of the Serra do Mar Complex. It extends across the adjacent coastal plain and also includes the estuarine complex of Iguape-Cananeia-Parana. In 1999, this territory and its people were recognized by UNESCO as part of the Natural Heritage of Humanity. This recognition acknowledged that this region is one of the richest biomes on the entire planet in terms of biodiversity. It also acknowledged that this is the homeland of the Quilombolas, Caiçaras and other indigenous peoples, such as the Guarani M'bya, who are responsible for the conservation, vitality, and continuity of the Atlantic Forest's rivers, bays, coves, mangrove swamps, mountains and waterfalls. In the 1980s, these territories also began to be included in the protected areas established by the Brazilian government for the conservation of the remaining areas of the Atlantic Forest. In Parana state, the protected areas lie in the recesses of Paranagua Bay, where the Port of Paranagua, which is the biggest Brazilian port for grain exports and the largest grain terminal in Latin America, is also located. In recent decades, the expansion of the port complex has damaged not only the local environment, including the sea, bays and land, and their biodiversity, but

114 Josh Lerner and Daniel Schugurensky, "Who Learns What in Participatory Democracy?," in *Democratic Practices as Learning Opportunities* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 85–100, https://bit.ly/3rQBg0K.

115 Yves Cabannes and Barbara Lipietz, "The Democratic Contribution of Participatory Budgeting PDF Logo," LSE Department of International Development Working Paper Series (London, 2015), https://bit.ly/3OGmrrM.

116 Yves Cabannes, "Contribution of Participatory Budgeting to Provision and Management of Basic Services: Municipal Practices and Evidence from the Field" (London, 2014), https://bit.ly/3MwMrE4.

117 UNDESA, "State of the World's Indigenous Peoples," 2009, https://bit.ly/3EKSeD2.

118 Karina Coelho, 'Caiçaras, Artisanal Fishermen, and Guarani M'byá's Territories between Protected Areas and Paranagua's Port', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

also the traditional livelihoods of the local people and the immaterial cultural heritage of their way of life.

While economic interests have been let loose, the rules governing protected areas have restricted most of the traditional uses that the indigenous people make of their own territories. Legal instruments already exist at the national level and are meant to guarantee the rights of indigenous people; they include consultation protocols and compensation and mitigation mechanisms. Local and national NGOs are currently pressing the Brazilian government to observe International Labour Organization Convention No. 169 on indigenous and tribal peoples. Environmental licensing processes, as well as compensation and mitigation strategies, officially guarantee traditional peoples' rights to be informed and consulted prior to any new ventures that might have an impact on their land, culture and environment.

Last but not least, **just renaturing calls for recognizing the contributions, and advancing the rights, of everyday city-makers whose practices are often dismissed as being "informal"**. Whether supporting the social production of housing and infrastructure or protecting the livelihood practices that help to renature cities on the ground, these experiences advance a feminist perspective that gives greater importance and centrality to the everyday city-making practices of poor and impoverished women and men.

Cape Town (South Africa)[119]

° Between 2013 and 2019, the South African Slum Dwellers International (SDI) Alliance worked together with other civil society partners in Cape Town on a joint project to upgrade informal settlements; this formed part of the *Comic Relief Four Cities Programme*. As its contribution to the project, the South African SDI Alliance identified the need to establish a metro-level fund for upgrading informal settlements. It saw this as a key priority and as a way of contributing to the Department of Human Settlements review of policy and practice for upgrading informal settlements. This set the stage for engagement with the Western Cape Province for the development of a provincial-level approach to upgrading informal settlements. As previously mentioned in Chapter 4, SDI uses community-led

data collection practices and protocols to make a rapid appraisal of all the informal settlements in the Western Cape area. In 2016, this appraisal was used to develop the *Western Cape's Informal Settlement Support Framework and Programme*. The use of community-led informal settlement data in this way emphasizes the value of using community-collected data on informal settlements to development policies and plans. This is in line with the needs, priorities and realities of informal settlement communities on the ground.

In 2017, South Africa's national government began to work on a process to review the *White Paper on Human Settlements*. Building on previous work, in 2018-19, a much deeper and more meaningful relationship was established between the South African SDI Alliance and the City of Cape Town, founded upon a shared interest in examining what it meant to turn Cape Town into a "resilient" city. This was of particular importance to the South African SDI Alliance, as no strategy can be considered truly resilient without it looking at the challenges, lessons and unique situations faced by those living in informal settlements. The alliance influenced the City of Cape Town's resilience strategy and ensured that the voices of informal settlement dwellers were heard, understood, and reflected in the process. This was all accomplished through the presentation of data collected by the community from over 70 informal settlements and relating to their upgrading interventions. The challenges identified were categorized as follows: (a) settlements without access to water, sanitation and electricity; (b) settlements with inadequate levels of basic services; and (c) settlements located on private land, where it would be very challenging to intervene. The process helped identify service delivery priorities in 74 informal settlements and opened the way to collaborations on projects involving other partners, such as the Western Cape Human Settlements Department through its *Informal Settlement Support Programme.*

In addition to experiences like the one outlined above, in which LRGs proactively engage with community-led upgrading processes, the development of inclusive recycling systems also offers insightful examples. These experiences show how pro-poor approaches can be used not only to advance just renaturing, but also to

119 Slum Dwellers International, 'Partnership for Resilient Citywide Slum Upgrading, Cape Town, South Africa', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

Source: Juliana Gonçalves.
Waste picker cooperative in Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

build and protect the livelihoods and rights of workers within the same process.[120]

Belo Horizonte (Brazil)[121]

° Belo Horizonte's integrated and sustainable solid waste management model reflects two key features in advancing towards more inclusive recycling systems. Firstly, worker cooperatives are contracted out as service providers for the collecting and sorting of recyclables. Secondly, multistakeholder platforms play a key role in advancing the principles of circularity and inclusion through the planning, implementation and monitoring of the recycling system.

The National Waste and Citizenship Forum, which is a multistakeholder platform involving public, private and civil society representatives, was created in 1998 under the leadership of UNICEF Brazil. Its mission was to advance towards: (a) the eradication of child labour and open dumps; (b) the implementation of a sanitary landfill; (c) the integration of waste pickers as service providers; and (d) the consolidation

of a participatory approach to urban waste management.[122] Following this precedent, and given the long-standing tradition of progressive local policy, the city of Belo Horizonte and its civil society organizations created the Municipal Waste and Citizenship Forum in 2003-2004. Some of the subsequent achievements of the forum include: (a) the elaboration of a socio-economic profile of waste pickers cooperatives (established in the early days of the forum); (b) the recognition of new cooperatives that were formed during the 2000 economic downturn; (c) the codevelopment of guidelines for providing municipal funding to other cooperatives; (d) measures to help building the management capacity of waste pickers; and (e) transitioning from social accords to proper commercial contracts to regulate service provision.

The forum has played a significant role in redesigning the selective collection of municipal waste, expanding the coverage of door-to-door recyclable collection, and extending contractual arrangements to more cooperatives operating in the city. Civil society actors participating in the forum have been working together on the *Zero Waste Project* in the Santa Tereza neighbourhood of Belo Horizonte for the past four years. This community-based initiative includes providing and promoting services associated with: food composting, a food coop system, a vegetable garden, a drop off site for recyclables, and campaigns for raising environmental consciousness. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the forum set up the Observatory for Inclusive Recycling, which was involved in the coproduction of emergency relief measures and safety protocols for cooperative sorting centres. These efforts resulted in the inclusion of cooperative members and unorganized waste pickers on the Municipal Secretary for Social Assistance's list for receiving food baskets and a detailed operational manual containing safety protocols for waste pickers.[123]

The inclusion of waste pickers in Belo Horizonte's solid waste management system highlights the value of a system that recognizes and supports workers' rights over time. The current challenge involves how to align a green economy approach, which is at once inclusive and pro-poor, and which represents the

120 Melanie Samson, "The Political Work of Waste Picker Integration," in *The Informal Economy Revisited: Examining the Past, Envisioning the Future*, ed. Martha Alter Chen and Françoise Carré (London: Routledge, 2020), 195–200.

121 WIEGO, 'Building Resilience in Times of Crisis: The Waste & Citizenship Forum in Belo Horizonte, Brazil', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

122 Sonia Maria Dias, "The Municipal Waste and Citizenship Forum: A Platform for Social Inclusion and Participation," WIEGO Policy Brief, 2011, https://bit.ly/3rO64Q4.

123 Sonia Maria Dias et al., "Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Inclusive Recycling in Brazil," 2020, https://bit.ly/3vMGnAe.

Source: Bruno Greco.
Waste picker cooperative in Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

demands of both organized and unorganized waste pickers, with conducting work at the city-wide scale. In this respect, the Municipal Waste and Citizenship Forum has demonstrated that wider deliberative governance structures are essential for advancing just renaturing. They can help to promote decent working conditions and to expand inclusive and sustainable waste management within the city, even when faced by local and national government austerity measures, political fragmentation and competing interests that constrain infrastructural investment.

Kampala (Uganda)[124]

° Community-based organizations in Kampala are currently championing the production of waste-based energy. The city generates over 1,500 tonnes of waste per day (80% of which is organic matter), but only about 40-50% of this is collected and disposed of through formal channels. Energy briquettes made from organic waste present a plausible alternative to wood fuel and charcoal. Despite the clear potential demand for energy briquettes within the city, their production is only undertaken at a micro level and through informal processes. It is therefore impossible to meet the growing demand for alternative, greener energy. Makerere University,

in partnership with ACTogether Uganda and Lubaga Charcoal Briquette Cooperative Society, is currently working in seven informal settlements across the city with the aim of promoting societal change and transformation through knowledge exchange. This initiative has built capacities in product development, business planning, financial record keeping, branding, and collective marketing. It has also provided briquette making machines (a set of four machines that includes a carbonizer, mixer, crusher and press machine) to each of the seven groups involved in the project.

The project is based on the premise that coproducing knowledge and engaging in practices that involve the communities themselves helps to develop and expand the action of business start-ups. These processes increase the integration of the urban poor into the urban economy. Many residents in informal settlements have come together in loosely organized savings and self-help groups. The coproduction of knowledge and capacity building has been based on these, as well as on existing, village savings and loan schemes established by the National Slum Dwellers Federation. The main focus has been placed on community-led initiatives using an "opportunities creation" approach to explore and demonstrate strategies that can later be scaled up and contribute to the transformation of waste management within the city as a whole.

124 Teddy Kisembo, Judith Mbabazi, and Paul I. Mukwaya, 'Community Based Production of Waste-Based Energy, Kampala, Uganda', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Renaturing (Barcelona, 2022).

6 Renaturing urbanization for a just urban transition

To conclude this chapter, the core argument will be summarized, followed by some recommendations for ways in which local, regional and national governments can work more closely with civil society organizations towards establishing a just urban transition through renaturing their cities and territories.

The starting point of this chapter was the notion that "renaturing urbanization" responds to the need to see urbanization processes and dynamics as being embedded within, rather than disconnected from, wider ecological systems and that it forms part of the wider web of life. This is a notion that flies in the face of a long tradition of regarding urbanization as a socio-technical process of development that depends on the extraction of natural resources from the global commons and the disposal of waste back into the global commons. This tradition assumes that there are no limits to these sources and sinks. The result is a series of global poly-crises that have instigated the emergence of new global governance configurations, particularly related to the climate crisis. However, urbanization has permitted the colonization of the commons and has also concentrated wealth in the hands of urban property owners and their financiers. For this reason, it has been argued that a just urban transition, to a more equitable and sustainable world, should seek to restore the balance between society and nature that was lost when urbanization became a socio-economic process that benefitted the few and destroyed the integrity of the global commons.

LRGs around the world are recognizing that they have a responsibility to face the challenge of renaturing urbanization. This chapter tells many of these stories, some of which are success stories, while others are not; either way, they are stories that many others can learn from. They illustrate the fact that over a vast range of contexts, the challenge of renaturing urban systems is being addressed in different ways. While LRGs cannot directly influence the directionality of global governance responses to global poly-crises, they can foster more just urban transitions. Their different points of departure are, however, not surprisingly, very context-specific. For some, this may be a case of greening, improving health, resisting green gentrification, or including informal settlements in urban development; while for others it could involve reconfiguring infrastructure to access renewable energy, decarbonize mobility, conserve water resources, promote green buildings, or process sewage in ecological ways. What we see emerging is a vast multiplicity of experiments that may seem disconnected, but which contribute, via international learning networks, to a great repository of memories and knowledge that can be used in the future. If human civilization is to survive, it will require more than the types of global agreements on how to "transform the world" that appear in the preambles to many international treaties and national constitutions. It will, instead, be the result of radical incrementalism, driven by the kinds of experiments discussed in this chapter. **To make sense of these experimental dynamics and to explore their wider implications, four key themes have been**

discussed: collibratory urban governance, material urban resource flows, multisectoral greening and rights-based approaches to renaturing urbanization. Instead of summarizing the essence of each of these items, the following core statement highlights what is of relevance for the LRGs that have been mandated to act in the best interests of their respective populations.

To reconcile rising levels of complexity and the increasingly urgent need for directionality, various modes of **collibratory governance** have emerged in many different parts of the world. Although not recognized as such, the "governance of governance" refers to the emergence of new capacities for facilitating change, partnering and directionality.

To reduce the **resource requirements of the world's towns and cities** (including those for land), as urban populations almost double by 2050, it will be necessary to undertake major reconfigurations of infrastructure and densification initiatives. The former will be required to achieve the substitution of resources, improve the efficiency of their use, and ensure the sufficiency of their supply, while the latter concerns creating more socially integrated, equitable, and less car based urban neighbourhoods.

To transform urban landscapes, **multisectoral greening** will be required which must promote greater social integration of poor communities. This can be achieved through: (a) measures that improve urban well-being; (b) planning innovations that reembed neighbourhoods into their green and blue environments; and (c) regulatory interventions that green the built environment in ways that increase, rather than reduce, affordability.

To ensure that the **renaturing of urbanization results in a just, rather than an unjust, transition**, it will be necessary to include a rights-based approach aimed at safeguarding the rights and livelihoods of the most marginalized urban citizens. This will call for concerted action to prevent green gentrification, reclaim the social and health benefits of renaturing, and de-commodify urban assets for the benefit of the urban commons.

The approaches and experiences examined throughout this chapter are necessarily complex and they must be so in order to learn how to tackle the challenge of achieving greater social equity and ecological sustainability. To avoid locking urban development into socio-environmentally negative trajectories, cities and local governments must fight harder, and better, against all kinds of inequalities. This implies

becoming more self-sufficient in terms of food, power, and water; creating multiple options for the recycling, reuse and remanufacturing of materials; and promoting car-free mobility. These substantial changes are not easy to make, particularly at the scale, and within the timeframe, in which urgent action is needed to achieve the globally agreed goals.

One overarching lesson is that it is unrealistic to expect any one actor to play a transformational role working alone. Many LRGs do not have sufficient funds, capacities and agency to take the necessary action, while national governments often fail to fully understand and respond to city-scale and territorial challenges and inequities. Single national-level policies, incentives aimed at only a limited number of actors (such as measures targeted to modify existing behaviour) and technological improvements are unlikely to achieve much more than isolated changes. Furthermore, many existing programmes and policies are geared towards technocratic transitions that do not recognize the critical role that citizens need to play in driving forward urban transformation.

An argument was made at the beginning of the chapter for new forms of urban and territorial collibration. It is clear that negotiating any new forms of governance requires a moral and political compass that places the protection of human and non-human rights as the central focus, while working to advance the collective social and ecological functions of cities and their surrounding territories. This will require a strengthening of the collective capacities, power and resources of urban dwellers vis-à-vis public authorities, which can lay the foundations for more equitable processes and outcomes.

Based on this analysis of renaturing urbanization, it is recommended that LRGs, national governments and their allies consider the following practical actions:

° It is necessary to give serious consideration to fostering and supporting the capacity for more **collibratory modes of governance**. In all likelihood, such a capacity already exists in one form or another. In some cities, it will already be well-developed, while in others it may be only embryonic. Such capacity must spread and be developed amongst locally elected leaders, universities, NGOs, business associations and even within LRG administrations. While these established, or currently embryonic, forms have emerged in response to the need to reconcile complexity with directionality, their role is

still often not formally, or even informally, recognized by key stakeholders. This means their contribution is under-appreciated and this can result in a lack of resources to sustain them.

° Joining international data-sharing networks and building up the capacity to understand **urban resource flows and the infrastructure and planning solutions** is critical. These initiatives could result in a reduction in total resource usage at the whole city level and greater resource equality within the city. The principles of the circular economy and the increasing importance of the water-food-energy nexus suggest that these three sectors could soon become the main focus of city-wide and neighbourhood-level interventions to reduce the material footprint of cities.

° Based on a thorough review of **multisectoral planning and regulatory instruments for fostering greening**, it is key to create an integrated perspective that ensures that the expansion of greening is predominantly about social inclusion and reconnecting everyone to natural systems. This perspective should aim to harmonize the various interventions that seek to connect natural systems for aesthetic, cultural, health and livelihood reasons.

° **Bringing social justice into the renaturing of urbanization** will require a combination of LRG action and civil society-based action. It will require creating the kinds of planning interventions and institutional arrangements that are necessary to promote and support rights-based approaches. The discussion about using CLTs to decommodify urban assets, and about various other strategies to foster and promote urban commons, is a case in point. LRG interventions to limit gentrification are particularly important. However, what ultimately matters is the removal of key urban properties from the property market. This will ensure that bottom-up social investments and top-down public or social-impact investments do not result in neighbourhood improvements that ultimately end up benefiting only private investors. The principle here is that commons must benefit if the main risk and investment came from them.

As a pathway toward achieving greater urban and territorial equality, renaturing relies on concerted and politically radical action across different scales and on delivering a social and environmentally just future for everyone.
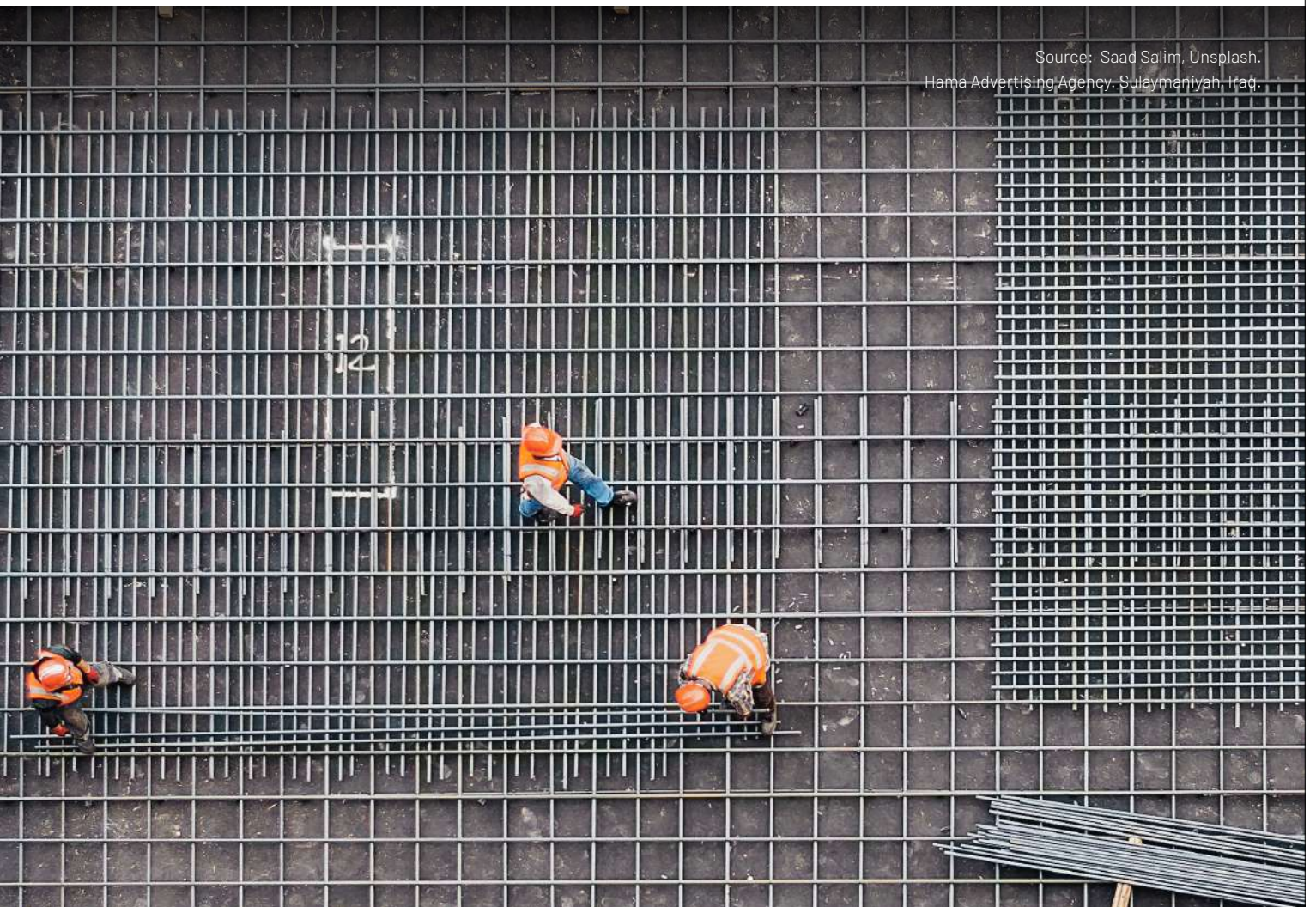

Source: Diogo Monteiro, JB Litoral.
Fishermen protesting against Paranagua's Port Complex expansion, Brazil, June 2021.

08 ↓ Prospering
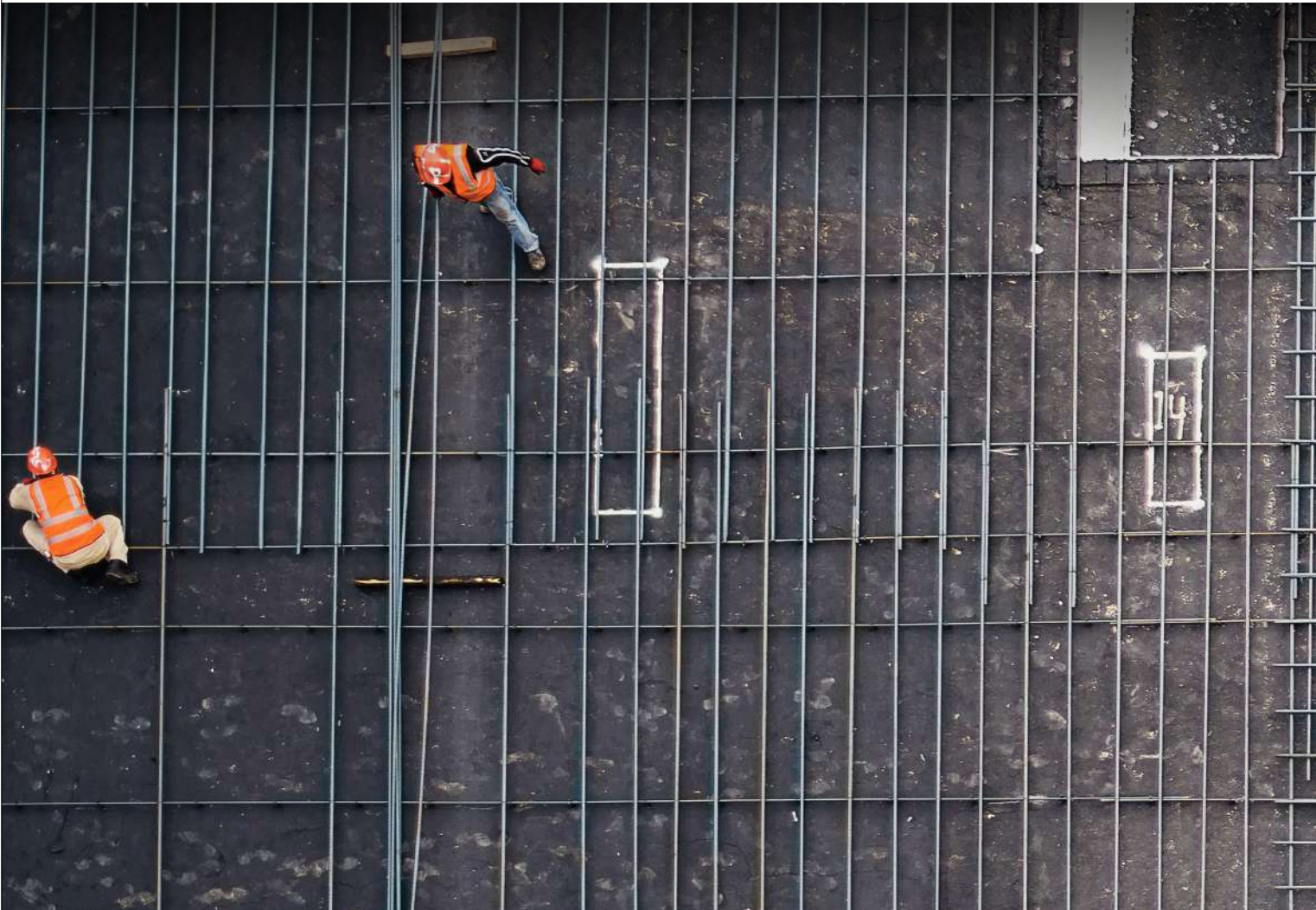
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Linking tourism, livelihood improvement, heritage and conservation through community-based tourism in Da Nang, Vietnam	Trang Phan (Da Nang Architecture University) Brenda Pérez-Castro (Asian Coalition for Housing Rights)
The role of creative and tourism economies in tackling/reproducing urban and regional inequalities	UCLG Committee on Culture

Abstract

This chapter focuses on pathways to urban and territorial equality with specific attention to prospering. It looks at different ways in which LRGs can address inequalities through local transformation strategies in this particular domain. Prospering is often understood as meaning something similar to economic growth, but this chapter challenges that idea. There is ample evidence to show that economic growth does not automatically lead to equality, which is an essential feature of prospering as the term is used here.

Promoting a *Prospering* pathway entails adopting a multifaceted and inclusive approach, which goes beyond the restricted definition of material wealth, measured in terms of economic growth and increases in gross domestic product (GDP). A *Prospering* pathway should be more attentive to what people care about and need, focusing on the broader concepts of happiness and well-being. Within this wider understanding of prospering, this chapter provides a specific contribution related to how to advance an equitable *Prospering* pathway with particular attention to the promotion and (re)distribution of stable income and decent work opportunities. The chapter also examines the obstacles that currently prevent achieving these goals. In particular, it discusses the impact of globalization and related drivers of the market economy on growing inequalities both within the labour market and between territories. This includes the growing precariousness, lower incomes, limited or no social rights and other challenges faced by workers. The impacts on different types of workers are analyzed, with special attention being paid to informality as a transversal aspect of the world of labour.

The chapter presents action-oriented strategies to address the previously mentioned problems and challenges. The strategies suggested include both intraterritorial and interterritorial strategies to promote equality. Strategies to improve intraterritorial equality need to pay attention to generating employment and the quality of work, based on an ethos of endogenous growth and local economic development. The principles of the social and solidarity economy and the circular economy should be promoted, corroborating the argument that different strategies to shape a *Prospering* pathway are not mutually exclusive, and that there should not be a one-size-fits-all approach.
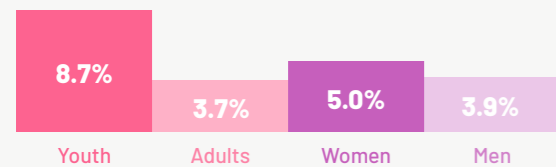
Interterritorial equality may be more challenging. A given LRG may have the capability to promote redistribution within the municipality or region under its administration. However, two or more municipalities or regions are, by definition, under the administration of different LRGs, which makes redistribution more complex. Nevertheless, a *Prospering* pathway can be generated and shaped if stronger horizontal cooperation between regions and municipalities, and also intermunicipal and interregional cooperation, are promoted. This requires moving away from competitiveness-oriented policies and practices and towards promoting greater collaboration and solidarity between territories.

As noted above, given the widely differing contexts in which LRGs operate, there is no specific recipe to create a *Prospering* pathway. Building on the realities of their own contexts, the approaches that LRGs adopt must take into consideration their different histories, national settings, local economic structures and distributions of skills and incomes. At the same time, the concrete experiences shared in the chapter can be a source of inspiration and can be replicated, with the necessary local adaptations.

Increasingly precarious labour markets

630m+ workers globally live in conditions of extreme or moderate poverty.[a]

220m people are unemployed worldwide. The 2021 global unemployment rate is estimated at 6.2%, above the pre-pandemic rate of 5.4%.[b]
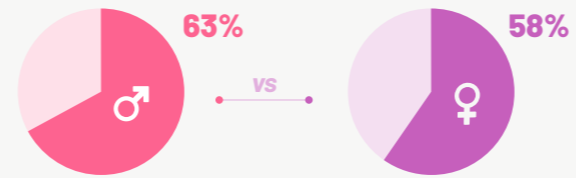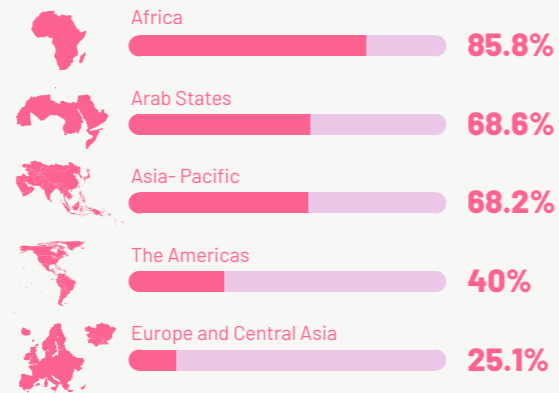
Proportion of jobs lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic:[c]

- Youth: 8.7%
- Adults: 3.7%
- Women: 5.0%
- Men: 3.9%

Prevalence and importance of the informal economy

60.2% of global employment is informal: this is over 2bn people.[d]

Including agriculture, the share of informal employment per region is:[e]

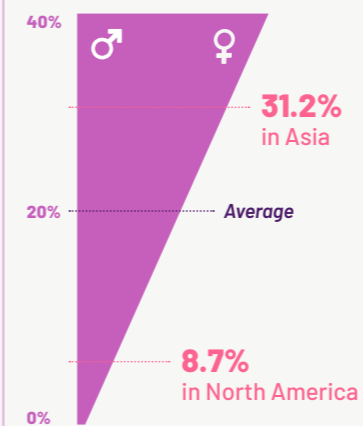- Africa: 85.8%
- Arab States: 68.6%
- Asia- Pacific: 68.2%
- The Americas: 40%
- Europe and Central Asia: 25.1%

63% ♂ vs 58% ♀

Percentage of men and women employed in the informal economy globally.[f]

Women are more exposed to informal employment in

- **90%** Sub-Saharan African countries.[f]
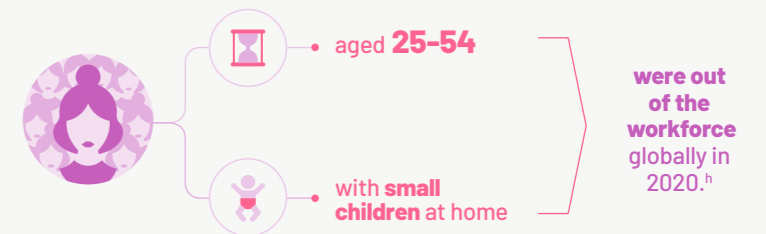- **89%** of countries from South Asia.[f]
- **75%** of Latin American countries.[f]

Gender inequalities in labour markets

There is a 20% gap between male and female labour participation rates, globally.[g]

- ♂ ♀
- 40%
- 20% — Average
- 0%
- 31.2% in Asia
- 8.7% in North America

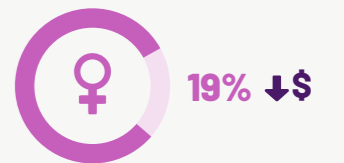**100m+ women** aged **25-54** with **small children** at home were out of the workforce globally in 2020.[h]

This includes **2m+** who left the labour force due to the increased pressures of unpaid care work.[h]

Globally, women continue to be paid 19% less than men.[i] 19% ↓$

Why prospering?

Prevalence of child labour

1 in 10 children are engaged in child labour.[j]

Child labour rose, for the first time in two decades, to **160m in 2020.**[j]

160 million

2010 — 2020

This same year, **23.3% of the world's youth** were not engaged in education, employment or training, a share that has shown no reduction in over a decade.[j]
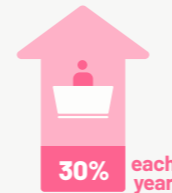
An expanding gig economy

USA and EU-15
There are 162m self-employed workers in the USA and EU.

15% are working through online platforms.[k]

Southeast Asia
30% each year

Gig work has grown at 30% per annum since 2010.[k]

China
↑**40%** each year

China expects its sharing economy to grow at 40% per annum.[k]

The potential of promoting the social and solidarity economy

As of 2017, **9.46% of the world's employed population** works in cooperatives.[l]

Almost 1 in 10

In 2022, 2.8m social and solidarity economy organizations and enterprises existed in the European Union.[l]

13.6m jobs

8% of the EU's GDP

Prospering pathway

Decent work and secure livelihoods

Towards urban and territorial equality

Supporting the creation of decent work and sustainable and inclusive livelihoods that are adapted to the diverse needs and aspirations of people across genders, races, classes, abilities and territorial realities.

- Prosperous territories with policies that ensure decent work and secure livelihoods for all

- An enabling environment for LED whereby local policies, regulations and financial mechanisms respond to the needs of diverse populations

- Strengthened SMEs and social, solidarity and circular economy organizations and initiatives

- An integrated informal sector that is recognized and supported

- Regular social dialogue between local workers, the private sector and public institutions

- Improved territorial equality with increased cooperation between municipalities and regions, as well as between urban and rural areas

Creating an enabling environment for local economic development through efficient and transparent regulatory frameworks, local financial systems, local procurement, land policies and governance, strengthening social dialogue with workers from the formal and informal sectors.

Promoting local economic development to stimulate endogenous development, cooperation and solidarity, both within and between territories, involving multiple actors and LRGs to catalyze local potentialities.

Establishing institutional collaborative mechanisms to recognize, regulate and integrate informal sector practices. Decriminalizing informal activities is an essential first step towards facilitating the contribution of people in this sector to the local economy and their access to public services and support.

How can local resources be leveraged to strengthen the local social fabric and to promote decent work, secure livelihoods, good public services and a healthy environment where diverse people can work and live fulfilling lives?

Enhancing horizontal cooperation between municipalities and regions, moving away from competition-oriented policies and practices and promoting greater collaboration and solidarity between territories, including metropolitan areas, intermediary cities and urban-rural partnerships to foster more balanced territorial development.

Advancing financial mechanisms that promote cooperation and solidarity, expanding support instruments that generate positive social and environmental impacts. These mechanisms may include social impact bonds, local currencies, tax share donations, crowdfunding and impact investments, among others.

How can greater urban and interterritorial equality be promoted while acknowledging and addressing different local economic structures and historical legacies, the unequal distribution of resources and different linkages with national and global economies?

Extending social dialogue, social security coverage and insurance to provide social protection for all workers. This includes people whose working conditions are directly or indirectly controlled by LRGs.

1 Introduction

One of the biggest challenges facing local and regional governments (LRGs) is how to promote prospering urban and territorial areas in a way that supports secure livelihoods in an inclusive, sustainable and participative manner. This chapter argues that this implies **a shift from traditional economic growth-centred approaches to a multidimensional understanding of the conditions under which LRGs can leverage partnerships and institutional capacities to promote a *Prospering* pathway that addresses urban and territorial equality**. This chapter explores this wider notion of prosperity and the barriers facing how to shape a *Prospering* pathway to equality. Based on grounded experiences and practices, it presents approaches to shaping a *Prospering* pathway both within and between territories.

The relationship between prosperity and economic growth within cities, and between cities and their territories, is complex. Built on the fact, highlighted in the UN-Habitat *2020 World Cities Report*, that goods and services produced in, and traded between, cities and metropolitan areas are accounting for an increasingly higher proportion of the global economy,[1] processes of agglomeration and economic growth bring both costs and benefits. These include high housing costs (see Chapters 2 and 4 for a more detailed discussion), congestion (Chapter 6), an excessive use of natural resources (Chapter 7) and governance challenges associated with increasing local-global tensions and uncertainties concerning urban and territorial economies (Chapters 3 and 9). These processes of agglom-

eration and growth have not taken place equitably and neither their benefits nor their costs have been spread equitably within their municipal and regional territories. There are growing socio-economic inequalities among residents, spatial inequalities between neighbourhoods and inequalities in decision-making aimed at addressing them. In addition, inequalities have grown between territories, even between those in the same country or region.

While there is an important ongoing debate about the mechanisms via which LRGs can promote prosperity as a multidimensional set of development goals, this chapter examines a *Prospering* pathway as a means of addressing urban and territorial inequalities. Given that a wider, multidimensional, approach to prosperity touches on factors addressed in various different chapters of this Report, this chapter focuses on a *Prospering* pathway built through the promotion of **stable incomes and decent work**. It does this within the context of **secure livelihoods**, and in an **inclusive, sustainable and participative way**. Section 2 reviews the current debate about the notion of prosperity, linking it to the main focus of the chapter. Section 3 discusses the barriers facing an approach to prosperity that benefits all citizens. The section explains how inequalities both between, and within, territories relate to key drivers in the market economy and their impact on working conditions and access to livelihoods. These, in turn, underlie the situations faced by specific categories of workers. Recognizing that the way barriers are defined has implications for the way solutions are formulated, Sections 4 and 5 explore the collective actions that need to be taken to shape a *Prospering*

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1 UN-Habitat, 'World Cities Report 2020. The Value of Sustainable Urbanization' (Nairobi, 2020).

Source: UN Women. Flickr.
The daily life of market vendors in Seychelles.

pathway. Section 4 focuses on shaping a *Prospering* pathway that advances equality **within** urban and territorial areas, while Section 5 focuses on shaping a *Prospering* pathway that advances equality **between** regions and urban areas.

This chapter argues that, **while LRGs have an important role to play, there is no simple, or standard, "one size fits all" recipe with which they can advance towards greater urban and territorial equality through adopting a *Prospering* pathway**. The approaches taken by LRGs must be context-specific and take into consideration local economic structures and the distribution of skills and incomes among local citizens. These approaches should recognize different local histories, local-regional-global ecological relationships, the extent of civil society mobilization relating to local production, and the relationship between local and central governance. While recognizing the importance of multilevel governance for tackling inequalities related to pros-

perity, it is at the local level that integrated policies and planning are grounded and where there are more opportunities for establishing synergies between actors in the public sector, private sector and civil society. This is also where prosperity, which is one of the five critical dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[2] encounters the challenges posed by the localization of the SDGs.

The final section of the chapter summarizes the key collective practices of LRGs and how they work to promote a *Prospering* pathway for equality in their respective urban and territorial areas and build on their institutional capabilities and on strategic partnerships established with organized civil society and the private sector.

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2 UN System Staff College, 'The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', 2017, https://bit.ly/3mbkXbG.

2 Prosperity

A narrow definition of prosperity as material wealth measured in terms of economic growth and increases in gross domestic product (GDP) has dominated political thought and action over the last century. Approaches and frameworks such as the Human Development Index (HDI) and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) now challenge this vision and seek to redefine prosperity as being something that ensures that all human beings can enjoy fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occur in harmony with nature. As noted above, prosperity is one of the five critical dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This vision represents a major shift in global discourse and signals the emergence of a new and more expansive conceptualization of prosperity, in which the focus is on the range of conditions, rights and freedoms, and capacities needed for people, living everywhere, to lead fulfilling lives. Prosperity is dynamic in that it means different things to different people and places. In fact, this is one of the reasons why using GDP as a fixed proxy for prosperity often fails: it does not take into account the subtleties of place, environment and the diversity of people and their qualities of life. Prosperity is, in fact, processual because it evolves over time and according to context.

The work of redefining prosperity is part of an emerging critique of the "economics-first" approach to progress. It particularly responds to the failure of mainstream economic policies based on the assumption that economic growth should trickle down in the form of job opportunities, wage rises, improved public services, and higher living standards for all. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the trickle-down theory has been criticized because high rates of economic growth have not generally been accompanied by consistent reductions in poverty and inequality. Researchers have concluded that in many developed economies a ceiling has effectively been reached in terms of what increasing material wealth can do for living standards, health and well-being. It is now recognized that the exclusive pursuit of economic growth is not sustainable. It is neither sustainable in the context of addressing the urgent challenges of inequality, nor in the context of limited planetary resources, environmental degradation and climate change. Growing inequalities in opportunities and in quality of life have led to a quest for measures for making progress that look beyond economic growth and GDP.

Several researchers have highlighted definitions of prosperity that look "beyond-GDP"[3]. These include high-profile theories of happiness and well-being,[4] measurements of multidimensional poverty,[5] and

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3 Saffron Woodcraft and Henrietta Moore, 'Conceptualising and Measuring Prosperity', GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

4 Examples include: Richard Layard, *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science* (London: Penguin Books, 2006); Paul Dolan, *Happiness by Design: Finding Pleasure and Purpose in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin Books, 2014); Felicia A. Huppert et al., 'Measuring Well-Being Across Europe: Description of the ESS Well-Being Module and Preliminary Findings', *Social Indicators Research* 91 (2009): 301–15.

5 For more information about the Alkire-Foster Method for measuring multidimensional poverty, see: Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative, 'Alkire-Foster Method', Multidimensional Poverty, 2022, https://bit.ly/3GH7oKI.

the increasing recognition of the HDI as alternative approaches to prosperity and development, which has been regularly used by the United Nations Development Programme since 1990.[6] Work has also been done on social progress; this has developed a series of measurements to assess social and non-economic development, looking beyond GDP:[7]

° the Foundational Economy collective, which has emphasized the social, as well as the material, infrastructure on which we all depend;[8]

° the Legatum Institute's annual Prosperity Index, which ranks countries according to their pathways from poverty to prosperity;[9]

° the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s *Better Life Initiative*, which charts whether or not life is improving within the OECD and its partner countries;[10] and

° the Sustainable Development Index, which uses aggregate data to assess the ecological efficiency of countries when it comes to delivering human development.[11]

As highlighted in Box 8.1, the Institute of Global Prosperity makes a detailed examination of prosperity via multiple criteria, looking well beyond economic growth. A redefined approach to prosperity is an emergent feature of a more holistic and ecological approach to this matter. The new focus is on the value created with the wealth that we have, much of which resides in communities and places. However, this value needs to be repurposed in order to meet new challenges and to improve the quality of life in those places.

6 See: UNDP, 'Human Development Index (HDI)', Human Development Reports, 2022, https://bit.ly/3xdQksK.

7 Social Progress Imperative, '2020 Social Progress Index', 2020, https://bit.ly/3Q1FehU; Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, and Jean-Paul Fitoussi, *Mismeasuring Our Lives* (New York: The New Press, 2010).

8 Luca Calafati et al., 'How an Ordinary Place Works: Understanding Morriston', 2019, https://bit.ly/3x3p4f8; Julie Froud et al., 'Foundational Liveability: Rethinking Territorial Inequalities', Fundational Economy Collective Working Paper, 2018, https://bit.ly/3NcGb59.

9 Legatum Institute, 'The Legatum Prosperity Index 2021', 2021, https://bit.ly/3zePqxj.

10 OECD, 'How's Life? 2020: Measuring Well-Being', 2020, https://bit.ly/3t9lzTm.

11 Henrietta L. Moore and Nikolay Mintchev, 'What Is Prosperity?', UCL Institute for Global Prosperity Working Paper (London, 2021); Jason Hickel, *Less Is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World* (London: Penguin Random House, 2021).

Box 8.1
Codesigned Prosperity Model for Hamra (Beirut)

The University College London's Institute of Global Prosperity (IGP) has been working on several prosperity models codesigned with local citizens in different urban contexts, including East **London** (UK), **Dar es Salaam** (Tanzania) and **Beirut** (Lebanon). Through participatory coproduction methodologies and workshops, the IGP has identified a distinctive set of elements that compose the codesigned local prosperity models: the foundations of prosperity; opportunities and aspirations; power, voices and influence; health and healthy environments; and belonging, identity and culture.[12] Although these elements change from one urban context to another, livelihood security has been identified as being fundamental to prosperity in all three cases. The diagram below shows the different elements of a codesigned prosperity model for **Hamra** (Beirut).

Source: Ahmed Al Baqami. Flickr. Beirut – Hamra st., Lebanon.

12 Woodcraft and Moore, 'Conceptualising and Measuring Prosperity'.

Figure 8.1

Codesigned prosperity model for Hamra (Beirut)

FOUNDATIONS OF
PROSPERITY

Affordable and reliable utilities
and public services

Local value creation

Housing security and affordability

Good quality and secure livelihoods

Stable and secure futures

BELONGING,
IDENTITES &
CULTURE

Lifelong integration

Community cohesion

Identity and culture

Diversity of social
networks

OPPORTUNITIES
& ASPIRATIONS

Good quality and
affordable education

Inclusion and fairness

Institutional inequalities

HEALTH & HEALTHY
ENVIRONMENTS

Clean, quiet and safe
neighbourhoods

Healthy bodies and healthy minds

Opportunities for healthy living

Liveability

POWER, VOICE
& INFLUENCE

Political inclusion

Voice and influence

Source: Henrietta L. Moore and Nikolay Mintchev, "What Is Prosperity?," UCL Institute for Global Prosperity Working Paper (London, 2021); Saffron Woodcraft and Henrietta Moore, "Conceptualising and Measuring Prosperity," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

Broadly speaking, prospering is about **the relationship between individual lives and collectives – their quality, aspirations and purposes – and the larger systems of opportunities and constraints within which they are embedded. A reimagined prosperity must take into account lived experiences, contextual values and structural constraints.** This means moving away from assumptions that economic growth will necessarily benefit everyone. Instead, it implies recognizing that individual and collective well-being can be an adequate proxy for shared prosperity. It also implies that it can be measured by data associated with: (a) secure livelihoods; (b) access to, and the quality of, services,

resources and opportunities, in general; and (c) also people's sense of achievement, or quality of life.

Global policy discourses that emphasize the role of places, and therefore of LRGs, in driving prosperity require close attention. In the context of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda (NUA), the "urban" setting is seen as being a "privileged locus of prosperity". Instruments such as the City Prosperity Index, which was proposed by UN-Habitat, have been put forward as elements of a Global Monitoring Framework for SDG 11 and the NUA.[13] Alongside this multidimensional approach to prosperity,

13 See: UN-Habitat, 'City Prosperity Initiative', 2022, https://bit.ly/3NJeyAq.

there have also been efforts to conceptualize and approach cities as engines of human development rather than only of economic growth.[14] Cities are identified as vital sites for concrete, transformative and sustained action to enhance prosperity, based on the hypothesis that they drive innovation and inclusion, and can help to generate and distribute prosperity, develop creative collaborations with local stakeholders, and implement new ideas for positive social change. While this may be the case, **the globalization of urban inequality that has accompanied widespread urbanization shows that wealthy cities are not, in themselves, a guarantee of equality and prosperity for all citizens**. Inequalities, vulnerabilities and risks are spatialized and intensified in cities in many complex ways. The question of how to conceptualize and take action to promote "urban prosperity" that builds pathways towards equality should be at the forefront of urban research and policymaking.

Delivering shared prosperity – reimagined in the SDGs as providing fulfilling and prosperous lives for people everywhere, within the constraints of the planet – will require new forms of knowledge, new ways of thinking that pay attention to questions such as interdependency, and new social institutions and forms of organization. **LRGs are well-placed to lead social innovations that focus on place-based prosperity models that can respond to these challenges.**

The above reasoning invites LRGs to assume a broad perspective, yet one centred on the intersections between lived experience and structural forces, in order to develop a redefined prosperity that is less concerned with aggregate economic wealth and growth. A *Prospering* pathway should be more attentive to the diverse nature of people and the things that they care about and need: secure and good quality livelihoods, good public services, a clean and healthy environment, planetary and ecosystem health, a political system that allows everyone to be heard, and the ability to have rich social and cultural lives. In this sense, redefining prosperity implies challenging both the structural features of our economies and the value premises on which they are built. In sum, prosperity relates to a wide range of issues and is associated with broader concepts of human development and well-being.[15] In recognizing this more expansive and meaningful definition, this chapter contributes to the discussion on urban prosperity and its role in advancing equality.

Source: Alexander von Halem. Flickr. Gardening seen in Franconia, Germany.

It does this by addressing questions such as equal access to stable incomes and decent work, in a way that recognizes intersectional social identities and the socio-cultural context. In doing this, it seeks to minimize the urban ecological footprint and to promote the right to participate in local governance through inclusive engagement with political and policy/planning decisions. The next section focuses on key obstacles to achieving this kind of prosperity.

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14 Alexandre Apsan Frediani, *Cities for Human Development: A Capability Approach to City-Making* (Rugby: Practical Action Publishing, 2021).

15 Woodcraft and Moore, 'Conceptualising and Measuring Prosperity'.

3 Barriers facing a *Prospering* pathway to equality

The increase in inequalities, both between and within territories, in recent decades has been linked to fundamental drivers in the market economy: competition and a push towards endless accumulation which have often taken place without any social protection or other redistributive policies. These dynamics are in conversation with governance structures of the type discussed in Chapter 3 and present multiple governance challenges for LRGs. This section discusses these drivers and is followed by a review of their impact on labour and livelihoods.

Source: Paul Fenwick, Flickr.
Mall food court in Dubai, UAE.

3.1 Drivers in the market economy

As underlined in Chapter 2, inequality of income has increased over the past 40 years – within municipalities and regions and between countries. Competition and accumulation have been supported by global trends. The first one is the policy-driven liberalization of the economy, with the deregulation of markets for goods, services and finance. The second one is technological change, especially affecting information and communication technology and the transport of both goods and people, which have led to massive reductions in costs. The aforementioned trends have been underpinned by globalization and a massive increase in cross-border flows of goods, services and finance, particularly since 1990. Although globalization was initially billed as a levelling and equalizing process, its effects have turned out to be just the opposite, and it has exacerbated

inequalities in income and wealth. One central feature of globalization has been "financialization": the increasing dominance of financial over productive economic activity. These factors have had a significant impact on the nature and location of businesses and work, as well as on the (mal)distribution of income and of wealth.

Financialization has had a particularly negative impact on inequality. This has been most obvious in the raising of salaries in the financial sector, relative to others, but also in the expansion of consumer-related amenities in financial districts, as opposed to other areas of cities, and increases in the wealth of cities with the largest financial centres as opposed to other settlements. Two broader processes are also worth mentioning. The first is the major increase in the volume and frequency of financial flows between markets and between countries, which has increased macroeconomic instability. The second is that financialization has driven speculative urbanism, which has provided easier access to credit, increased the wealth of high- and middle-income households, helped to push up land values, and adversely affected the affordability of housing and also the capacity of many small companies to obtain good locations. After the 2008 financial crisis, the decline in growth of the real economy and the stagnation of wages effectively reduced access to credit for small businesses and also for poor, or even middle-class, households.

These problems have been compounded by the limitations of economies of agglomeration. While economies of agglomeration are a central attribute of human settlements, they do not, *per se*, address inequalities, due to the process of cumulative causation. This reinforces the case for adopting a distributive approach, of the type highlighted in Section 4 of this chapter. Cumulative causation implies that those who are already benefiting from agglomeration are the ones who continue to benefit most, as they have already appropriated economic rent. This exacerbates the gap between them and those who have not succeeded in doing so. This is reflected not just in terms of class inequalities, but also in the intersection of class with gender, race, ethnicity, age and disability. How this ultimately plays out depends on the way in which intersectional identities are present and interacting within each particular context.

The municipalities, or regions, with the largest agglomerations of specific industries or groups of activities will require larger numbers of workers with greater skills, or at least with skills that are scarce in the labour market, which will be paid higher salaries. The resulting wage premia for these workers, relative to others working in the same area, will further fuel inequality. It will also contribute to higher housing costs and influence the (mal)distribution of household wealth as well as the cost of land. **Spatial poverty traps are just one expression of how economies of agglomeration can develop unevenly within a given territory.** These take the form of neighbourhoods in which poverty is entrenched in a vicious circle, through the interaction of low incomes, low quality schooling, poor provisions of healthcare and local amenities, and limited access

to transport. This restricts access to higher-paying jobs and other opportunities, perpetuating poverty and its interlinkages with complex phenomena such as vulnerability, risk and urban violence. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that many of the benefits of agglomeration depend on information being distributed through interpersonal or inter-firm networks, which are generally only accessible to the few, and on the basis of having specific intersectional social identities.

Economic rents (defined as revenues or profits which are higher than those enjoyed by competitors) derived from the drive towards accumulation have distinctly spatial implications: the "winners" and "losers" in the market economy are unevenly distributed across a given territory. The spatial separation of the gener- ation and appropriation of rent is also a consequence of the vertical disintegration of manufacturing, which is a phenomenon that has been increasing since the 1980s. Rent is generated throughout the supply chain as a whole. But the distribution of power amongst businesses is spatially unequal, and this has conse- quences for intermunicipal equality. It is important to underline that there is also a correlation between where employment is located within the supply chain and the quality of such employment. This is a point which will be further explored in the subsection below.

3.2. Labour and livelihoods

Inadequate working conditions trap many workers in a poverty cycle and perpetuate inequalities. This is related to the way economic production is structured and framed by the previously described context. There has been an increase in the precarity and segmen- tation of labour markets, which has affected a large percentage of workers in different regions. The types of work deficits, and examples of the groups of workers affected, will be presented throughout this subsection.

As already noted, economic drivers have led to inequal- ities in the workforce both with and between territories. The deregulation of markets has also entailed the deregulation of labour in many places. Many urban workers now face challenges related to their rights

which have important implications for their living and working conditions and productivity. Circumstances vary greatly, depending on the level of enforcement of labour rights at the national, regional and municipal levels. In places with weak law enforcement, the more specialized workers are the least vulnerable, while those at the bottom of the pyramid bear the brunt of work deficits. At the same time, the labour market often exerts pressure on workers to accept worse conditions, with the extent of such pressure depending on the rate of (un)employment.

Moving production sites from more to less developed countries has led to higher rates of unemployment in the former. **Unemployed workers do not have the same protection and standard of living as those in work.** As a result, a vast range of non-standard forms of work has emerged in industrialized countries (including part- time work, casual labour, minijobs, zero-hour contracts, triangular employment relationships through temporary work agencies and/or subcontracting companies, and self-employment), to say nothing of the vast array of non-standard forms of work present in economically developing countries. In each local context, the demo- graphic composition of these non-standard forms of work reflects the intersection of class, gender, race, age and/or ability, amongst other factors related to social identity.[16]

This shift in production has naturally been welcomed in the receiving territories, where it has generated much- needed employment, albeit under conditions that are often inappropriate. Production structured according to value-chains entails several layers of subcontracting. **Low wages in developing countries** are a factor that attracts corporations to subcontract services and goods there. The deeper companies go into the subcon- tracting chain, the fewer labour rights their employees have and the less clear their job security becomes. Also, many companies have used subcontracting as a buffer against periodic falls in demand. This entails greater insecurity for workers and particularly those affected by multiple and intersecting oppressions based on class, gender, race and age, amongst others. In addition, many of the subcontracted companies and workers are self-employed and without any social benefits or guarantees.

Casual work is associated with temporary and flexible positions with companies and has no set requirements

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16 ILO, 'Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture. Third Edition' (Geneva, 2018).

beyond the need to complete specific tasks. Under these circumstances, workers' rights are often unclear and they enjoy less protection under the law than those who are directly employed. Informal workers are, by definition, outside the cover of the law.[17]

Flexibility in hiring (and firing) is a broad trend, as are casual contracts. Employers have also pushed for zero hour contracts, which come with no obligation to provide a minimum number of working hours. Workers must therefore be constantly on the look-out for new assignments, often with different companies. As previously commented, flexibility has also increased the hiring of "self-employed" and "one-person company" staff. In extreme cases, a whole production chain may consist of only this type of "companies". It allows firms to avoid employment obligations, such as, *inter alia*, the payment of social security quotas.[18]

A new and burgeoning type of casual labour has arrived with the advent of the **sharing economy**. The former is based on the sharing, acquiring and providing of goods and services through an online platform, although there is some theoretical debate about how to define certain aspects. At different times, sharing has been seen as an umbrella that encompasses different types of economies that have been variously referred to as gig, on-demand, peer-to-peer, crowd, collaborative and collaborative-consumption economies.[19] Sharing can, for example, facilitate exchanges and services at the neighbourhood or city level and support social and solidarity forms of economy. Some examples of this are presented below, in Subsection 4.1.

However, while such promising cases exist, today the concept of the sharing economy is much more closely associated with labour-related deficits and represented by the **gig economy** and the "**uberization**" of work. The gig economy is characterized by online platform workers, on-call workers, flexible and temporary jobs involving freelancers and independent contractors,

Source: Davide Alberani. Flickr.
Fighting for rights in the gig economy. Italy.

and companies avoiding labour regulations. This also facilitates tax evasion in many cities and countries.[20] Sharing economy initiatives have a major presence in cities around the world and form part of a fast-growing tendency. A 2016 global survey showed that platform companies had a total market value of 4.3 trillion USD and directly employed millions of people.[21] Another study estimated that 15% of the 162 million "independent workers" in the USA and the EU-15 were working via online platforms: more than 24 million people. Gig work in Southeast Asia has been rapidly growing since 2010. Based on World Bank estimates, in 2019, the gig work population was increasing at a consistent rate of 30% per year.[22] In Japan, the importance of sharing platforms was estimated to have doubled between 2016 and 2020 (with their value increasing from 260 million USD to 540 million USD). China's Sharing Economy Research Institute suggested that the market value

17 ILO, 'The Construction Industry in the Twenty-First Century: Its Image, Employment Prospects and Skill Requirements' (Geneva, 2001), https://bit.ly/3PZ4pBz; Edmundo Werna, 'Labour in Urban Areas (Special Issue)', *Habitat International* 32, no. 2 (2008): 137–282; Edmundo Werna and Jeroen Klink, 'The Builders of Cities: Prospects for Synergy between Labour and the Built Environment', in *Research Companion to Construction Economics*, ed. George Ofori (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2022), 328–50.

18 ILO, 'The Construction Industry in the Twenty-First Century: Its Image, Employment Prospects and Skill Requirements'; Werna, 'Labour in Urban Areas (Special Issue)'; Werna and Klink, 'The Builders of Cities: Prospects for Synergy between Labour and the Built Environment'.

19 World Economic Forum, 'Collaboration in Cities: From Sharing to "Sharing Economy"', 2017, https://bit.ly/3zdM8KT.

20 Cristina Banks, 'Health, Safety, Well-Being and Economic Security Implications of Gig Work: An Interdisciplinary Perspective', International Labour Organization, 2019, https://bit.ly/3953wGZ.

21 McKinsey Global Institute, 'Independent Work: Choice, Necessity, and the Gig Economy', 2016, https://mck.co/3Mgu9pS; See also Gallup's Perspective on The Gig Economy and Alternative Work Arrangements: Gallup, 'The Gig Economy and Alternative Work Arrangements', 2018, https://bit.ly/3PXZZee, which estimated that 36% of US workers participate in the gig economy to a certain extent, including part-time workers and those with multiple jobs. The Federal Reserve's Report on the Economic Well-Being of US Households in 2017 found that 31% of adults were engaged in gig work.

22 DigiconAsia Editors, 'Gig Economy in SE Asia Is Keeping the Lights on: Who Is Helping Them?', *DigiconAsia*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3tebnc0.

of the country's sharing activity would grow at a rate of 40% per year and account for 10% of GDP by 2020.[23]

Existing research has shown new, and yet unclear, employment relationships between platforms and service providers. There has also been unfair competition between sharing economy businesses and traditional sectors (such as local shops, tourism and mobility) due to the presence of various loopholes within the legal framework in which new economic models have to operate, in addition to issues related to taxation, consumer law and protection from discrimination. For example, gig workers are not considered employees, although they are *de facto*. As a result, they do not have the same legal rights and benefits that other types of employees enjoy.[24]

Examples of precarious work are not, however, only restricted to the gig economy. By and large, when the relationship between workers, employers and governments is not regulated, it is challenging for workers to effectively demand their rights. **Migrant workers**, who abound in many urban areas, are particularly susceptible to exploitation as they must often accept precarious working conditions in order to survive in their host cities. This is particularly the case in sectors such as construction (male dominated), domestic service (female dominated) and commerce. One example that clearly illustrates this is the construction industry in cities in the Persian Gulf, such as Doha (Qatar). Since 2014, there have been recurring complaints and discussions at the International Labour Organization (ILO) Governing Body about the working conditions in the construction industry at the venues for the 2022 Football World Cup in Qatar.[25] There are also many registered cases of **public workers** in different countries without proper employment conditions, often due to poorly resourced government agencies coupled with legislation which provides them with little protection.

Child labour deserves special attention because of its moral implications and the toll that it takes on children's education and on their future prospects of finding decent work. This trend also renders young people increasingly vulnerable to exploitation, illegal, underground and hazardous activities.[26] In urban areas, in some countries in the Global South, this is particularly notable in commerce, domestic services, waste picking and recycling, and also in peri-urban activities related to the production of building materials, low-income housing construction, water collection and providing support to different types of home-based enterprises. In addition, the existence of child labour reduces the opportunities that adult workers have of finding employment. Importantly, post-COVID-19 inequality has had a major impact on home-based enterprises and particularly on women and members of the urban poor.[27] These factors add up tocomplexity of the issue and its linkages with the employment opportunities of the adult population. **Young people** (15-29 years old) currently face an uncertain future in the urban labour market, in both developing and developed countries. Due to their limited professional experience, young people tend to find themselves in vulnerable positions and are approximately two to three times more likely to be unemployed than adults. Those who do have jobs often find themselves employed in risky activities, working long hours for low pay, and in informal employment with few rights. Globally, it is estimated that 59 million young people between the ages of 15 and 17 are currently engaged in hazardous forms of work.[28]

Bonded labour is also found in many cities and their rural hinterlands, particularly in the developing world. This practice has, for example, been reported in garment production, and even in the central areas of major world cities such as Sao Paulo (Brazil). Many cities in the Middle East and West Asia still have the *kafala* system, which requires migrant workers to have an in-country sponsor, usually their employer, who is responsible for their visa and legal status. This practice has been criticized by human rights organizations as it creates situations that offer opportunities for the exploitation of workers; some employers take away the passports of their workers and abuse them, with little chance of legal defence.

23 World Economic Forum, 'Collaboration in Cities: From Sharing to "Sharing Economy"'.

24 UCLG Digital Cities, 'Innovation to Promote Decent Work in the Context of an Expanding Gig Economy', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

25 ILO, 'Complaint Concerning Non-Observance by Qatar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), and the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), Made by Delegates to the 103rd Session (2014) of the International Labour Conference under Article 26 of The ILO Constitution', in *331st Session of the Governing Body* (Geneva, 2017), https://bit.ly/3NTSgMe; ILO, 'Complaint Concerning Non-Observance by Qatar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), and the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), Made by Delegates to the 103rd Session (2014) of the International Labour Conference under Article 26 of The ILO Constitution', in *325th Session of the Governing Body* (Geneva, 2017), https://bit.ly/3GKwPep.

26 ILO, 'Action against Child Labour 2008-2009 : IPEC Progress and Future Priorities' (Geneva, 2010), https://bit.ly/38LJIrV.

27 Marty Alter Chen, 'Homes Double as Workplaces for Many Urban Poor, Especially Women', WIEGO, 2021, https://bit.ly/3Q2koPm.

28 ILO, 'Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Technology and the Future of Jobs' (Geneva, 2020), https://bit.ly/3GNdpW8.

Box 8.2

The case of female workers in India's construction sector

The construction sector in India has witnessed rapid growth in recent decades. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2018-19, approximately 12% of the country's labour force was engaged in construction work, making this sector one of the largest employers of the non-agricultural labour force. Overall, this accounted for 5.5% of the total female workforce and 14.2% of that of males. The industry is characterized by seasonal or temporary labour, often employing migrants and members of socially disadvantaged groups. Unlike single female migrants, who tend to be engaged in domestic work, women (and especially young girls) employed in the construction sector often migrate with their extended families or as part of larger kinship networks due to concerns regarding safety.

The Contract Labour Act, of 1970, and the Inter-State Migrant Workers Act, of 1979, lay out norms governing the timely payment of wages and the provision of water, toilet and washing facilities for workers in various sectors, including that of construction. However, worksites routinely violate these norms, which are critical for ensuring occupational safety and healthy and decent working conditions. The maternity benefits programme seeks to provide partial compensation, through direct cash transfers, to women who incur wage loss due to pregnancy and childbirth. However, the programme remains largely inaccessible to most women due to the imposition of limiting conditions and low compensation packages. The Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, of 1996, mandates the provision of creches at construction sites and also that of other facilities, such as canteens for workers. However, these conditions remain unfulfilled at the majority of worksites.

Construction site creches run by not-for-profit organizations, such as Mobile Creches in Delhi and Aajeevika Bureau in Ahmedabad, aim to mitigate concerns regarding childcare, to help prevent accidents and injuries to children, and also seek to create spaces to help address women's healthcare needs. This model currently works on a cost-sharing basis, with responsibilities being shared between not-for-profit organizations and major local employers. There have also been efforts to link these creches to existing infrastructure under the Integrated Child Development Services, India's oldest flagship programme for improving maternal and child health. The programme can provide nutritional support for children and health monitoring for pregnant women and lactating mothers. There is an urgent need to build upon and expand both of these models, in which responsibility falls upon the employer and the state, and to provide support for delivery from civil society organizations (CSOs).

Source: Ruchika Lall and Divya Ravindranath. "The Case of Female Workers in India's Construction Sector," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

Although forms may differ from context to context, there tend to be gender divisions of labour between different forms of employment and work, accompanied by cases of gender discrimination. Women are exposed to informal employment conditions in more than 90% of the Sub-Saharan African countries, 89% of countries in Southern Asia, and almost 75% of those in Latin America.[29] In the construction sector, for example, there is clear evidence of deficits in the rights of **female workers** in urban areas. This often results in unequal treatment and cases of harassment. Where women work on building sites, they also tend to have the lowest paid jobs[30] perpetuating income inequality between genders. Box 8.2 presents evidence of the challenges faced by female construction workers in India.

29 ILO, 'Women and men in the informal economy: a statistical picture' (Geneva, 2018), https://bit.ly/2P5g4y4.

30 Sunil Kumar and Melissa Fernandez, 'The Urbanisation Construction Migration Nexus in 5 Cities in South Asia' (London, 2016), https://bit.ly/3NjZKly; Roderick Lawrence and Edmundo Werna, *Labour Conditions for Construction: Building Cities, Decent Work and the Role of Local Authorities* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

Source: Carol Mitchell. Flickr.
Women work. Delhi, India.

In short, the previous paragraphs note the lack of rights of many groups of workers who often find themselves trapped in vulnerable situations that present only limited chances of reducing inequalities.

Overwork is one of the causes of occupational safety and health deficits. Again, this is related to the way in which economic production is organized. Subcontracting, on a piece-work basis, intensifies the pressure placed upon workers while increasing the difficulties involved in coordinating their work and ensuring safety. Many workers are on temporary contracts, which, in a context of fluctuating demand, encourages them to work long hours to make the most of their opportunities to work. They are also less likely to receive the training required to work safely than workers employed on permanent contracts, and are in a weaker position to refuse unsafe work. Informal workers therefore find themselves in a particularly vulnerable situation.[31]

The market economy fluctuates, having periods of greater and lesser demand. During downturns, workers may have to resort to unemployment insurance where it is provided. If it is not available, they need to seek work elsewhere, and either accept lower paid employment in the same or other sectors, or rely on family support. The **lack of social protection** is a major cause of poverty, especially (although not exclusively) for informal and casual workers and small-scale entrepreneurs working in urban areas. Their living and working conditions expose them to a series of risks on a daily basis. These include: sickness, disability, accidents, premature

death, the loss of assets, the lack of clean water and proper sanitation, exposure to fire and flood, the use of toxic substances at work, and overcrowding, among others. Crises are standard occurrences in the lives of the urban poor. Exposure to these multiple risks is high and those in low-income settlements tend to be the least protected. Numerous urban workers and small-scale entrepreneurs do not have access to adequate healthcare, nor do they receive paid leave, protection against loss of pay when laid off, or compensation/coverage for ill health, accidents or old age. Without adequate social protection, even the smallest of crises can ruin their livelihoods. Should one income earner in the household be injured or fall sick, the whole family risks falling into despair, poverty, child labour and/or debt.[32] This situation can also seriously jeopardize the potential expansion of the urban economy.

In short, deficits in workers' rights undermine their living and working conditions and productivity, and hence their capacity to fully engage in the local economy. Conversely, **improving workers' rights, in an inclusive, sustainable and participatory manner, leads to improved productivity and preparedness and help the urban workforce to participate more effectively in the local economy**. Given the importance of informal work in many local economies, their case is further detailed in Box 8.3.

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31 Lawrence and Werna, *Labour Conditions for Construction: Building Cities, Decent Work and the Role of Local Authorities*.

32 ILO, 'The Informal Economy' (Geneva, 2007), https://bit.ly/3asnnQA; ILO, 'World Social Protection Report 2020-22' (Geneva, 2021), https://bit.ly/38QPmct; Werna, 'Labour in Urban Areas (Special Issue)'.

Box 8.3

Challenges for the urban informal economy

Globally speaking, 61% of the workforce is informally employed: a total of 2 billion workers worldwide. Most of the urban employment in developing and emerging economies is informal. Global estimates also show a significant overlap between working informally and being poor. International Labour Conference discussions about informal employment have helped to raise awareness of this problem. As far back as 2002, the Conference recognized that informal workers face greater deficits than formal workers regarding the four pillars of decent work: economic opportunities, rights, social protection and voice. To make matters worse, the working poor in the informal economy – and especially the self-employed – face greater exposure to risks and shocks than formal workers. This includes greater exposure to: (a) policy uncertainty and policy hostility (as existing policies and laws tend to be biased against them); (b) economic shocks and risks (shifts in demand, prices, and competition); and (c) occupational health and safety risks (associated with both their work and their workplaces).

Early analyses about informality defined informal and formal production as being separate from each other – e.g. "the two circuits of the urban economy".[33] However, subsequent analyses have made it clear that there are strong linkages between the two. There is only one economy, but with intricate connections among employers and workers. In many instances, informal work supports the development of formal businesses. For example, and as already explained in the present section, the now preponderant production structured in supply-chains often roots its lower subcontracting layers in developing countries due to their low wages. Informal work is a common feature in such layers. This is where maximum surpluses can be extracted, as informal workers do not have clear rights (or often any rights at all), such as those to minimum wages or social security payments. Furthermore, in periods of decline in demand, these workers can be easily dismissed without compensation.

In addition to greater deficits in terms of decent work, the working poor in the informal economy also face greater deficits regarding decent living: they have less access to adequate and affordable healthcare, education, housing and basic infrastructure services. Most live, and some work, in informal, underserviced settlements. Due to the conditions in these settlements, informal workers also face greater vulnerability to non-economic shocks than formal workers. These relate to health risks, natural disasters, climate change and political conflict. Despite this greater exposure to risks and shocks of different kinds, the working poor engaged in the informal economy have only limited (if any) access to legal and social protection.

Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) has made in-depth studies of three groups of informal workers: home-based workers; waste pickers and recyclers; and street vendors. All three groups are subject to stigmatization, exclusion and/or penalization, without legal or social protection. Home-based workers frequently suffer from insecure housing tenure and lack basic infrastructure for their workplaces, and also face exploitation from landlords. Waste pickers and recyclers often face insecurity related to their access to the raw materials, a lack of space in which to sort out such material, and/or the absence of contracts for selling the fruits of their work. Street vendors are often subject to harassment, eviction and the confiscation of their stock and equipment. In addition to this, in the sectors which WIEGO has studied, informal work abounds; this is also the case in many other sectors of the local economy, such as transportation, construction, domestic services, textile production, equipment repair, and even health services (healers), amongst others. There is a large body of literature on the informal sector in general and also on its presence in specific sectors. By and large, it replicates the problems highlighted by WIEGO in the sectors that it has analyzed.[34]

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33 Milton Santos, 'Spatial Dialectics: The Two Circuits of Urban Economy in Underveloped Countries', *Antipode* 9, no. 3 (1977): 49–60.

34 For a summary, see the Working Issue Paper on the theme, prepared for the UN Summit on Housing and Urban Development, Habitat III: UN–Habitat and ILO, 'The Informal Sector', Habitat III Issue Papers (New York, 2015), https://bit.ly/3thKyDN.

All in all, the need to formalize the informal economy has been a constant theme in policy debates and prescriptions. Debates on formalization have, however, often focused too narrowly on regulating and taxing informal enterprises while neglecting the problem of how to increase their productivity and earnings. Debates have also tended to call for deregulating labour markets while neglecting how to increase the employment benefits and income of informal wage workers.

Source: Martha Alter Chen and Caroline Skinner, "The Urban Informal Economy. Achieving Prospering and Territorial Equality," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

Social dialogue has been an important tool for workers, employers and the government to help jointly discuss solutions to the problems noted before. It is also one of the core labour rights.[35] Successful social dialogue structures and processes have the potential to resolve social and economic problems, to promote good governance, to advance social and industrial peace, and to further economic progress. However, the current high proportion of temporary, casual, informal and unemployed workers makes it difficult to organize and engage in a dialogue that is inclusive of different social identities. Zero-hour contracts and the transformation of workers into one-person companies are two issues that only add further challenges.

3.3 Inequalities and divergence between urban areas and their territories

Source: Molly Adams. Flickr.
May Day - Workers Strike 2017. Los Angeles, USA.

The theory that local economic growth would lead to the convergence of incomes both between cities within a national economy[36] is flawed for two reasons. First, this view draws on the historical experiences of some high-income countries and a limited number of places, but cannot be generalized. Limited experience suggests that local economic growth attracts workers looking for jobs and firms looking for markets and labour within contexts of economic growth.[37] It has often been argued that this influx of productive resources would lead to the convergence of average incomes between cities and territories within a given national economy. This theory draws on the historical experience of a few high-income countries to suggest that a country's initial industrialization will lead to rural-urban migration which will be concentrated in a few cities or regions, which will grow in size and income. As wages rise and the service sectors grow in the settlements which first

35 Sarosh Kuruvilla, 'Social Dialogue for Decent Work', in *Decent Work: Objectives and Strategies*, ed. Dharam Ghai (Geneva: International Institute for Labor Studies, International Labor Office, 2006), 175–215; Carlien Van Empel and Edmundo Werna, 'Labour Oriented Participation in Municipalities: How Decentralized Social Dialogue Can Benefit the Urban Economy and Its Sectors', ILO Sectoral Activities Programme - Working Paper (Geneva, 2010), https://bit.ly/38PltYK.

36 J. Vernon Henderson and Sebastian Kriticos, 'The Development of the African System of Cities', *Annual Review of Economics* 10, no. 1 (2018): 287–314.

37 Sandrine Cazes and Sher Verick, *Perspectives on Labour Economics for Development* (Geneva: ILO, 2013).

industrialized, a second phase of economic development begins, involving the spatial dispersion of industry, as factories move to other cities where wages are lower. However, this sequence of events, based on the experience of some industrialized countries, does not provide a good description of how things have played out in recent decades in many other countries.

In low-income countries, and especially in Africa, many cities have grown rapidly without much industrialization. Proximity and density have meant that productivity in these cities has been higher than in neighbouring rural areas, and has supported higher incomes and levels of quality of life.[38] However, these cities have often been classed as "consumption cities",[39] characterized by providing low-skill, informal urban services and only limited to secondary sector activity. In middle- and low-income countries, in all regions, 52.6% of urban workers are in informal employment, with this share being as high as 80.8% in Sub-Saharan Africa. The vast majority of these informal workers – who account for around 75% of workers in low-income countries – either work alone, or with a very small number of family members, in household microenterprises, usually generating little income.[40]

Furthermore, within the OECD, the largest cities (which are very few in number) are the ones that grow most rapidly and provide nearly a quarter of total economic growth, while more than one-third of its cities are slow growers and contribute only 15-20% of total growth.[41] In different regions, there are also examples of economic growth and change driving cities into decline. Examples of this include Eastern Europe in the post-soviet era, and certain regions of Europe and the USA. This the result of globalization, which led to industrial jobs moving abroad, to low- and middle-income countries,[42]

Source: ILO Asia-Pacific.
Homeworkers and their families. Indonesia.

and later of the impact of the 2008 global financial crisis, which resulted in a number of cities shrinking in size as their economies became less diverse and people moved away from them. This trend was especially noted amongst the most skilled and youngest members of their populations.[43] These "places left behind" are often dominated by service sector employment which pays low wages (at least by national standards) and they are often characterized by having higher rates of unemployment than their national averages. The increased divergence amongst cities is illustrated by their very different contributions to the overall rate of economic growth.

The complex interactions between cities, territories and the economy underline the dual nature of the challenge facing LRGs. On the one hand, they need to encourage economic growth and change in order to prevent certain cities and territories from falling behind. This, in turn, increases competition between territories. On the other hand, they need to address growing inequalities both within and between cities – the latter stemming precisely from increased competition between them. These dynamics have transformed labour markets in all regions and have had critical impacts on access to work and labour conditions for the majority of their workers.

To summarize, this section has highlighted the main drivers of inequality associated with the market economy, both within and between cities and territories whose paths to development have become increasingly detached from social protection and redistributive policies. The following sections present strategies and actions that LRGs can lead to address these pernicious trends.

38 Henderson and Kriticos, 'The Development of the African System of Cities'.

39 Douglas Gollin, Remi Jedwab, and Dietrich Vollrath, 'Urbanization with and without Industrialization', *Journal of Economic Growth* 21, no. 1 (2016): 35–70.

40 WIEGO, using data from ILO 2018. A more specific definition of informal employment is provided below. The global or regional shares of *urban* informal workers in household microenterprises are not provided by the ILO, but research analysis conducted in many individual cities suggests that it is of the same order as that highlighted by national data.

41 Enrique Garcilazo and Joaquim Oliveira Martins, 'The Contribution of Regions to Aggregate Growth in the OECD', *Economic Geography* 91, no. 2 (2015): 205–21; See also Enrique Garcilazo and Joaquim Oliveira Martins, 'The Contribution of Regions to Aggregate Growth in the OECD', OECD Regional Development Working Papers (Paris, 2013); and Jose Enrique Garcilazo, Joaquim Oliveira Martins, and William Tompson, 'Why Policies May Need to Be Place-Based in Order to Be People-Centred', VoxEU, 2010, https://bit.ly/399CrT4.

42 David H. Autor, David Dorn, and Gordon H. Hanson, 'The China Syndrome: Local Labor Market Effects of Import Competition in the United States', *The*

American Economic Review 103, no. 6 (2013): 2121–68.

43 Nijman and Wei suggest that one in ten US cities is shrinking, and one in three of the cities in Germany, as well as in other European and high-income Asian countries: Jan Nijman and Yehua Dennis Wei, 'Urban Inequalities in the 21st Century Economy', *Applied Geography* 117 (2020): 102188.

4 A *Prospering* pathway to equality within cities

This section includes some practical, action-oriented, experiences from LRGs to shape prosperity-related pathways to urban and territorial equality in response to the challenges identified in the previous section. It should also be noted that the pathways discussed intersect and are mutually reinforcing.

4.1 Promoting endogenous growth and local economic development

For the transformation of municipal and regional economies, LRGs should promote endogenous development. This requires emphasizing the improvement of factors internal to each respective territory, carefully assessing their attributes, and investing to take advantage of their specificities and capacities. This approach also acknowledges and builds upon the socio-cultural identity of place as expressed in local systems of production. The attributes of each sector of the local economy need to be assessed with care. Many territories are rich in natural resources (such as minerals and forests). These are often sold unprocessed, especially in the Global South. Agricultural products are also usually sold without processing. Many municipalities and regions which sell their produce in a raw state later buy them back as manufactured products, for a much higher price. Many localities could take advantage of economies of agglomeration and invest in manufacturing their produce and then sell them as finished goods with added value, thereby generating more income at the local level and, at the same time, creating more jobs. Other locations may have other attributes, acting as service or cultural centres. In many instances, LRGs have tapped into the comparative advantages of their respective economies. Sectoral approaches vary according to the attributes of each municipality or region. Box 8.4 provides some specific examples related to tourism under the leadership of LRGs.

Box 8.4

Endogenous growth with a focus on tourism and related sectors

Lisbon (Portugal)

° combines tourism and culture. One of the local measures is the *Lojas com História* (*Historic Shops*). It recognizes the need to intervene in the property market in order to protect historic and cultural spaces from the pressures exerted by globalization and speculation and gives rent protection for periods of 5-10 years. Today, more than 250 businesses have received this status. *Lojas com História* is a good example of an intervention that helps to conserve spaces that are, at the same time, essential for local cultural life, identity, social cohesion and economic development, and which are also of interest for visitors.

Da Nang (Vietnam)

° is the largest and fastest-growing city in central Vietnam and an economic powerhouse. However, not all of the city's residents have benefitted from its growth. As pressure on its coastal land has increased, the city's traditional fishing communities have found themselves in an increasingly vulnerable position. The local government has played a key role in recognizing the negative social impact of previous policies and the need to integrate these communities. By supporting community-based tourism and exploiting their traditional knowledge, the city authorities have nurtured and strengthened these communities and their social links.[44]

San Antonio (Chile)

° is a province located in the central zone of Chile and has a long coastline and a large port. A development plan was designed to improve the competitiveness of its micro and small companies in order to increase their income and the quality of local employment and to implement a development strategy headed by local actors. The cultural heritage of San Antonio was identified as one of the regional characteristics that could best be exploited to boost the local economy. Various renowned poets were born and lived in this area, which also contains the House Museum of the Nobel Prize-winning poet Pablo Neruda. San Antonio's tourism plan focuses on upgrading the quality of existing tourism services and promoting innovation through public-private partnerships. It also seeks to articulate and interconnect other traditional economic activities present in the territory, such as artisanal fishing and agriculture, with tourism in order to strengthen the diversification of its offer.

Source: UCLG Committee on Culture, "The Role of Creative and Tourism Economies in Tackling/Reproducing Urban and Regional Inequalities," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

44 Asian Coalition for Housing Rights and Da Nang University, 'Linking Tourism, Livelihood Improvement, Heritage and Conservation through Community-Based Tourism in Da Nang, Vietnam', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

The adoption of a local economic development (LED) approach is crucial for paving the way to endogenous growth. The most prominent reason for endorsing LED strategies is that they mobilize and capitalize upon local potential. Although there is no universal consensus regarding its definition, various popular conceptualizations tend to share certain similarities. The most notable of these are: an emphasis on the engagement and participation of stakeholders from all sectors; local leadership and ownership; the mobilization and sustainable exploitation of local resources; and a marked territorial orientation in the diagnosis of problems and development of strategies.

These defining features give LED a distinctly different character from both the top-down approaches and spatially blind policies relied upon in the past. These features make LED approaches more amenable to delivering equitable economic growth. In fact, there is ample evidence to confirm that LED approaches have the capacity to propel both economic growth and more holistic socio-economic development, in both cities and their associated territories. From this, it can be inferred that LED may offer a particularly viable option for the pursuit of more equitable economic growth in a range of different contexts.[45]

With the decentralization processes that began in many countries in the 1980s, LRGs have gradually acquired more responsibilities in LED and come to participate more proactively in related processes. As the closest level of government to their communities, LRGs have the deepest understanding of their needs and priorities. They also have the greatest spatial, organizational and social proximity to them, which allows them to better address local challenges and promote greater participation and social inclusion. **Locally planned and managed economic development is also more likely to build upon the specific strengths and resources of a given community and territory and to protect and enhance its environmental and cultural heritage.**

LED has now been on the agenda of many LRGs and their associations for some time. United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) has a specific Committee on Local Economic and Social Development, which focuses on LED as a public necessity.[46] LED is one of the fundamental pillars required to address the processes of decentralization and regionalization. Although, as noted above, definitions of LED vary, for UCLG – and with its specific attention on LRGs – it should have the following elements:[47]

°   LED is a participative process. It must be based on partnerships between local authorities, other public sector agents, the private sector and civil society, and should be used to foster local commercial activity. This can take many forms, including social economy enterprises that respond to the needs of marginalized groups, and also micro, small, and medium enterprises. LED initiatives should be community-led and locally owned.

°   Local governments provide leadership and coordination in the planning and implementation of LED initiatives. They do this either directly, or through delegation to community-based agencies. LRGs build social capital, connect local governments to their communities in a myriad of ways, and generate innovative solutions to help meet local needs.

°   LED plans integrate efforts across sectors, developing both the formal and informal economy. They do this with a view to achieving community goals, such as providing better quality jobs, reducing poverty, promoting environmental sustainability, and ensuring the inclusion of marginalized groups, and most notably women, young people, people with disabilities, and indigenous peoples.

°   LED initiatives tend to vary widely, depending on local needs and conditions. They may include: the development of infrastructure, research and innovation; skills training; attracting new investment; providing technical and financial services to new and existing businesses; supporting procurement policies; and providing support for marketing.

°   LED is a long-term process aimed at developing more inclusive and resilient communities. LED practitioners recognize that it takes time to build up local capacities and to include marginalized groups. They therefore also use a diverse range of indicators to monitor and measure their success.

45 Andrés Rodríguez-Pose and Callum Wilkie, 'Conceptualising Equitable Economic Growth in Cities', Cities Alliance Discussion Paper – No. 2 (Barcelona, 2015), https://bit.ly/39767jy.

46 See: UCLG, 'The Commission of Local Economic and Social Development', 2022, https://bit.ly/3NTVLCC.

47 UCLG et al., 'The Role of Local Governments in Territorial Economic Development', UCLG Policy Paper, 2019, https://bit.ly/3xbnFTR.

Source: Arthur Franklin. Unsplash.
Local business in St Helens, UK.

Different authors have divided the elements of LED in different ways. The following text highlights and prioritizes the organizational vehicles and specific local policies used to promote LED.

Local economic development agencies (LEDAs) have been widely used to promote LED, in general, and employment, in particular, and therefore deserve attention.[48] LEDAs are "legal, no profit structures, generally owned by the public and private entities of the territory", through which "local actors plan and activate, in a shared way, initiatives for territorial economic development; identify the most convenient instruments for their realization; and enhance a coherent system for their technical and financial support".[49] A wide range of local, regional and national governments,

working in many OECD countries, use this modality to subject some of their local economic development activities to the operational control of appropriately regulated and supervised company structures (defined as companies, agencies, or corporations), rather than to manage them from within a municipal platform (such as council departments or service directorates). This reflects an established consensus that economic development-related activities are unlike the other roles and responsibilities of LRGs. They are primarily "market-facing" (relating to labour, property, investment markets, etc.), rather than "citizen-facing", and involve market-based transactions and incentive structures, rather than the delivery of public services.

The first LEDAs were called "development agencies" and were established in Europe after World War II in response to the local crises caused by war damage, industrial decline and dereliction.[50] Later, those of other types and with other purposes were created. There was, however, no rigid, defining formula.[51] Several subsequent waves of development agencies have also been created and recognized elsewhere. In North America, in the 1960s and 1970s, they were established to address the impact of deindustrialization in the rust belt. In East Asia, they were used in the 1980s and 1990s to help plan and manage rapid urbanization and industrialization. In the current era, they have been used in Latin America, South Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe to promote economic development in newly integrating economies. There has also been a continued process of reinventing and updating the role of development agencies in places where they already existed. This has often involved changing their intervention focus, altering the tools applied, and disbanding the older generation of development agencies and creating new ones. **Both bottom-up and top-down processes have been involved in the creation of LEDAs.** While both may bring benefits to local territories, particular emphasis should be given to bottom-up approaches, as they enable LRGs and local citizens to steer the process themselves. There is a growing number of documented cases of how different LRGs have used LEDAs in different parts of the world.[52]

48 Franco Jimmy Torres Suarez et al., 'Local Economic Development Agencies for Governance and Internationalization of Local Economies', Innovation for Development and South-South Cooperation, 2015, https://bit.ly/3NWvOlG; Debra Mountford (OECD), 'Organising for Local Development: The Role of Local Development Agencies. Summary Report', OECD CFE/LEED Working Document (Paris, 2009), https://bit.ly/3zztYDF.

49 Andrea Ferrannini and Giancarlo Canzanelli, 'The Role of Local Economic Development Agencies for Innovation', ILS LEDA Paper N°20, 2013, https://bit.ly/3GPgmFl.

50 Greg Clark, Joe Huxley, and Debra Mountford, 'The History and Diversity of Development Agencies', in *Organising Local Economic Development: The Role of Development Agencies and Companies*, ed. OECD (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2010), 39–82, https://bit.ly/3Q5sV3O.

51 Clark, Huxley, and Mountford.

52 Mountford (OECD), 'Organising for Local Development: The Role of Local Development Agencies. Summary Report'; Ferrannini and Canzanelli, 'The Role of Local Economic Development Agencies for Innovation'; Torres Suarez et al., 'Local Economic Development Agencies for Governance and Internationalization of Local Economies'; Jens Dyring Christensen et al., 'Reader Inter-Agency Conference on Local Economic Development', 2008, https://bit.ly/3Qe3ygy.

Whether or not LRGs choose to create specific orga-nizational vehicles for their respective LED strategies, there are a range of specific local policies for promoting local economic development in which stable incomes and decent work are the central focus:

(a) Generating employment by design; this is some-thing which LRGs can do through various strategies. These include planning and implementing policies which lead to "job rich" methods of production. It also includes supporting companies and increasing employability via such means as skills training and promoting initiatives that target disadvantaged groups. This implies moving away from the conservative premise that job creation is a consequence of economic growth *by default*. As shown throughout this chapter, economic growth has often led to, or actually been based on, the creation of inadequate forms of employment.

(b) Creating an enabling environment for local job creation and harnessing the demographic dividends of this through investment in education and the skills required by the labour market. Investment in training is also crucial for the creation of employment in different sectors of the local economy. These may also require different types of interventions, depending on their specific sectoral and local characteristics. This includes ensuring access to skills development for young people to enable full and effective participation in the local economy, as well as an enabling environment for promoting economic inclusion and entrepreneurship.

(c) Investing in labour-intensive and growth industries, including housing and infrastructure, while ensuring a sustainable relationship with natural resources. There are many strategies that LRGs can implement, either directly or by supporting private initiatives; these include investment in the built environment and upgrading infrastructural facilities. While human settle-ments require substantial improvements in infrastruc-ture, and these are necessary to promote the economy, the very implementation of such infrastructure can also generate much needed employment. The **use of labour-intensive techniques** should be encouraged as much as possible and should take a gender and diversi-ty-sensitive approach. In many instances, this is better than employing capital-intensive techniques in terms of both cost and quality and, at the same time, creates extra employment. **Hiring the local workforce** means that salaries enter the local economy, with the resulting multiplier effects contributing to the development of the local territory. Such investment can stimulate local economies, create immediate employment gains, and

have a long-term impact on income as well as on living and working conditions.

Creating employment should not only target the private sector, but also **public work**. LRGs are not abstract entities; they are staffed by public workers, and the workers are the actors who actually deliver local public services. Government authorities therefore need to have adequate human resources and to provide them with decent work.

LRGs can also encourage job growth and enforce better employment conditions in sectors in which they are not directly involved, by supporting private entrepreneurship. This can, for example, be achieved through **procurement** (see Box 8.8). This is particu-larly important for micro and small enterprises, which are responsible for a significant proportion of local employment. The creation of jobs should be based on evidence-based policies, supported by improvements in the collection of social indicators, disaggregated by geography, age, gender, race and ethnicity, and other factors judged to be appropriate in the particular context.

(d) Promoting an enabling business environment that is supportive of private investment in all priority sectors, both formal and informal, through estab-lishing strengthened and more transparent regulatory frameworks, land policies and financial systems. This includes:

° **Efficient and transparent regulatory frame-works:** effective local governance, and institutions need to be accountable, reliable and transparent. Their capacity and expertise need to be developed at all levels, including the economic development functions of LRGs. This will involve strengthening and improving the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of government programmes and enhancing trans-parency. Importantly, the regulatory framework should be fit-for-purpose, inclusive and just. Both territorial and business regulations should be reviewed to create an enabling environment to help production units establish themselves and expand. This includes, *inter alia*: (a) updating any outdated regulations and bylaws that may hamper the development of enterprises, add extra costs, and make it difficult for informal producers to formalize; (b) ensuring that there are balanced regulations for the use of public spaces

Source: Edward Ma. Unsplash.
Local shops in Tokyo, Japan.

(considering that many enterprises do not have any other location from which to operate while at the same time that public spaces need to be organized); and (c) modifying housing regulations in order to take into consideration the growing trend for home-based enterprises.

° **Land policies:** land is, by definition, a local resource. It is also a finite and scarce resource and one which is strategic for endogenous economic development. For most of the poor in developing countries, land is not only a primary means of securing shelter but also of generating a livelihood. It is the main vehicle for enabling investment and transferring assets between generations. As land represents a large share of the asset portfolio of poor populations, ensuring secure property rights (often based on land that they already possess) for these populations in all their diversity can greatly increase the net wealth of poor people. If property rights are poorly defined, or cannot be enforced at a low cost, workers and entrepreneurs will be compelled to spend valuable resources on defending their land, thereby diverting their time and effort from more productive endeavours. In sum, it is important to pay attention to land policies in order to achieve endogenous growth. All workers, regardless of their gender or ability, need secure places in which to live (which are also assets) and businesses need secure places at which to produce.

Security, in terms of a place to live and to produce, becomes particularly important when people work from home. More and more workers are now resorting to this formula, because of the difficulties involved in renting an office, so that they can work independently, because they are combining domestic work with paid work, and/or because many enterprises now operate online. Home-based work not only affects the upper end of the market (those who work via the Internet), but also a large number of low- and middle-income workers, who provide goods and services, such as pre-cooked food, textiles, garments and equipment repairs, amongst other goods and services. Land use policies can, and should, address the expansion of home-based business, as this has implications for zoning regulations.

While a significant percentage of the workforce resorts to working from home, many others work from public spaces. LRGs play a crucial role in defining such issues as the use of public markets and how to protect the informal economic activities that take place therein. In addition to vast numbers of street vendors, many other people

also work on public land, such as those engaged in urban agriculture on collective land.

The city of **Shenzhen** (China) provides an interesting example of all-inclusive land policy. Before the 1980s, Shenzhen was a collection of fishing and agricultural villages with a population of 300,000. In only a few decades, the city became one of the economic powerhouses of China, with a population of over 20 million. Despite the many benefits that come with economic growth and urban development, existing communities are often left behind or displaced. By permitting the villagers to retain their land rights and to carry out private development on their own, the national and Shenzhen governments endowed each village community with extremely valuable urban land and the ability to profit from economic development.[53]

The same rights that enable the private sector to use land efficiently can also give the government the power to impose responsibilities on landowners, for the public good. These include the responsibility to pay taxes and to adhere to land-use plans. Land policy contributes to the fiscal health of the municipal authority in two important ways: through sustainable land-based revenues, and through equitable and productive land-use decisions. Better access to opportunities means better outcomes, at both the individual and collective levels, and land policy can be a crucial lever for achieving this. Chapter 4 looks at access to land in greater detail, within the framework of commoning.

○ **Local financial systems:** cities require predictable, secure and substantial sources of revenue in order to be able to support their services, infrastructure and economic development. Initial investment to create companies and jobs is fundamental for generating surpluses and the consequent tax revenues from economic activity with which to finance public expenditure. This can help break the vicious circle of a lack of public funding for infrastructure (and other

needs) leading to a lack of financial contributions from businesses and workers.

Inclusive access to basic public goods, such as clean water and sanitation, parks, schools, transportation and housing, depends on the existence of properly functioning and well-resourced LRGs. Tax systems are engines for public action; they provide the resources needed to promote and improve civic well-being. An efficient tax system raises revenue while, at the same time, minimizing unintended side-effects of development. Furthermore, an equitable tax system imposes obligations on taxpayers in proportion to their resources. With specific respect to land, the aim is to advance land valuation methodologies to better understand its pricing, measure the costs and benefits of public policies, and strengthen the institutions responsible for levying property taxes. It is also important to be able to evaluate the effects of land use regulations, identify good practices, introduce land value return mechanisms in order to increase the supply of serviced land, and reduce informality.

(e) Promoting transparent, accountable and representative governance. Local growth and development must occur within an adequate regulatory framework that enables, rather than destroys, livelihoods. LRGs can reinforce the voices of workers and their right to organization. Social dialogue plays an important role in creating and maintaining employment. It can, for example, be used in crisis situations, to help reach agreements with companies not to lay-off workers. There are many good examples of this which emerged in the aftermath of the 2007-08 global financial crisis, and then again during the COVID-19 crisis. In **Hong Kong**, for example, the construction industry was severely hit by the financial crisis: unemployment rose, forcing many construction workers who had worked in the industry for more than 20 years to look for employment in other sectors. In an effort to tackle the crisis, the Concrete Industry Trade Union (CITU) held talks with the Mass Transit Railway Corporation (MTRC), an organization that had been established in 1975, and whose sole shareholder was the Hong Kong government. The other government-owned rail operator, the Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation, had merged with the MTRC in 2007. Workers (through CITU) and employers (MRTC) subsequently approached the Hong Kong government to talk about beginning work on the

53 Michael Castle-Miller, 'Unexpected Laboratories within the State-Sanctioned Laboratory: Shenzhen's Urban Villages', Working Paper, 2014, https://bit.ly/3mgMLeL.

Box 8.5

Agenda to boost local jobs and livelihood opportunities

A well-known example of promoting local partnerships is provided by local economic development agencies. They have been created at the initiative of local governments and usually bring together the public and private sectors in order to stimulate local economic networks and promote job-creation and the development of small businesses. The three LEDAs implemented in **KwaZulu-Natal** (South Africa) promote trade and investment in the Harry Gwala region, with a focus on projects that create employment.

LRGs committed to hosting and integrating migrants and refugees are currently implementing mechanisms to facilitate their access to quality employment. In **Barcelona** (Spain), *Barcelona Activa* (*Active Barcelona*), the agency responsible for labour insertion activity within the city, is a LEDA that has aligned its capacity-building programmes for migrants with local market needs and providing support for migrant entrepreneurs. In the same city, the *Employment in the Neighbourhoods* programme has been implemented in twelve different neighbourhoods that were chosen for their high unemployment rates. It provides access to employment and promotes the socio-economic revitalization of these areas. The territorialization of policies that foster access to decent livelihoods has also allowed LRGs to (re)localize employment; in doing so, it has been possible to compensate for spatial imbalances and ameliorate inequalities.

Ethnic and/or religious minorities, who tend to face specific obstacles when accessing employment or to be highly concentrated in a limited number of sectors, can also benefit from targeted employment policies. From the end of the 1990s onwards, indigenous communities have also been priority targets for **Mexico City**'s (Mexico) development policies. A programme currently offers support to indigenous women and to other women who live in the more rural areas of the city's territory. It also provides them with equipment and technical assistance to support their productive activities.

More and more LRGs are now taking into account the importance of the informal sector. The municipality of **Ahmedabad** (India) has worked with a committee of vendors on the design of the new Bhadra Fort Market and on the process of allocating space there. By encouraging the formalization and growth of micro and small-scale enterprises, LRGs can also give informal workers the possibility to improve their status and foster their transition to formal employment.

Source: Cécile Roth (UCLG GOLD), "Agenda to Boost Local Jobs and Livelihood Opportunities," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

construction of infrastructure projects that had been proposed earlier. The dialogue was successful and led the Hong Kong government to approve 12 billion HKD for the construction of the West Island Line project. Work on this new project began in August 2009 and it created 5,000 new jobs in the construction industry.[54]

It is necessary to address efforts to overcome barriers which have hindered social dialogue at the local scale. There are various examples of good practices involving local dialogue from around the globe, such as those of

Marikina (the Philippines) and the municipal efforts to promote decent work programmes in Brazil.[55] LEDAs can also be a vehicle for social dialogue and, in turn, provide a powerful platform for improving the quality of work.

Box 8.5 highlights examples of the promotion of local jobs and livelihoods, based on a local development approach. Two of these examples are especially related to LEDAs.

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54 Van Empel and Werna, 'Labour Oriented Participation in Municipalities: How Decentralized Social Dialogue Can Benefit the Urban Economy and Its Sectors'.

55 Van Empel and Werna.

4.2 Supporting the social and solidarity economy

As explained at the beginning of Section 4, the strategies presented here are not parallel, but intersect and are mutually reinforcing. The previous subsection focused on endogenous growth with particular attention being given to LED. The social and solidarity economy (SSE) has often been used by LRGs as an ethos to guide economic development in their respective territories. The SSE encompasses organizations and enterprises with social, and often environmental, objectives, which are guided by the principles and practices of cooperation, solidarity and democratic self-management and where decision-making power is not linked to the weight of local capital. This is an important strategy via which LRGs can counteract the pressure exerted by competitive market forces which, as explained in Section 3, have often been unleashed without any concern for social issues or solidarity. Many LRGs have successfully led their territories to prospering via SSE. Several examples of this are provided below.

Organizations, relations and activities that adhere to the distinctive principles of SSE are many and varied. The most common types are:[56]

° cooperatives;

° non-profit organizations;

° associations engaged in economic activity;

° trusts or savings groups (often formed to organize finance-related activities);

° foundations; and

° entities that prioritize social and environmental goals over profit.

This range, although broad, can still be expanded. It can also include, for example, community contracting.[57] This enables low-income communities to formulate agreements with contracting authorities to implement infrastructure work and, to all intents and purposes, effectively operate as a contractor. This involves using the fundamental principles of organization and negotiation to improve the access of marginalized communities to productive resources, basic social services and remunerative employment. As the contractor is a community-based organization, it has a social and redistributive ethos. This allows LRGs to play a role as either funding agencies or clients and to engage directly with grassroots communities.

There are many examples of the successful implementation of different modalities of SSE from around the world. The municipality of **Cordoba** (Argentina) has adopted the *Pact for a Social and Solidarity Economy* as "a fundamental vector for social cohesion, a more equitable distribution of wealth and the protection of the values of sustainability, equality, equity and participation".[58] Cooperatives have burgeoned in many sectors of the economy. The municipality of **Meyrin** (Switzerland) has granted building rights to seven housing cooperatives and a foundation. They are all recognized as "public utility" project owners and benefit from public financial instruments that facilitate their access to construction credits. With these mechanisms, which include the likes of mortgage guarantees and low interest loans, housing cooperatives only have to secure a minimum equity participation (10% of a project's total cost). The same neighbourhood also contained another type of cooperative: a "participatory farmer supermarket". With the technical assistance and leadership of a local farmer, a support association was created in 2015, which won a cantonal grant to launch its project.[59]

In **Montreal** (Canada), the Milton Parc community confronted a giant real-estate developer and saved an entire neighbourhood, subsequently transforming it into one of the largest co-op housing schemes in the history of Canada. The drafting of a regulation, called the *Declaration of Co-ownership*, secured the tenancy of the residents and ensured that every tenant was

56 UNRISD, 'Guidelines for Local Governments on Policies for Social and Solidarity Economy' (Geneva, 2021), https://bit.ly/3Qe3MUW.

57 Jane Tournée and Wilma Van Esch, 'Community Contracts in Urban Infrastructure Works: Practical Lessons from Experience', Socio-Economic Technical Papers (SETP) No. 13 (Geneva, 2001), https://bit.ly/3PWgZS9.

58 Municipality of Córdoba, 'Plan Municipal de Paz y Solidaridad 2018-22' (Córdoba, 2018), https://bit.ly/3NpwArs.

59 CoHabitat Network, 'More than Housing: Multiple Use Cooperatives for the Transition towards Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Cities', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

handed back their home after it had been renovated. This declaration was unique in that it included restrictions relating to social responsibility and a prohibition on speculation which applied to 616 apartments in 15 housing co-ops, housed in 146 residential buildings and two commercial buildings of historical and community value in the neighbourhood.[60]

Since 1988, and particularly since the creation of the Municipal Development and Solidarity Fund, the city of **Dakar** (Senegal) has been committed to social and solidarity economy programmes dedicated to young people and entrepreneurs. **Abidjan** (Ivory Coast) has already established a one-stop office for the social economy and the shared economy. Likewise, the municipality of **Bamako** (Mali) has included the social and solidarity economy in its development programme, which seeks to promote and support cooperatives, professional associations and groups of economic interests.[61] **Preston** (UK) has sought to develop equitable urban economic development models with strong links to local cooperatives. Building on the experiences of similar ventures, ranging from flourishing cooperatives in **Cleveland** (USA) and in the **Basque Country** (Spain), Preston's local government has supported local cooperatives as well as community land trusts, municipalized pension funds and community banks. It has also redirected budget funds towards cooperative firms that employ local labour and make a social contribution to the local community. The local government has created a holistic and democratic approach to local economic development through a federated network of worker-owned co-ops which are accountable to community-owned trusts.[62]

Box 8.6 provides further examples from other parts of the world. Box 8.8 includes other examples of local economic development based on SSE from **Quito** (Ecuador) and **Izmir** (Turkey).

As previously noted, when discussing the barriers to prosperity, while the sharing economy includes new, and often unclear, employment relationships and competition rules, it can also be associated with solidarity. Examples of this include peer-to-peer collaborative exchanges at the neighbourhood and city levels (e.g. bike sharing platforms, cohousing, and repair activities, such as the online learning platform Skillshare). In fact,

60 CoHabitat Network.

61 Cécile Roth (UCLG GOLD), 'Agenda to Boost Local Jobs and Livelihood Opportunities', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

62 Matthew Thompson, 'What's so New about New Municipalism?', *Progress in Human Geography* 45, no. 2 (2021): 317–342.

Box 8.6

Using the social and solidarity economy to build alternative economic paths

The government of **Seoul** (Republic of Korea) has established a Public-Private Policymaking Partnership for the Social Economy, a Social Economy Centre, a Social Economy Academy and a Social Investment Fund. The Academy has developed and run 45 courses, administered 131 courses, and helped a total of 7,960 trainees. The fund supports social enterprises and in 2019 it provided 10 billion KRW in funding.

In the **Liverpool City Region** (UK), the Social Economy Panel has helped to build a platform that required each of the city region's SSE sectors to work together in a systematic manner. There have been many similar initiatives, with one example being Kindred: an independent community interest company, which offers finance tailored to the needs of the SSE.

One of the priorities of the local government of **Barcelona** (Spain) was to develop the *Plan to Boost the Social and Solidarity Economy (2016–2019)*. One institutional innovation was the creation of a Citizen Participation area, which is an informal consultative and joint decision-making body which focuses on public policy relating to the SSE.

The government of **Durban** (South Africa) has established an SSE environment via its *Cooperative Development Plan*. Its stakeholders include national government departments and agencies, its provincial administration, the municipality itself, universities, banks, SSE organizations and enterprises (SSEOEs) and for-profit enterprises. The *Cooperative Development Plan* has provided administrative and technical assistance and training to help improve SSE performance and sustainability. The Cooperatives Incentive Scheme provides start-up capital and equipment to a maximum value of 350,000 ZAR per cooperative and also access to business incubation services.

Source: Mercedes Aguilar, Paula Bejarano, and Juan Carlos Díaz, "Social, Solidarity, and Circular Economy to Build Alternative Economic Paths," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

many municipalities are already strongly engaged with the sharing economy. In **Barcelona** (Spain), for example, the *Programme of Time and Caring Economy* is organizing a time bank project in cooperation with the community network of neighbourhoods and the *Associació Salut i Família* (*Health and Family Association*). Work time is exchanged between people doing everyday tasks. This may, for example, involve taking care of a sick child, reading books to old people, helping with school homework, taking care of domestic pets or plants, repairing things, or simply accompanying people on walks. Citizens can redeem the time that they invest in the form of work time credits from others who will then perform services for them. The city currently has 28 time banks listed on its website. Peer-to-peer networks on the internet help to support such time banks and to provide knowledge-sharing networks, exchange markets and other collaborative initiatives that help to optimize the management of people's time and resources.

SSE organizations and enterprises often have comparative advantages in certain labour-intensive and employment-centred activities, including the provision of collective goods and services to meet basic needs, broadening people's access to finance, managing common/pooled resources, protecting and regenerating the environment, and forward fitting economic systems. Yet sometimes, they also engage in some other, more capital-intensive, forms of activity, such as manufacturing and processing. The patterns of production and consumption practiced by SSEOEs are more likely to be environmentally sustainable since they tend to be more sensitive to local environmental conditions than those of for-profit enterprises. In addition, SSE activity is often associated with localized circuits of production and exchange which tend to be more conducive, not only to providing for basic needs, but also to provisioning local economic development through generating income and boosting local demand and profits (or surpluses). These profits can subsequently be reinvested in the creation of more decent jobs, either within the businesses concerned, or through support for local community projects. Finally, besides their own economic activities, SSEOEs are often engaged in broader civil society movements that lobby and petition governments for better infrastructure and services and contribute to greater social cohesion through a variety of other social functions.

As stated in Chapter 4, there is a strong nexus between the solidarity economy and the urban economic commons. This suggests that SSEOEs can also help to promote commoning practices. Examples of such practices mentioned in Chapter 4 include popular economies of barter and exchange at the market of La Salada, in **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), and mutual aid groups in **Milan** and **Naples** (Italy), and in **Athens** (Greece), which have repurposed neighbourhood infrastructure in order to produce and distribute food, consumables and basic healthcare services.

Interest in the SSE has risen sharply in recent years, not least in the wake of the global financial crisis of 2008 and the COVID-19 pandemic, when the search for an alternative to "business as usual" intensified among policy stakeholders. As a result, SSE is now coming to be seen as a viable strategic means of implementing the SDGs. This has been matched by concerted efforts from key international coalitions and alliances such as the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy, the Intercontinental Network for Promotion of Social Solidarity Economy, the SSE International Forum (formerly known as the "Mont-Blanc Meetings") and the Global Social Economy Forum. All of them have contributed to raising the visibility, and deepening the understanding, of SSE in international policy circles, particularly regarding its critical role in transforming social and economic relations and activities. Box 8.7 provides illustrations of the magnitude of SSEOEs.

Source: Joel Muniz, Unsplash.
Food donation.

Box 8.7
SSE organizations and businesses

According to European Union data for 2022, its member states currently have more than 2.8 million SSEOEs, which provide 13.6 million jobs and represent 8% of the EU's GDP. Globally speaking, as of 2017, there were at least 27.2 million people working in cooperatives, all around the world, of which around 16 million were cooperative employees and 11.1 million were worker-members; this constituted at least 9.46% of the world's employed population. It is estimated that there are at least:

° • 375,375 cooperatives, employing more than 1,939,836 people, in Africa;

° • 2,156,219 cooperatives, employing more than 7,426,760 people, in Asia;

° • 2,391 cooperatives, employing more than 75,438 people, in Oceania;

° • 181,378 cooperatives, employing more than 1,896,257 people, in the Americas;

° • 143,226 cooperatives, employing more than 4,207,744 people, in European countries that are members of the EU;

° • 221,960 cooperatives, employing more than 4,710,595 people, in European countries which are not members of the EU.

Source: UNRISD, "Guidelines for Local Governments on Policies for Social and Solidarity Economy" (Geneva, 2021), https://bit.ly/3Qe3MUW.

Numerous new financial instruments can be used by SSEOEs with the caveat that LRGs need to carefully examine their feasibility and practicality for each particular need and in each local context:

° **Social impact bonds:** a government (and often a municipality) enters into a tripartite agreement with potential private investors and with SSEOEs who are willing to both coinvest and deliver a service. If successful, the SSEOEs reinvest their share of any profits to expand or consolidate their operations.

° **Impact investing (or social venture capital):** investments directed at companies, organizations and funds with the intention of generating a measurable social and/or environmental impact alongside a financial return on invested capital.

° **Complementary (or social) currencies:** a way of enabling generated wealth to circulate within a territory without it being syphoned off to outside territories. They can be used to favour purchases and exchanges with distinctly social and environmental goals, to foster local solidarity and to help disenfranchised groups. For example, the city of

Barcelona (Spain) has launched a pilot project for a social currency called *Recurs Econòmic Ciutadà* (*Citizen's Economic Resource*), which is a digital exchange system equal in value to the euro, open to all citizens.

° **Tax share donation:** allowing taxpayers to earmark a proportion of the tax that they are due to pay to support the SSE; this scheme has been already implemented in Italy at the central government level.[63] As there are also regional and municipal taxes, LRGs can implement this idea within their respective territories.

° **Crowdfunding:** digital technology has provided many new ways to connect projects and organizations with large and institutional funders, but also with individual and small-scale investors and donors. Crowdfunding has evolved as an important alternative strategy for financing SSEOEs in the early stages of their development.

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63 Samuel Barco Serrano et al., 'Financial Mechanisms for Innovative Social and Solidarity Economy Ecosystems' (Geneva, 2019), https://bit.ly/3awEoZY.

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development has produced a set of guidelines which provide detailed orientation for LRGs interested in promoting and supporting the SSE. The information provided ranges from advice about policies to legal frameworks, development plans, capacity building and financial strategies. The ILO has also published information and acted widely on promoting the SSE, paying particular attention to labour.[64]

As previously noted, the SSE often encompasses not only social, but also environmental objectives. The latter may have a great impact and also deserve attention.

4.3 Promoting circularity

To briefly recap, the strategies presented here are not parallel, but reciprocally supportive. In a similar way to the SSE, circularity has also been used by LRGs to guide the economic development of their territories.

The circular economy is a production and consumption model that involves sharing, renting, reusing, repairing, renewing and recycling existing materials and products, as many times as possible. In this way, the life cycles of many products can be extended. Achieving sustainable development, in congruence with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for the protection of people, the planet and prosperity, implies bringing about an important change in economic consciousness (relating to competitiveness, production and consumption). This, in itself, also implies a transition from linear to circular models ("natural cycles") which offer the potential to rise to current environmental challenges and to generate new business opportunities and economic growth. Practices that foster a circular economy model help to redefine the concept of growth by focusing on the benefits that it can provide to the whole of society. These are based on three key transformative principles:

(a) preserving and enhancing natural capital, controlling finite stocks and balancing the flows of renewable resources;

(b) optimizing the use of resources, and rotating products, components and materials to ensure their maximum utility at all times, both in terms of technical and biological cycles; and

(c) promoting the efficiency of the system, and discovering, highlighting and eliminating negative externalities.[65]

Although "greening the economy" will not, *per se*, increase intraterritorial equality, it can be a driver that will help to achieve this goal. Yet, such greening efforts must be embedded in an ethical approach, whereby an environmental ethos only makes sense if it goes hand-in-hand with an ethos of socio-economic equality. If not, the environment will be protected for the benefit of a few people only. Greening the economy is also pragmatically strategic because, in the short-run, it is far more likely to attract more support and investment to a given municipality or region than any approach perceived as being non-green. In the long-run, resilience and sustainability will necessarily be based on a green economy. If not, the territory (and the planet) will collapse.

Chapter 7 on *Renaturing* extensively analyzes these approaches and how to apply them to existing environmental and urbanization-related challenges. Due to a series of related issues, and as a result of "business as usual", the world is experiencing what has been called an "ecological overshoot". It refers to the situation when the demands made by humanity exceed what the biosphere of Earth can provide through its capacity for renewal. The ecological overshoot has continued to grow over the years and reached a 50% deficit in 2008: meaning that it takes 1.5 years for the Earth to regenerate the renewable resources that people use each year and to absorb the excess CO2 that is produced in the same period. Moderate scenarios projected by the United Nations suggest that if current global production and consumption trends continue, by the 2030s, we will need the equivalent of two Earths to support us. To lock-in *Renaturing* pathways, there is a need for behavioural change and to move towards more equitable territories. The extreme concentration of resources, and the resulting inequalities, have been

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64 See, for example, Bénédicte Fonteneau and Ignace Pollet, 'The Contribution of the Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Finance to the Future of Work' (Geneva, 2019), https://bit.ly/3x97erc. More publications available at: ILO, 'Social and Solidarity Economy', 2022, https://bit.ly/3GULyU7.

65 Mercedes Aguilar, Paula Bejarano, and Juan Carlos Díaz, 'Social, Solidarity, and Circular Economy to Build Alternative Economic Paths', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

Source: Mike Bing. Flickr.
Tel Aviv waste picker, Israel.

accompanied by an increase in environmental problems. Redistribution is a necessary condition for achieving a more sustainable future.

In addition to many other negative impacts, environmental challenges also take their toll on the lives, well-being and productivity of urban workers, placing limitations on their social and economic development. Poorer workers often bear the brunt of diseases and illnesses borne by environmental vectors. These are often associated with the lack of access to safe water and sanitation, floods, sound pollution, overcrowding, uncontrolled urban growth, traffic accidents, outdoor and indoor air pollution, and/or the use of inappropriate building materials which can result in exposure to extreme thermal conditions, amongst other problems.[66]

Initiatives to improve the urban environment will not only counteract these impacts, but will also have the potential to generate new businesses and employment. At the same time, as actions to improve the urban environment require the active participation of workers and businesses, there is a need to scale-up skills, through training in green technologies, and also to secure decent working conditions and to develop greener municipalities and regions.

One good example of an integrated circular economy strategy is provided by the municipality of **Amsterdam** (the Netherlands). It aims to halve its use of new raw materials by 2030 and to achieve full circularity by 2050. To pursue this goal, it has defined three value chains: (a) consumer goods (mainly relating to products such as electronics, textiles and furniture); (b) construction (including the design, construction and renovation of houses and other buildings, as well as designing public spaces, ranging from roads and bridges to playgrounds and parks); and (c) food flows and organic waste. It is deemed particularly important to promote the longevity of products. As a result, "material passports" have been created, which account for reusable materials from demolition sites and promote the use of more sustainable materials in the construction of buildings. Similar measures have been imposed on restaurants and hotels to encourage them to donate food that would otherwise have been thrown away. One illustration of collaboration in the hospitality sector is the Circular Hotels Frontrunner Group, which is a network of 22 leading hotels that are working with the city, and its own suppliers, to find ways to reduce food waste and the unnecessary consumption of materials.[67]

Chapter 7 provides an illustration of how it is possible to combine the environmental and labour agendas: in **Belo Horizonte** (Brazil), the inclusion of waste pickers in the solid waste management system combines the protection of the environment with that of workers' rights. The experience involved aligning a green economy approach, which is at the same time inclusive and pro-poor, and represents the demands of both organized and non-organized waste pickers, with work at the city-wide scale. The Municipal Waste and Citizenship Forum has demonstrated that wider deliberative governance structures are essential for making advances in the area of just renaturing. The forum is a platform that brings together different stakeholders, who include waste pickers and informal collectors of

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66 WHO, 'Health in the Green Economy: Health Co-Benefits of Climate Change Mitigation - Housing Sector' (Geneva, 2011).

67 Aguilar, Bejarano, and Díaz, 'Social, Solidarity, and Circular Economy to Build Alternative Economic Paths'.

debris, and involves them in planning, implementing and monitoring recycling schemes.[68] This initiative promotes decent work conditions and helps to expand inclusive and sustainable waste management in the city. It has even managed to achieve this amidst local and national government austerity measures, political fragmentation, competing interests and constraints on investment in infrastructure.[69]

Pune (India) has incorporated waste recyclers into its social waste management scheme. In 2008 it launched a partnership with Solid Waste Collection and Handling, India's first, fully self-owned, waste-pickers cooperative. Citizens receive more affordable, reliable waste services (demonstrating official responsiveness to local demands), while recyclers benefit from more secure livelihoods and formal recognition of their work.[70] Also in India, Banyan Nation is the first integrated plastics recycling company to have used data intelligence to develop a largely informal supply chain and incorporate proprietary plastics cleaning technology. Banyan's smart waste management platform, which is based on the Internet of Things, detects, aggregates and analyzes data in order to help cities make their waste management more effective and economical. It helps cities to avoid sending potentially valuable resources to serve as landfill and thereby helps to remedy India's garbage crisis. To date, this company has recycled more than 3,500 tons of plastics and integrated more than 2,000 informal sector waste workers into its value chain.[71]

The examples provided above illustrate just some of the ways in which LRGs are promoting circularity. In fact, LRGs can play a vital role in making their territories more sustainable through dialogue, investment, regulation, and also providing incentives to the private sector. They can promote local social dialogue and bring on board actors who, by and large, do not normally take part in such dialogue at the national level. These include unregulated workers and enterprises and community-based organizations. LRGs can help to green the economy while, at the same time, promoting decent working conditions. Green jobs should also be quality jobs.

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68 Sonia Dias, 'The Municipal Waste and Citizenship Forum: A Platform for Social Inclusion and Participation', WIEGO Policy Brief (Urban Policies) No. 5, 2011, https://bit.ly/3NYYE59.

69 Sonia Dias, 'Waste Pickers and Cities', *Environment and Urbanization* 28, no. 2 (2016): 375–390.

70 Lalitha Kamath et al., 'Pune: Civil Society Coalitions, Policy Contradictions, and Unsteady Transformation', World Resources Institute Case Study, 2018, https://bit.ly/3zjXSLW.

71 Aguilar, Bejarano, and Díaz, 'Social, Solidarity, and Circular Economy to Build Alternative Economic Paths'.

4.4 Endorsing and promoting quality work

a. Employment conditions

To create prospering pathways to equality, it is important to recognize and support the struggles of workers to obtain better working conditions and more rights. Many LRGs have understood this and taken action to achieve these goals. LRGs can promote decent working conditions in different ways. Their efforts can be embedded in comprehensive strategies to promote LED, the SSE and circularity, or via specifically targeted actions. Possible courses of action include:

° designing and implementing policies for their own employees;

° providing procurement regulations to ensure that any outsourced activities provide decent work;

° linking support for new enterprises to the promotion of decent work;

° providing new avenues through which urban workers can demand their rights;

° creating enabling environments for different forms of social dialogue and to encourage the organization of workers;

° promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women through their effective mainstreaming in policy and providing access to the development of skills and provision of financial services; and

° enforcing and even expanding on the existing international and national regulations related to labour rights.

Given the magnitude and the reach of procurement in local territories, Box 8.8 presents a set of examples of LRG engagement.

Box 8.8
Experiences in inclusive local procurement

Several LRGs, from different parts of the world, have taken action to include in their local legislation and policies procurement clauses that enhance the resilience of both workers and companies, promote safe and healthy working conditions, facilitate the involvement of micro- and small-scale business in local governance, and ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups. These actions aim to offer concrete alternatives to the current economic and urban development models that tend only to reinforce exclusion and inequalities. They are in line with the recent call made by some LRGs, throughout the world, for states and regional organizations to support the *UN Binding Treaty on Transnational Corporations and Human Rights*. These are not, therefore, a set of isolated practices developed by scattered LRGs, but rather part of a joint commitment to improve local procurement and implement solutions from the inside, often with the support of associations of local governments. These may be either subnational initiatives, as in the case of **Catalonia** (Spain), or national ones, as in the cases of Norway, the UK, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand. Global networks have also committed to lead the evolution towards establishing more inclusive and sustainable procurement arrangements. Organizations such as ICLEI have sought to do this through the Procura+ European Sustainable Procurement Network and the Global Lead City Network on Sustainable Procurement; the latter includes cities from the Global South, including **Quezon City** (the Philippines), and **Tshwane** and **Cape Town** (South Africa).

Beyond opening up local procurement to smaller companies and professionals, local governments have also fostered decent conditions within the organizations of their contractors. In **Cali** (Colombia), where female unemployment was 14.1% in 2018, as opposed to 8.2% amongst males, the municipal council undertook affirmative action to empower women who were heads of household via public procurement. In a pilot project, contractors in charge of surveillance services for public facilities were required to employ 103 women who were heads of household (10% of the required personnel). Based on this experience, in 2019, a set of binding guidelines were adopted by the municipality which made the inclusion of similar clauses obligatory for those providing goods and services to the municipality on a regular basis.

Rzgow (Poland) launched a tender for municipal waste collection through which the contractor, the local social cooperative Komunalka Rzgów, was required to submit a document confirming its status as a sheltered workplace. It also had to make a declaration confirming that its activity included the social and professional integration of people who were members of socially marginalized groups and that at least 50% of its employees working on the contracted project belonged to socially marginalized groups.

It is essential to foster a political and legal enabling environment and to provide procurement instruments that set aside traditional price-centred approaches and focus on promoting equality as a valuable outcome. Examples include the EU, the Ecuadorian Organic Law on the Popular and Solidarity Economy and National Procurement System, and the Local Ordinance in **Cali**. Building trust amongst local companies and alliances with the most relevant local institutions, such as chambers of commerce, and offering training sessions and spaces for exchange for those who will eventually present tenders, has empowered actors and changed many mindsets. There are also similar examples from **Milwaukee** (USA) and **Quito** (Ecuador).

Source: Anna Calvete Moreno (UCLG GOLD), "Inclusive Local Public Procurement," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

Source: MercadoActivo. CBC.
Women and the popular and solidarity economy. Quito, Ecuador.

While social dialogue has, in turn, been used to either create or maintain employment, it has also often been used to improve the quality of work. One example related to sectoral dialogue is a project to support construction workers in **Dar es Salaam** (Tanzania). It created a platform for negotiations with both private actors and the public sector and led to the recognition of informal workers by the country's National Construction Council.[72] LRGs should aim to provide both formal and informal workers with avenues through which to expand their businesses and improve productivity, while simultaneously improving their working conditions.

The city of **Vienna** (Austria) has promoted social dialogue aimed at addressing issues related to the sharing economy. While there have been cases in which such economic initiatives have been based on solidarity, there have also been other cases in which such moves have entailed problems. As noted before, new and potentially unclear working relations may even lead to the loss of labour rights and cause uneven competition due to loopholes within the legal framework. Vienna's local government created a steering committee and several working groups, which involved municipal departments and representatives from different institutions. The gig economy usually generates issues that the traditional "labour union versus company" scenario cannot solve. This includes involving several actors in the social debate, which is fundamental for protecting workers while, at the same time, not rendering digital platforms unservable.[73]

Looking beyond specific cases of social dialogue of the type illustrated above, a burgeoning bottom-up movement is that of the Right to the City, which is a way in which improvement of employment conditions can be linked to the mainstream of urban development. It is important to realize that the right to the city refers to a collective effort to reshape the process of urbanization and that this requires demands, pressure and struggle. Workers' groups have traditionally served as powerful levers for obtaining rights in the cities in which they live and work. The workplace, on the other hand, has been an important locus for collective gathering and for struggles for the right to the city.

During the time at which mass-production and assembly line factories first emerged, workers' claims to their own rights were supported by strong trade unions with real bargaining power, which was blended into the struggle to access the Right to the City. In current systems of production, with an increase in informal labour, indentured labour, self-employed workers, one-person enterprises and other types of precarious work, it is important to understand how to continue organizing the defence of workers' rights. Legislation is a fundamental necessity to provide a legal framework for the Right to the City (and to land tenure, building codes, etc.).

The members and partners of the Global Platform for the Right to the City support equal opportunities and decent work conditions. Groups such as the Solidarity Center work internationally and support around 500 labour unions and workers' associations. They provide attention to structurally discriminated groups, such as people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, and afro-descendants. Action Aid in India is currently working to provide training to domestic workers, who are mainly women, to help them gain recognition and enable them to claim their rights. This project, which is supported by the European Commission, has resulted in the creation, and strengthening, of trade unions representing domestic workers in seven of the country's states. It has mobilized over 8,000 members.[74]

The ILO Conventions provide an international set of tools that can support the Right to the City and simultaneously improve employment conditions. These are international treaties that have been ratified by

72 Arthur Jason, 'Organizing Informal Workers in the Urban Economy: The Case of the Construction Industry in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania', *Habitat International* 32, no. 2 (2008): 192–202.

73 UCLG Digital Cities, 'The Development of Vienna's Approach towards a

Fair Sharing Economy', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

74 Global Platform for the Right to the City, 'Inclusive Economy and Food Security', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

countries on a voluntary basis. Once ratified, they are legally binding. Although there are no conventions that could be classed as explicitly "urban", many of them can, indeed, be used in the urban context. Examples include conventions related to: (a) public works; (b) occupational health (also connected to environmental health); (c) the rights of women; (d) the rights of migrants; (e) the rights of children; and many others. International labour conventions can therefore be used as instruments of pressure with which to implement the Right to the City (in the countries which have ratified them).

ILO recommendations can also be used as instruments for policy formulation. These are non-binding technical guidelines. The recent Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) has been widely used by organizations such as WIEGO and StreetNet to support the transition of workers and economic units from the informal to the formal economy. The Workers' Housing Recommendation, 1961 (No. 115) on the right to housing has also proved to be a powerful tool. Once applied, they can help to provide adequate housing for workers and their families. This essentially implies guaranteeing such rights to the whole population of a given territory.

Importantly, a national government must not only sign and ratify treaties guaranteeing such rights, but it must also implement them as obligations. Central governments can go beyond international conventions and enforce more far-reaching regulations. While respecting national laws, LRGs can go further and enforce regulations and address specific issues which are pertinent to a given municipality, or municipalities, which may not be covered by national-level regulations.

b. Social protection

With less than half of the world's population having access to any form of social security coverage, it is important that LRGs promote policies that help to extend the level of social protection afforded to all members of society. Deficits in social protection are particularly critical for informal workers due to their greater insecurity and higher likelihood of being exposed to hazardous working conditions.

One way of supporting social protection at the local level can be through the municipal extension of staff insurance coverage to cover those who are not necessarily directly employed by the local government but whose working conditions are, in many aspects, controlled

by the municipality.[75] One important example of this applies to street vendors who require the municipality to provide the infrastructure that they require, issue trade permits, and allow them to sell their products in public spaces. Both the informal worker and the municipality could make a contribution to the insurance (in return, for example, for the worker obtaining a licence to trade) and this would make it possible to expand social security coverage.

Social protection could also be improved by LRGs encouraging formal insurance companies to develop specific products for poorer workers and to extend their application. The formal insurance system may also need to be reshaped in areas where outsourced (and often home-based) production is prevalent. There may also be possibilities for extending the occupational insurance schemes of companies to cover those working from home or from other locations. Similarly, banks could be encouraged to provide affordable savings accounts for informal workers.

One vital enabler for broadening social security coverage in many cities is LRG endorsement of civil society organizations; this is important because the public sector cannot do everything alone. Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) is an example of a CSO which, *inter alia*, promotes savings that help to provide better social security coverage. As its name suggests, SDI supports communities who live in informal settlements. Savings networks are active in 527 cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They operate in 4,818 settlements and represent 8,871 women's savings groups, with 387,885 members. These groups support the development of social cohesion and collective capacities, and offer a financial safety net for many of the poorest members of society, who then use their savings, or take out small loans from their peers, to keep their children at school, cover medical bills, and cope with unexpected shocks.[76] When groups federate, we see how savings can help advance efforts to achieve settlement change outcomes that go beyond promoting just livelihoods. Federations can use their learning, monitoring and evaluation systems to track the growth of different groups and monitor their health. Collecting savings data is a long-established practice in the SDI's community-driven slum data work and something that has gained increased traction in this arena. Through such practices, the contribution of

75 Francie Lund, 'Social Protection and the Labour Market: Towards a Research Agenda', *IDS Bulletin* 39, no. 2 (2008): 87–92.

76 Slum Dwellers International, 'Our Savings, Our Strength', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

savings to improved livelihoods can be noted by each of the SDI affiliates. Increasingly, there is a movement towards the digitization of savings data.

The Self-Employed Women's Association, which is an Indian trade union, is another example of this type of organization. It provides a comprehensive social insurance scheme that covers both self-employed and wage-earning workers in many municipalities. Box 8.2 presented an example of social protection for Indian women in the construction sector; this is one of the key sectors in India's urban economy and one in which women are habitually discriminated against. LRGs could consider promoting similar experiences through partnerships with NGOs.

The previously mentioned ILO instruments: international conventions and recommendations, provide suitable tools for helping to establish and support regulatory frameworks for social protection and can also be used as a basis for establishing such action. At the national level, the ILO is currently advocating for extending social security coverage for everyone. At the local level, on the other hand, substantial efforts are being made to strengthen community-based social security organizations. Through implementing appropriate policies and programmes, LRGs should support such developments and actively promote them. This support should also extend to efforts undertaken by individual people and small groups of residents. In fact, there have been successful cases of promoting healthcare protection and community surveillance at the individual level.

4.5 Recognizing informality

While previous subsections also relate to the informal sector, it is singled-out here on account of its relevance within the urban economy. It is important in its own right and because of its critical linkages with companies that operate in the formal sector and urban consumers. Informal workers are still in the majority in the Global South, and their numbers are also growing in the Global North. They bear the brunt of the deficit of decent work explained in Section 3. The challenges faced by informal workers and businesses have already been detailed in Box 8.3. While informal workers all share a common set of demands, such as freedom from harassment and fear, the right to organize, a recognized legal standing, and social protection, informal workers operating in urban areas also want their economic contributions to be recognized by LRGs and incorporated into local policies and plans on fair terms.[77]

LRGs need to deliver the public services that are essential for prospering, while they must also promote and provide an enabling environment capable of supporting a variety of actions that must be implemented by other actors. Some of these are illustrated by cases presented

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77 See: UN-Habitat and ILO, 'The Informal Sector'.

Source: The Advocacy Project. Flickr.
Informal Market in Harare, Zimbabwe.

throughout this chapter. At the same time, in order to deliver these services well, LRGs need to be properly resourced. This requires appropriate intergovernmental transfer mechanisms and the payment of local taxes by citizens and private enterprises. Setting-up public enterprises can offer an alternative way to finance LRGs. Even so, residents also need to pay their fair share in order to receive adequate services. While this may seem obvious, it is not always the norm. Cases of poorly resourced LRGs abound, especially in the Global South. This discussion is especially pertinent in the case of informal workers and informal enterprises which, by definition, operate outside the regulatory boundaries of governments. There is therefore a need to create and strengthen trust between LRGs and informal operators. This is an issue which deserves special attention.

LRGs should develop concrete mechanisms to support informal enterprises. These include providing secure spaces for business, capacity building, providing credit, facilitating information about markets and giving legal advice. **A *Prospering* pathway towards equality requires a virtuous cycle of trust between LRGs and civil society, paying particular attention to the informal sector.** Many informal-sector enterprises in urban areas have both backward and forward linkages to formal enterprises. It is important to understand this when defining strategies to support and promote them. This will help to protect them from exploitation and also to help increase their productivity and to create employment. At the same time, LRGs should also facilitate the registering and taxing of informal enterprises by simplifying bureaucratic procedures and offering them benefits and incentives in return for paying taxes.

In Indian cities, such as **Surat** and **Ahmedabad**, the Mahila Housing Trust has negotiated deals with city agencies and leveraged city local funding on behalf of informal workers. These funds have been used to upgrade housing and to provide solar energy technology that allows home-based businesses to power refrig-erators, soldering irons and sewing machines. These changes have helped to raise incomes, save money and reduce energy consumption. In **Bangkok** (Thailand), an organization that includes home-based and informal workers, called HomeNet, negotiated with the Bangkok Mass Transport Authority to extend its services to cover the outskirts of the city where most of the city's informal workers reside; this has given them better access to inputs for their products and markets in which to sell them. The cities of **Bhubaneshwar** (India) and **Durban** (South Africa) have worked with local NGOs and informal

worker groups to create specially designated zones in public areas. They have also improved markets for street vendors, acknowledging the important role that they play in each city's economy (see Chapter 4 for a discussion on the potential roles that LRGs can play to engage in land reappropriation and urban economic commons).**78**

City governments have also offered procurement opportunities. In India they have begun working with the Self-Employed Women's Association (see 4.4) to give self-employed women jobs that provide core public infrastructure services. This partnership is now organizing workers and linking them to specific city government departments which are responsible for sanitation, water, electricity and housing. Since these cities lack sufficient budgets and investment capital to meet the demand for services, employing these informal workers fills unmet needs, creates employment, fosters more inclusive cities and saves money that would otherwise have to be spent on hiring city staff to manage service delivery. Unemployment benefits have also been extended to workers in the informal sector. One important example is provided by the city of **Marica** (Brazil).

WIEGO carried out an eleven-city study which highlights the kind of recovery measures informal workers need to revive their economic activities. The organizations of informal workers which collaborated in this study voiced common demands for recovery measures and future reforms. This action can be categorized as follows:

° financial assistance to pay off debts and restore savings and assets;

° cash grants and stimulus packages, including government procurement, to support the recovery of informal livelihoods and enterprises;

° policy and legal reforms, at both the national and local levels, to create an enabling environment for the informal economy; and

° universal comprehensive social protection that provides both social insurance and social assistance to informal workers.

The types of enabling environment at the local level demanded by these organizations of informal workers are listed below (along with examples of the targeted demands in selected cities) in Table 8.1.

78 Anjali Mahendra et al., 'Seven Transformations for More Equitable and Sustainable Cities' (Washington, DC, 2021), https://bit.ly/3x9RlRd.

Table 8.1

Examples of demands for local enabling environments made by organizations of informal workers

Policy demands	City examples
Regulated access to, and the right to work in, public spaces, including moratoriums on permits and fees	**Bangkok** The Bangkok Metropolitan Authority should allow vendors and motorcycle-taxi drivers displaced by recent evictions to return to their original places of work. **Ahmedabad** The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation should reopen and protect all the natural markets run by street vendors and also all of the wholesale markets. **Durban** The eThekwini Municipality should institute a moratorium on permit fees (irrespective of whether informal workers are in arrears or not). **Accra** The National Board For Small Scale Industries, the relevant municipal assembly departments and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development should expand existing markets to create space for street vendors. **Lima** Local governments must comply with Ordinance 1787, which regulates commerce in public spaces and promotes formalized relocations.
Basic infrastructure services at workplaces	**New York** New York City Council should use its Capital Fund to create a land trust that supports sustainable work and ensures that worker-led sorting and depot spaces can continue to exist. **Accra** Municipal governments should invest to improve infrastructure at places of work, ensure better ventilation and sanitation facilities and provide a generally safe and secure working environment. **Durban** eThekwini Municipality should reactivate public bathing facilities.
Transport between home, markets and the workplace	**Ahmedabad** The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation should provide affordable and accessible public transport for informal workers and their goods, between their places of residence and wholesale markets and vending sites/markets.

Reduction of harassment and evictions	**Durban** eThekwini Municipality should stop using harassment and the confiscation and impounding of goods.
Decriminalization of informal workers and their livelihood activities and legal protection against abuse from the police, local authorities and employers	**New York** New York City Council should immediately implement City Council Intro 1116, adopted in February 2021, which would remove the current cap on food vending permits. It should also establish a single vending enforcement agency to harmonize regulations and permanently remove the New York Police Department's responsibility for vending enforcement and, at the same time, establish a multistakeholder Vending Advisory Committee.

Source: Chen, Martha Alter, and Caroline Skinner. "The Urban Informal Economy. Achieving Prospering and Territorial Equality". GOLD VI Working Paper Series #05 (November 2021). Barcelona: United Cities and Local Governments.

Concurrently, appropriate regulations should discourage employers from hiring workers informally or informalizing existing jobs. Employers should be encouraged to contribute to the health coverage and pensions of their workers and extend other benefits to them, such as paid sick leave and overtime pay. The formalization discourse was given impetus through deliberations at the 2014 and 2015 International Labour Conferences and led to the adoption of the Recommendation R204 on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204). R204 also provides guidelines for extending protection to informal workers and shifts the discourse away from plucky entrepreneurs who evade taxes and regulation and to vulnerable workers and economic units who need protection and incentives to formalize. One of the provisions mandated by R204 is that of "regulated access to public space for urban informal workers". Thanks to this recommendation, and to the two-year deliberations that preceded its adoption, the discourse on formalization is now more likely to focus on the rights, and not only the responsibilities, of informal workers and informal enterprises, within the formalization process. It also regards formalization as a gradual and incremental process, and not as a one-time registration or legal incorporation.

The New Urban Agenda, which was adopted at Habitat III, includes several articles that mandate the integration of the informal economy into city policies and plans. Furthermore, it recognizes that the informal workers of each sector have specific needs and demands, and therefore require a specific set of economic rights. In the specific cases of home-based workers, street vendors

Source: World Bank. Flickr.
Working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Madagascar.

and waste pickers, WIEGO suggests that LRGs should consider and act upon the following considerations:

° Home-based workers require secure housing tenure and basic infrastructure services. They should not face forced relocation, and should have secure and transparent contracts that provide them with fair prices and/or piece-rates.

° Street vendors need: secure access to public space; licences or permits to sell; identity cards; and basic infrastructure services (e.g. water and sanitation).

° Waste pickers require: access to waste; waste management contracts; and remuneration from municipalities and infrastructure centres (for sorting and storing reclaimed waste).

5 A *Prospering* pathway to interterritorial equality

As mentioned in the introduction, globalization, urban growth and economic transformations (including the advent of new technologies) are not only leading to significant changes in labour markets, but are also producing national urban and territorial systems. The evolution of urban and territorial hierarchies has different impacts on interterritorial (in)equalities relating to: trade, economic development, investment, migration, environment and culture, among other dimensions. This, in turn, leads to inequalities in the opportunities that different sectors of the population have to live prosperous lives. The increasing competition between different territories, and the impact of different crises, have led to a scenario in which there is a growing polarization between, on the one hand, cities and regions that are becoming increasingly dynamic and integrated into global economic flows (which has diverse impacts on local dynamics), and, on the other, cities and regions that have become stagnant or marginalized.[79] This territorial asymmetry has been observed in both economically developed and developing countries. It is found in both urban and non-urban environments, and it conditions the exacerbation of interpersonal inequalities at both ends of the spectrum. There is now a pressing need for all levels of government to actively seek to promote territory-specific economic development, to promote more balanced territorial development, and to incentivize horizontal cooperation.

Source: Jocke Wulcan. Unsplash. Land development. Stockholm, Sweden.

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79 For more information on territorial inequalities, see Chapter 2, Section 4 in this Report.

5.1 Balanced territorial development: The need for multilevel collaboration, national urban policies and territory-specific economic development pathways

The 2030 Agenda has made a call to reduce inequalities within and among countries (SDG 10). Centrally-driven, top-down approaches to economic development are increasingly being questioned, in favour of territorially-oriented, place-based strategies that integrate the needs and priorities of local actors. LRGs have a critical role to play in shaping and influencing these place-based strategies. However, the interterritorial redistribution of responsibilities across different jurisdictions is complex and requires collaboration between national, regional and local government entities. In particular, it involves affording attention to the often extractive relations between urban and rural territories and overcoming a narrow focus on developmentalist and functionalist approaches in order to promote a more balanced form of territorial development. Supportive national and regional policies need to give greater attention to local development schemes and to adapt them to recognize the growing relevance of these territories. They need to promote greater solidarity and resilience to respond to the pressures of the global economy and the impact of different crises.

However, the vision and culture that shape subnational policies and territorial planning strategies can be profoundly different from one country to another. For example, the concepts of "territorial cohesion" and "balanced development", which are enshrined in European Union institutions and policies, differ considerably from the planning traditions of many other regions and countries, which may not have developed such a comprehensive vision of regional planning.[80] In parallel, some countries are developing national urban policies (NUPs) which, among other commitments, include that of directing national support to promote "integrated, polycentric and balanced territorial development policies and plans".[81] However, to date, this dimension has only been enshrined in a limited number of NUPs.[82]

Indeed, the development potential of many localities and regions may be limited by top-down strategies and policies. These have often been recommended based on the idea that the benefits of promoting economic dynamism in key urban areas and regions will eventually spill over, or trickle down, into surrounding rural territories and less dynamic areas. Nevertheless, and as noted above, this does not necessarily hold true in every case. Instead, such policies have often led, *de facto*, to these "lagging" localities and regions being treated as obstacles to national development.

Researchers and policymakers have suggested that, rather than limiting economic dynamism and the potential for economic growth of large, urban agglomerations and dynamic regions, "opportunities for growth exist in all types of regions"[83] and that "all [typologies of territories] have the potential to make substantial contributions to [national] economic growth".[84] Even so, it is crucial to note, as highlighted in the earlier sections of this chapter, that for economic growth to effectively translate into prospering, it must entail improvements

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80 Philip McCann, 'A Stocktaking of European Cohesion Policies and National Urban Policies', GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

81 United Nations General Assembly, 'Resolution 71/256. New Urban Agenda' (2016), https://bit.ly/3mkLHXu, paragraphs 13.e, 95 and 136.

82 "A total of 30 countries (41%) report NUPs that fulfil the criteria for SDG11.a.1, i.e. responding to population dynamics, ensuring balanced territorial development", in: OECD, UN-Habitat, and Cities Alliance, 'Global State of National Urban Policy 2021', 2021, 14, https://bit.ly/3MlzwnW.

83 OECD, *Regions Matter: Economic Recovery, Innovation and Sustainable Growth* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2009).

84 Fabrizio Barca, Philip McCann, and Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, 'The Case for Regional Development Intervention: Place-Based versus Place-Neutral Approaches', *Journal of Regional Science* 52, no. 1 (30 August 2012): 134–52, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9787.2011.00756.x; Philip McCann, 'Space-Blind and Place-Based Policy: Initiatives for Fostering Innovation and Growth', GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

Source: Hossam Hassan. Unsplash.
Sterilization and disinfection of onion seeds
in Arab El-Raml, Al Minufiyah, Egypt.

context",[85] facilitates the embedding of these activities in the territories that host them. This, in turn, improves the resilience of the territory's economic dynamism to external competition and to the volatility of the global economy, thereby increasing the sustainability of the territories that are stimulated. **Such approaches, in turn, lead to a more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth that can actually be felt by the inhabitants of regions, cities, small towns and rural municipalities.**

in the pillars of prosperity. It must also bring with it: better quality work, a healthy environment, improved living conditions, better health care, good education, greater safety, more freedom and improved governance, amongst other advantages. In order for this to happen, territorially-specific economic development pathways need to be promoted. As noted in Section 4, **by definition, these must include participatory processes that rely on the insights, perspectives and priorities of local economic actors. They must also include populations of all genders and ages, but particularly young people, minorities and migrant populations, engaged in both the formal and informal sectors. In short, they must favour more inclusive economic development**.

The engagement of local actors in the formulation of territorially-specific economic development approaches makes it easier to design policies that more accurately reflect local interests and priorities. This effectively ensures that growth generated by localized approaches is accompanied, and indeed reinforced, by the creation of quality employment opportunities. It also helps to protect territories against job destruction, which is a phenomenon that often accompanies crises and hits the most vulnerable territories hardest, thereby further fuelling interterritorial inequalities. It has been suggested that prioritizing economic activities that reflect and rely on local strengths and resources, coupled with efforts to "[improve] the [local] productive

5.2 The role that regional governments can play in promoting prospering pathways and reducing interterritorial inequalities

When adequately empowered and resourced, regional governments may enjoy a privileged position from which to coordinate and foster equality-driven actions together with the LRGs subject to their jurisdiction. This is particularly the case in federal countries, where state governments have considerable autonomy and resources. Regional governments can act as strong agents in the design and implementation of key economic development policies; in the management of rural-urban interlinkages; and also in the promotion, design and implementation of policy actions designed to support environmental sustainability.

85 Antonio Vazquez-Barquero, 'Inward Investment and Endogenous Development. The Convergence of the Strategies of Large Firms and Territories?', *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development* 11, no. 1 (1999): 79–93.

Regional governments, working in partnership with local governments, can develop more tailored strategies to address local vulnerabilities from a holistic understanding of territorial heterogeneity. This is important, firstly, to stimulate and support local governments and help them to adopt a *Prospering* pathway that can leverage the potential of local resources. This would, amongst other things, involve them tapping the traditional knowledges of the local population and its skills, the specific local climate conditions, the existing infrastructure, and particular social relations (see Section 4). This would be done to promote quality local work, and consequently, to help increase the equality of opportunities to live prosperous lives of the population spread across a given territory. It is important, secondly, to prevent a particular local economic development strategy applied at one specific location from hindering opportunities to prosper at another, and thus hampering the possibility of achieving balanced and sustainable territorial development. This may happen, for instance, as a result of the depletion of natural resources, of the creation of polluting externalities, or of distortions in the region's labour markets that increase inequalities.

In order to promote an approach to regional development based on just and environmentally sustainable endogenous economic growth, cooperation and solidarity, regional governments must create a context that is more conducive to, and favours, innovation and productivity, following the lines outlined above. Regional governments may seek to promote and facilitate partnerships between economic and local institutions. They can support local production (giving particular emphasis to local small and medium-sized firms) and offer financial and fiscal incentives to set up new local businesses. Regional governments can also invest in training and educational programmes to improve the skills of the local workforce and to improve the quality of local employment. Examples of how to involve local businesses and actors in improving local synergies include: incentivizing innovation and knowledge-sharing to strengthen local capacities; identifying real sources of development; helping territories to relaunch their economies; and increasing interaction between neighbouring rural and urban environments.[86]

Regional governments can also tailor their investment, giving priority to upgrading strategic infrastructure in those places that have fewer employment opportunities. Regional governments have a pivotal role to play in improving transportation and information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. This is required to allow their populations to access quality services and job and educational opportunities. As analyzed in detail in Chapter 6, such large-scale investments lock-in development patterns which may either aggravate existing interpersonal and interterritorial inequalities or, on the contrary, help to reduce them. It is therefore of critical importance that regional governments promote a socially just and environmentally sustainable vision and deliver integrated territorial development through well-researched and planned investments in infrastructure.

In response to economic cycles, many regional governments have led processes of regeneration and renovation aimed at protecting existing employment, improving its quality and creating new employment opportunities. Strategies to do this include involving the local business sector in calls for projects, and strengthening links with national programmes for sustainable and just economic development. Regional governments can also promote the creation of regional clusters that involve groups of local economic actors and institutions by taking advantage of their mutual proximity. Examples of this include cases of public business incubators and regional parks for micro, small and medium enterprises. Along these lines, some regional governments have promoted strategies for smart specialization which are mainly focused on research and technological development. This is the case, for example, of the **Basque Country** (Spain), which has promoted cluster policies to enhance cooperation among small and medium enterprises.[87] Other examples are provided by the **Pays de la Loire** and the **Bretagne** regions (France), which are currently fostering interregional cooperation based on geographic proximity and leveraging existing complementarities.

The role of culture in regional economic development is also significant. Recognizing an opportunity for regional economic growth, in 2021, the region of **Cusco** (Peru) launched its *Plan Estratégico de Desarrollo Regional Concertado* (*Strategic Concerted Regional Development Plan*). This tapped into the comparative advantages offered by its considerable historic and cultural

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86 UCLG, *GOLD IV: Co-Creating the Urban Future. The Agenda of Metropolises, Cities and Territories* (Barcelona, 2016), 264–66.

87 See: Interreg Europe, 'Leveraging Cluster Policies for Successful Implementation of RIS3', Clusters3, 2022, https://bit.ly/3Miclut. The Basque Country's government and other stakeholders established the Basque Industry 4.0 Pilot Group, with active clusters dedicated to advanced manufacturing technologies, the automotive industry, energy and ICT.

heritage. The regional government decided to promote the responsible development of its tourist attractions – through initiatives such as a commitment to managing and preserving the region's cultural, natural and archaeological patrimony. It has undertaken this task in collaboration with the local population, the government and the private sector. The case, analyzed above, of **San Antonio** (Chile) is a good example of regional development and culture.

In sum, coordinating efforts that combine national and regional policies should strengthen the interconnections and cooperation between different kinds of territories, such as rural areas, metropolitan areas and intermediary cities. This should subsequently promote more balanced territorial development, a necessary condition for a *Prospering* pathway to contribute to greater urban and territorial equality. Such efforts must not marginalize intermediary cities, small towns and their rural environments, but rather build on their privileged connections with local communities and territories.

Source: Adrian Dascal. Unsplash.
Inca factory in Cusco, Peru.

5.3 The importance of an LRG-led paradigm shift: Towards more intermunicipal cooperation and symbiotic, non-extractive urban-rural relationships

Promoting equality between territories may be more challenging for LRGs than doing so within their specific jurisdiction. A given LRG has the capability to promote redistribution within the municipality or region under its administration, which is already a highly complex endeavour. However, two or more municipalities, or regions, will, by definition, be subject to the administration of different LRGs. Even so, LRGs can address interterritorial inequalities by changing the vision of local economic development from one of competition between different localities and regions to one of solidarity and cooperation. This includes moving away from fiscal competitiveness, based on providing fiscal advantages to attract companies, and particularly international ones. This kind of competition between LRGs to attract businesses often entails reducing taxes and the unit cost of labour, which almost inevitably translates into there being fewer resources available to LRGs for promoting pathways to equality, and impacting on wages and labour rights for local workers. The result is often a "race to the bottom" if LRGs get involved in such fiscal competitiveness-based economic development schemes, which creates lose-lose situations in the mid- and long-run.

Cooperation can take different forms, from localized collaboration between municipalities to regional and supraregional collaboration. **Intermunicipal cooperation** is defined as several LRGs working together with the aim of providing a joint public service.[88] This is not a new instrument, but is an approach adopted by LRGs to reduce unit costs and improve service quality through economies of scale, attract investment funds reserved for projects of a specified minimum size (such as EU structural funds and other investment mechanisms), and enhance economic performance through coordinated planning while, at the same time, providing better environmental protection. Intermunicipal cooperation can have a single, specific purpose, or several different ones. It can also take place in many different ways. Types of such cooperation include: joint management, the sharing of public services, and the management of specific issues within a conurbation or with neighbouring settlements.

In Europe, the waste collection and recycling process exemplifies a well-established joint management model. For example, 63% of the local governments of large cities in France transfer responsibility for their waste management to a consortium of towns.[89] There are also many examples of nearby medium-sized towns and cities joining forces to share certain public services, such as hospitals. This approach has proven particularly helpful in ensuring the provision of services during complex emergencies such as the COVID-19 crisis. This was, for instance, the case at **Kempen** (Belgium), where the intermunicipal consortium model for the provision of social services allowed the repurposing of workers to address changes in user needs, particularly related to providing daily care for elderly older people care-dependent populations.[90] In such cases, the main service provision centre must be located in a specific municipality, but it can serve all of the municipalities within a given area; as a result, such solutions should be planned collectively. Intermunicipal cooperation is well-developed in countries like Spain (*mancomunidades*), Sweden (federations of municipalities and counties), and the USA, and also in many countries in Africa and Latin America. The previously mentioned local economic development agencies can also encom-

pass two or more municipalities. Examples of these would include those covering the **Vlore** (Albania) and **Sumadija/Pomoravlje** (Serbia) regions.[91]

Several examples, from different regions, showcase locally grounded and collaborative approaches undertaken by governments, community-based actors from civil society and the private sector. These approaches often build on traditional practices, including family and community networks, and complementarities between urban, peri-urban and rural communities to promote greater equity, with economic, social and environmental benefits that are shared between different territories. The **Pichincha** province (Ecuador), whose capital is Quito, Ecuador's largest city, has a metropolitan area with a population of over 2.5 million. The provincial government formed a consortium of LRGs in 2014 to promote strategic action to contribute to integral territorial development and the solidarity economy. One of the programmes launched was the *Quito Food Strategy*. This built upon the 18-year experience of the *Participatory Urban Agriculture Project* and included measures for strengthening urban agriculture production, extending agricultural development in peri-urban and rural areas, and developing a food hub and bio-fairs for the commercialization of local food products. The results have included the training of 6,000 entrepreneurs in product commercialization and generating 1.5 million USD in income for small producers, 84% of whom are women. In **Izmir** (Turkey), the city has promoted rural development through "machine parks" that provide tractors and other farm equipment to small producers, early warning systems for weather forecasting, and training in good agricultural practices. In **Seoul** (Republic of Korea), the Seoul Metropolitan Government created the *Urban-Rural Coexistence Public Meal Service* in 2017. This programme seeks to combat the steady decline in the rural population and the increasing economic disparities between rural and urban communities, which have increased exponentially over the past 50 years. It is also a response to growing concerns about food security and safety. Seoul has established intergovernmental agreements that have paired urban districts with rural authorities in order to supply meals to public institutions. The benefits of the scheme include a more stable commercial environment, offering fair prices to producers and quality food to consumers. It has resulted in a reduction in distribution costs and the number of intermediaries, and has promoted direct trade between farmers and population

88 Susanne Halmer and Barbara Hauenschild, 'Remunicipalisation of Public Services in the EU' (Vienna, 2014), https://bit.ly/38S132s.

89 See: European Commission, 'Inter-Municipal Cooperation among Small Municipalities', Green Best Practice Community, 2022, https://bit.ly/3Oe4VKr.

90 UCLG, Metropolis, and LSE Cities, 'Local Public Services in Crisis Mode: Adapting Governance Models to Exceptional Times', Policy Brief, 2022, https://bit.ly/3aBATkZ.

91 See: Ferrannini and Canzanelli, 'The Role of Local Economic Development Agencies for Innovation'.

Source: STREETNET IDEA B. Leifso Thona.
A street vendor in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, that integrated the IDEA organization, member of StreetNet, is now a community leader.

centres, more efficient monitoring of municipal food quality, and higher safety standards.[92]

The management of unique, codependent and symbiotic relationships between rural and urban areas has become increasingly strong in recent years. This relates to an important component in livelihoods and production systems in most regions of the world. Positive urban-rural partnerships are central to preserving key resources (such as water, land, agriculture and forests) and to the provision of key services and infrastructure for a *Prospering* pathway. Achieving this requires active cooperation between the LRGs, local businesses and communities concerned, within specific geographic areas, and careful management of the natural resources and economic activity therein, which are often related to agriculture and farming.

There are several noteworthy examples of the participatory management of natural resources such as forests, water bodies and renewable resources. The joint management of watersheds allows for the coordinated management of water resources within the limits of a specific geographical unit: a river basin. This must take into account the different components of the water cycle, and interactions between natural and human systems, and promote a balanced and sustainable use of resources. This type of operation has been imple-

mented in many parts of the world, including in Brazil, France, Malaysia and the Niger River Basin. In the latter, an integrated watershed management plan is shared by nine countries: Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Ivory Coast, Benin, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Chad.

As said, it is crucial to devote particular attention to horizontal cooperation to promote a *Prospering* pathway that helps to advance equality related to economic activity throughout the rural-urban continuum. Tackling the dependency of rural households on urban jobs in small urban areas or on seasonal population flows, from rural to urban environments and vice versa, is very important for reducing rural poverty. In the meantime, many urban areas exhibit some rural characteristics: the dependence of many low-income urban households on urban agriculture. It is therefore necessary to fully understand and support positive rural-urban linkages in all of their diversity and to promote democratic participation and grassroots leadership in order to galvanize partnerships that can have a positive impact in different territories. Balancing agricultural activities and employment with non-agricultural activities and non-farm employment is essential for territories and for the mobilization of local actors and communities. LRGs in France, Ecuador, Morocco and Ivory Coast, to name but a few, have sought to promote cooperation between local farmers, local urban markets, schools and companies working in traditional sectors through short-circuit local production systems. They have also done this through promoting alternative production models that seek to ensure food security and increase the contribution of agriculture to their territory's economy (e.g. "agri-villages" in **KwaZulu-Natal**, South Africa).[93] At the same time, institutional factors, regulatory constraints and political bottlenecks, asymmetrical information flows, the lack of cooperation among the institutions and actors involved, and the fragmentation of policy-making can all affect the effectiveness of urban-rural partnerships. A *Prospering* pathway that seeks to reduce interterritorial inequalities must take all of these factors into account.

92 UCLG Regions, 'Regional Economic Development to Promote Endogenous Dynamics and Territorial Solidarity', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Prospering (Barcelona, 2022).

93 UCLG, *GOLD IV: Co-Creating the Urban Future. The Agenda of Metropolises, Cities and Territories*, 267, 268, 278.

6 Conclusion

This chapter has advocated for a broad, inclusive approach to prospering as a pathway to urban and territorial equality, calling to move beyond the narrow definition of economic growth that has previously served as the main rationale for steering urban development. Redefining prosperity entails challenging both the structural features of our economies and the value premises on which they are built. Advancing a *Prospering* pathway to achieve greater urban and territorial equality thus means focusing policymaking efforts and resources on establishing and consolidating the pillars needed for populations to live fulfilling lives. This vision is central to both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda. The pillars of prosperity include stable incomes, decent work, secure livelihoods and the capacity to engage with urban governance and policy making in an inclusive, sustainable and participative manner. At the same time, advancing a *Prospering* pathway to achieve equality implies acknowledging that prosperity is dynamic, that it means different things to different people and in different places, and that it is processual, as it evolves over time and according to context.

Consequently, LRGs find themselves in a privileged position for promoting a *Prospering* pathway that is able to respond to the needs of diverse populations and to provide the things that they need and care about, including secure and good quality livelihoods. Based on this understanding, this chapter has proposed concrete roles that LRGs can play to advance prospering pathways related to the promotion of quality employment opportunities, just and sustainable endogenous economic development, and more balanced territorial systems.

In order to do this, the chapter started with an overview of the complex relationship that exists between cities, their territories and economic growth. Contrary to some of the most popular theories of mainstream economics, which hold that the economic growth of fast-growing urban areas and richer populations will trickle down to less dynamic areas and poorer citizens, the chapter highlights the fact that urban agglomeration and economic growth have tended to produce more and more inequality. Cities have been turned into the sites of inequality, largely as the result of development and territorial articulation based on neoliberal principles of competition, both within cities and between cities and neighbouring rural areas. This has fuelled social inequalities between citizens, and spatial inequalities between places, at the neighbourhood, city, regional and national levels.

The increases in inequalities, both between and within territories, that have taken place in recent decades have been linked to fundamental drivers in the market economy. The policy-driven liberalization of economies in favour of capitalist accumulation has been the most notable consequence of the deregulation of markets for goods, services and finance. This, in combination with the development of ICT and innovations in the field of transport, and underpinned by globalization, has profoundly transformed labour markets. Such transformations have meant that labour markets have become increasingly precarious and segmented. This is because these transformations have often taken place without either social protection or policies of redistribution. This has affected workers in different ways, according to their social identities and where their employment

Source: L'odyssée Belle. Unsplash.
Parque Forestal, Santiago, Chile.

is located. As noted, the deregulation of markets has also often entailed the deregulation of labour in order to reduce production costs. This has impinged upon the rights of urban workers and adversely impacted their living and working conditions. Production structures based on subcontracting and the shifting of employment to places where lower salaries are paid (which correlates with fewer workers' rights) have effectively locked in lower wages and created greater insecurity in these territories. This has anchored the territories affected to the lower levels of production value chains, created path dependency and entrenched inequalities between different territories.

In this regard, the chapter has explored the different strategies that each level of government can promote in order to reduce interterritorial inequalities. These include promoting national strategies that actively seek to produce more balanced and polycentric territorial development, of the type outlined in dialogue with LRGs. National urban policies and territorial policies (such as the EU regional cohesion policies) have been highlighted as tools which can be used to contribute to this objective while, at the same time, improving effective multilevel governance. Emphasis has also been placed on the strategic position of regional governments in promoting territorial-specific endogenous growth. Regional governments can do this by supporting local governments in bringing about a change of culture: moving away from competitiveness-centered approaches that create lose-lose scenarios in the medium- and long-runs and instead promoting solidarity- and cooperation-based approaches to economic development. The chapter has also highlighted how local governments have a key role to play in the consolidation and expansion of this culture.

This is something which they are increasingly doing, via different modalities of intermunicipal cooperation.

Moreover, production structures have led to casualization and increases in informal employment. Casualization has expanded as a result of the flexibilization of job contracts and the ICT-enabled expansion of the gig economy, which is largely unregulated in many parts of the world. These forms of employment are becoming increasingly common in both the Global North and the Global South. Their use (and abuse) often implies workers being hired as self-employed labour or as one-person enterprises, which means that the contracting firms have few, if any, employment obligations, such as having to make social security or pension fund payments. This, in turn, curtails workers' access to public safety nets, which include the provision of adequate healthcare, paid leave, protection against pay loss when laid off, accidents and old age. This is particularly important as global crises, including economic and non-economic shocks, become more frequent and intense. Furthermore, the current high proportion of temporary, casual and informal work, and the rate of unemployment, make it difficult for workers to organize themselves and to engage in meaningful, productive and inclusive social dialogue. Moreover, the lack of regulated working relations affects different populations in different ways, according to their social identity. The chapter places particular emphasis on informal employment, migrant workers, child labour and bonded labour, carefully noting how gender cuts across these groups, entrenching and fuelling inequalities. It is also important to note that workers in the informal economy, and particularly women (who comprise the highest proportion of informal sector workers), are those most vulnerable in times of global crisis and the ones who must bear the brunt of the deficit of decent work.

In response to these trends, the chapter has identified strategies to improve urban and territorial equality that LRGs can engage with. The chapter has devoted particular attention to local economic development as a leverage to promote more inclusive and endogenous economic growth. The chapter has also shown how locally planned and managed economic development is more likely to build on the specific strengths and resources of a community and territory, as well as to protect and enhance its environmental and cultural heritage. In order to achieve this, LRGs can promote LED built upon partnerships forged across sectors, with local communities and stakeholders, in order to improve the quality of jobs and reduce poverty. LRGs can also work to favour environmental sustainability and the inclusion of marginalized groups, and particularly women, young people, older people, people with disabilities, indigenous people and LGBTQIA+ populations. The chapter illustrates, presenting concrete experiences, how LRGs should actively seek to create quality employment and how they can do so. This implies providing skills development training, investing in labour-intensive infrastructure upgrading that employs local workforce, and applying inclusive procurement. The chapter also highlights the role that LEDAs can play in steering and updating LED practices and tools.

Special attention has also been given to the different ways in which LRGs can promote the social and solidarity economy modalities. These can include the promotion of cooperatives, associations, non-profit organizations and community contracting. In this way, LRGs can promote production patterns that are more sensitive to local conditions and that promote circularity. These tend to be more environmentally sustainable and, in some cases, such as the formalization of waste picking activity, may also contribute to the improvement of local employment conditions. In engaging with the SSE, LRGs may also promote shorter production circuits that can reduce carbon footprints while increasing the demand for local products and also local profits. These, in turn, can then be reinvested in the creation of more quality, local employment and infrastructure. LRGs can also steer SSE modalities, which are often embedded in the struggles of social movements, to move away from "business as usual" and to transform existing social and economic relations and activities, thus resulting in better urban governance. The chapter has also explored several financial instruments that LRGs may be able to apply to promote SSEOEs, such as social impact bonds, impact investment, social currencies, tax share donation and crowdfunding.

The chapter has also advised LRGs, and indeed all levels of government, to actively engage with regulatory frameworks in order to make them more transparent and serve as pathways to greater urban and territorial equality. In particular, LRGs should update outdated regulations and bylaws that hamper the development of businesses and the recognition of informal producers. They should also promote regulations governing the use of public space that take into consideration, on the one hand, that many businesses do not have any other location from which to operate and, on the other, that public spaces also need to cater for the needs of the wider population. The experiences highlighted show how LRGs have managed to safeguard livelihoods by protecting the safe pursuit of economic activities in

public spaces; this was particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governments should also revise housing regulations and land policies and make sure that they take into consideration the growing number of home-based businesses. Their numbers have grown significantly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and currently include high-, middle- and low-income workers. LRGs can play a strategic role in stimulating endogenous growth through securing places where people can live and work. This can be achieved via equality-driven land use policies and zoning regulations. This is particularly important for middle- and low-income workers, especially if they are employed in the informal sector.

Importantly, the chapter has highlighted how LRGs can embed quality employment conditions into all of the LRG-led strategies outlined above. These may relate to the promotion of: micro, small and medium enterprises, the SSE, the circular economy, social dialogue, the recognition and formalization of informal work, the endorsement of CSOs and NGOs, and/or engagement with ILO conventions. Promoting quality employment includes promoting resilience and safe and healthy working conditions. This also involves facilitating micro- and small-scale enterprise involvement with local governance and ensuring the inclusion of structurally discriminated groups, sometimes through affirmative action. LRGs have a determinant role to

play in fostering a change of culture by advancing a political and legal enabling environment and providing procurement instruments that set aside traditional price-centred approaches and focus on promoting equality as a valuable outcome.

The chapter has also spotlighted different strategies through which LRGs can broaden social security coverage. This is a critical lever to help advance urban equality and is something to which less than half of the world's population has access. These strategies include extending staff insurance coverage for workers who, although not directly employed by the local government, have working conditions that may be subject to municipal control or influence. They also include LRGs advocating and officially encouraging insurance companies to develop specific products for poorer workers, as well as engaging with CSOs, like SDI and other federations and associations of the working poor, that provide social protection schemes. For LRGs to create a *Prospering* pathway to equality, they first need to develop specific mechanisms that support informal enterprises and create virtuous cycles of trust, involving civil society and the informal sector.
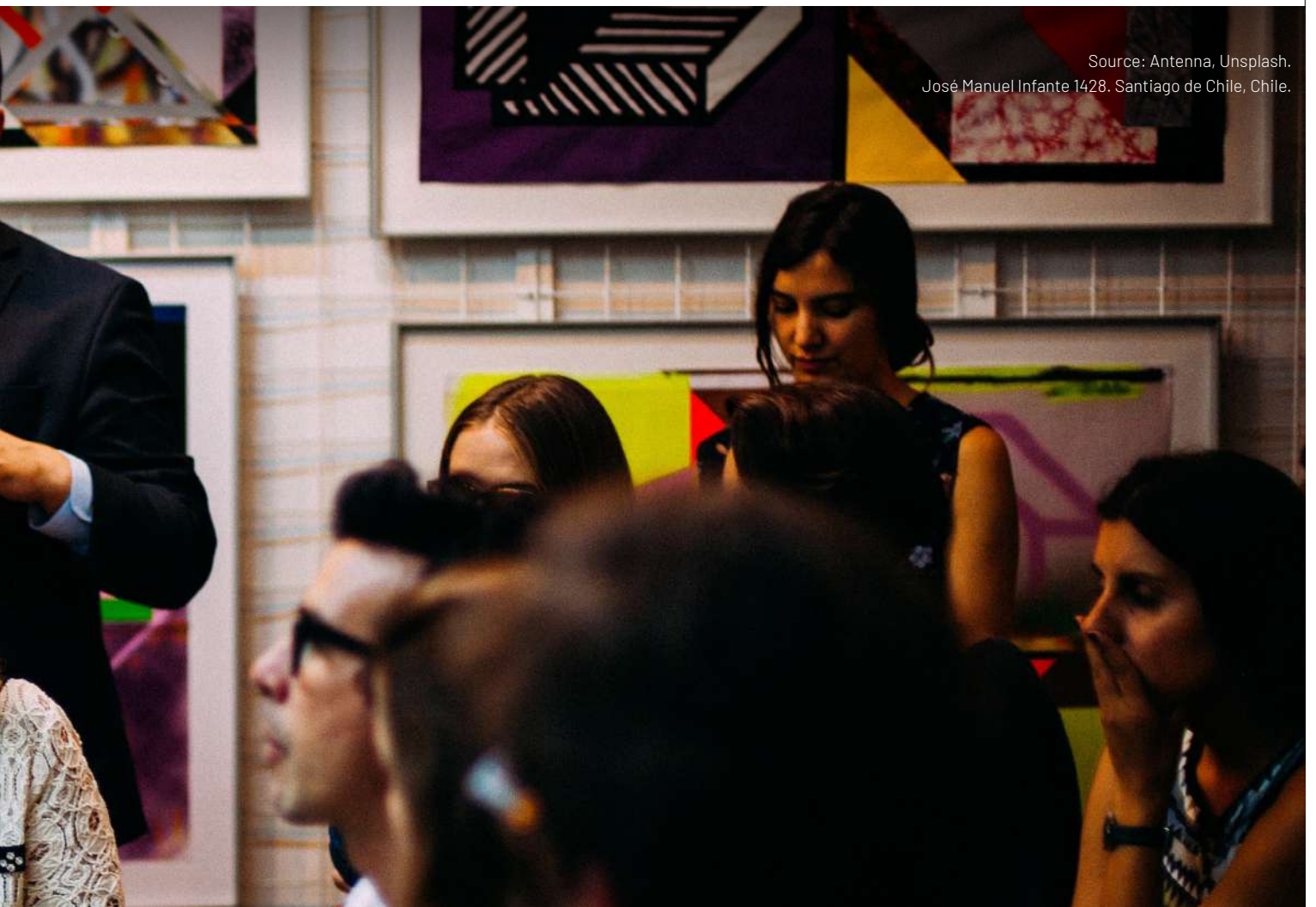

Source: Parij Borgohain, Unsplash.
Worker in Orissa, Koinpur, India.

09 ↓
Democratizing

Source: Antenna, Unsplash.
José Manuel Infante 1428. Santiago de Chile, Chile.

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Abstract

Deepening democracy is a fundamental condition to advance urban and territorial equality. Local democratic institutions that are accountable and open to all citizens and local stakeholders are crucial for the improvements in livelihoods, service delivery and the protection of human rights. Informal norms and formal rules underpin simultaneously the potential for democracy to address inequalities between groups. These dynamics also often apply to who can vote and the nature of local voting systems. In a context of rising income inequalities – and long-standing tensions about resources, identities, and rights – the task of deepening democracy is an uphill battle that requires multiple strategies.

Chapter 9 on *Democratizing* analyzes a range of "democratic innovations" that enable local and regional governments (LRGs) to promote citizen engagement in democratic decision-making; address inequalities in voice and political power; and counter discrimination, wealth inequalities, and spatial segregation in urban areas and territories. These democratic innovations occur in at least three different levels: deliberative spaces, participatory spaces, and spaces for collaborative governance. Looking at these different areas, the chapter examines novel forms and mechanisms for participation, deliberation and collaboration at the local level, as well as how LRGs can democratize their ways of understanding and acting to remedy urban and territorial inequalities. For these mechanisms to achieve transformative change, the chapter discusses how to recognize the diverse needs and aspirations of different groups of residents, as well as to ensure a place-based approach. In other words, it emphasizes that democratization is only a valid process if it leaves no one and no place behind.

The chapter demonstrates that a precondition for these democratic innovations to succeed is the establishment of an enabling environment, which includes a clear devolution of powers, along with the necessary funding, local capacity-building, and supportive legal and institutional frameworks. It synthesizes a range of promising experiences, including those led by Human Rights Cities and officials committed to transparency, accountability, open government and the fight against corruption. These experiences demonstrate different ways to counter elite capture, tokenistic forms of participation, and the cooptation of marginalized groups. They range from instituting political quotas and creating partnerships with marginalized communities; to creating departments and coordination mechanisms to tackle inequalities cross-sectorally; recognizing the diverse forms of knowledge and data-collection of civil society; and incorporating democratic values and comprehensive rights-based approaches in all activities, amongst others.

The chapter acknowledges the challenges regarding the implementation of these principles and mechanisms, especially in highly unequal cities and territories. These challenges are even greater when combined with other crises. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has sometimes been taken as an excuse for restricting democratic rights, as many governments have increased restrictions on the media and on personal expression, combined with increasing surveillance and limiting transparency, often under the justification of emergency powers. Acknowledging this and other challenges, and in order to overcome them, the chapter offers a discussion about the elements that democratic practices and strategies need to incorporate, through locally-tailored solutions, so as to renew trust and revitalize citizen engagement in local democracies.
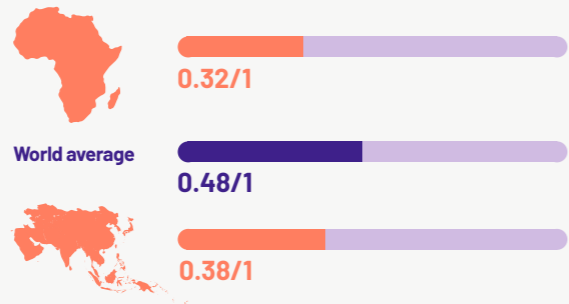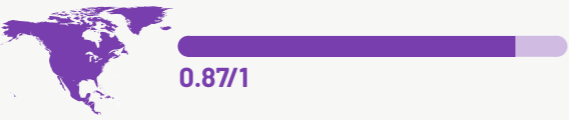
Countries in 2022:[a]

- **83** considered **free countries**
- **56** considered **partially free countries**
- **56** considered **not free countries**

- 42%
- 29%
- 29%
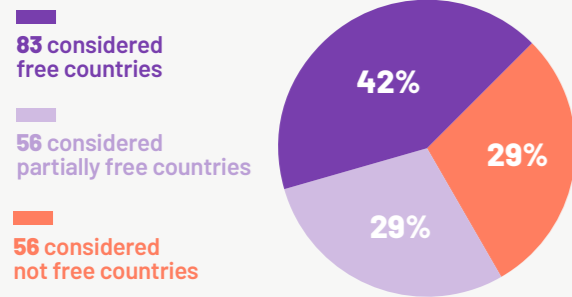
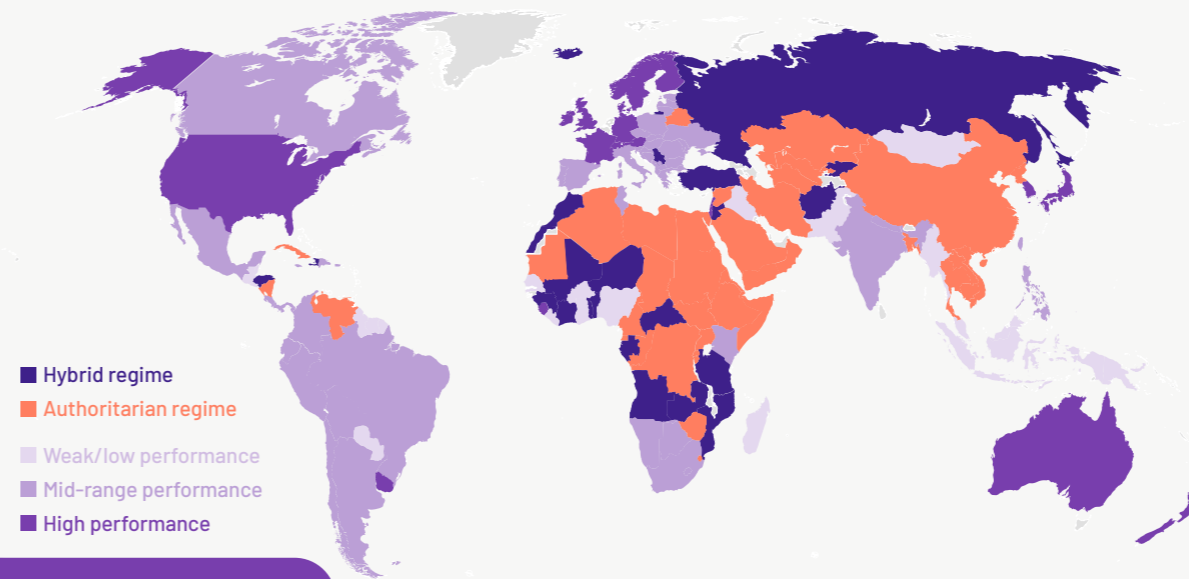The proportion of the global population living in "not free" countries is the highest since 1997:[a]

38%

Almost **4 in 10**
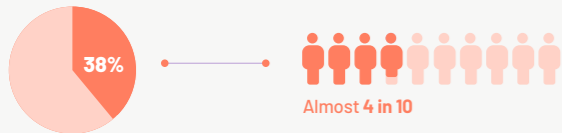
In 2020, Africa and Asia-Pacific remained under the world average regarding the freedom of regional and local elections.[b]

Africa: 0.32/1
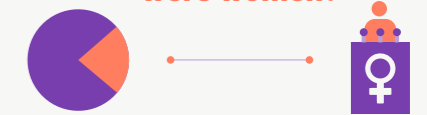
World average: 0.48/1

Asia: 0.38/1

North America had the highest local democracy score:[b]

0.87/1

In 2020, democratic and non-democratic regimes were as follows:[c]

- Hybrid regime
- Authoritarian regime
- Weak/low performance
- Mid-range performance
- High performance

Global democracy trends

In 2018, 20% of the world's mayors were women.[d]

Based on an analysis of 135 countries:

Global share of women in **local government**[d]: 33% women / 67% men

Global share of women in **national parliaments**[d]: 26% women / 74% men

Unequal representation of women and men in local governments

Why democratizing?

Institutionalization of local democracy

Countries with legal provisions for direct democracy[e]

Based on an analysis of 184 countries

- **48 countries** have regional-level provisions
- **65 countries** have local-level provisions

e.g. to institutionalize referendums, citizens' initiatives, agenda initiatives, recalls...

61 countries at the regional level and 53 at the local level do not have any kind of legal provision for direct democracy.[e]
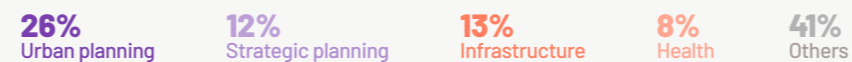
Optional referendums are the most common institutionalized form of direct democracy at the local level (they exist in 31% of the countries).[f]

- Optional referendum
- Mandatory referendum
- Recall
- No
- Other
- No data
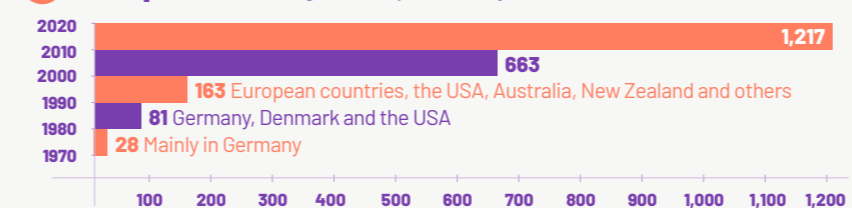- Multiple answers
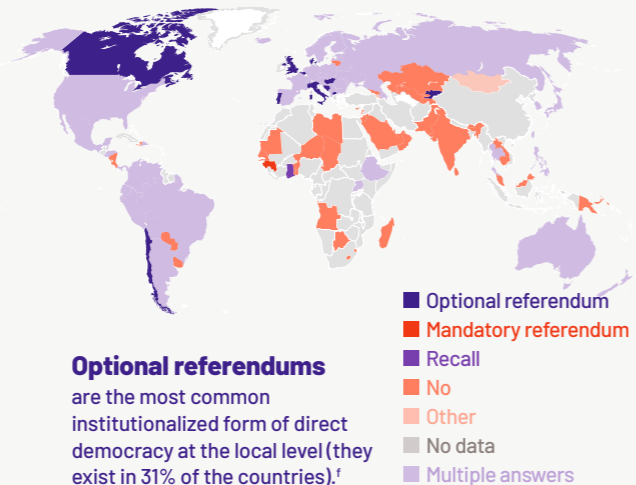
Deliberative processes

86% of deliberative processes were promoted by cities and regions (from 566 initiatives collected in OECD countries in 2021, implemented between the 1980s and 2021).[g]

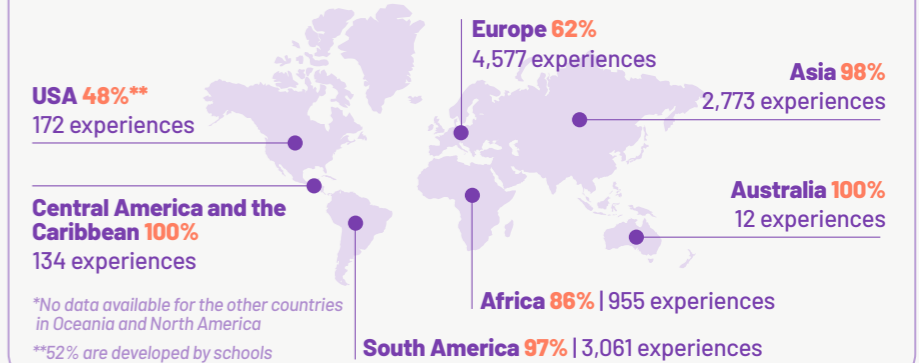The most frequent policy domains addressed through deliberative processes in OECD countries are:[h]

- **26%** Urban planning
- **12%** Strategic planning
- **13%** Infrastructure
- **8%** Health
- **41%** Others

↑ **Mini-publics** have grown exponentially since the 1970s:[i]

Year	Value	Note
2020	1,217	
2010	663	
2000	163	European countries, the USA, Australia, New Zealand and others
1990		
1980	81	Germany, Denmark and the USA
1970	28	Mainly in Germany

100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1,000 1,100 1,200

Participatory processes

11,600+ experiences between 1990 and 2020

Participatory budgeting is mostly promoted by LRGs in different regions of the world. The following data represent 11,600+ experiences developed between 1990 and 2020 and the percentage promoted by LRGs by region:[j]

- **Europe 62%** 4,577 experiences
- **Asia 98%** 2,773 experiences
- **USA 48%**** 172 experiences
- **Australia 100%** 12 experiences
- **Central America and the Caribbean 100%** 134 experiences
- **Africa 86%** | 955 experiences
- **South America 97%** | 3,061 experiences

*No data available for the other countries in Oceania and North America

**52% are developed by schools

Democratizing pathway

Participatory, deliberative and collaborative democracy

Towards urban and territorial equality

Mixing participatory, deliberative and collaborative processes and innovations according to the different needs and aspirations of local communities. These practices need to be institutionalized and combined with other components of the democratic system in order to sustain a systemic, place-based and long-term democratic approach.

- Enhanced and combined participatory, deliberative and collaborative democratic spaces
- Increased recognition of intersecting identities through a rights-based approach
- Empowered inhabitants that increasingly participate in local decision-making through dialogue and cocreation
- A supportive enabling environment that institutionalizes and fosters participation and other democratic mechanisms
- Increased partnerships and community-led initiatives that enhance the delivery of public services

Promoting transparency, accountability, open governance and the fight against corruption as foundational aspects for building trust and increasing civic engagement.

Fostering an enabling environment for local democracy and decentralization through supportive governance frameworks that ensure regular local elections and promote diverse forms of citizen participation from a rights-based approach. This entails recognizing power asymmetries and moving away from formal tokenistic forms of participation and cooptation that often lead to elite capture.

Promoting participatory processes that encourage the involvement of all residents in decision-making and monitoring of local governance, such as participatory budgeting and planning, community scorecards and social impact assessments, in such a way that enhances the provision of local government services.

Taking an intersectional approach to participatory policy and programming that allows for recognizing, valuing and building the capabilities of structurally discriminated groups. This implies actively facilitating their engagement in inclusive, deliberative and transparent bottom-up processes.

Using deliberative strategies at various stages of policy processes, including mini-publics, referenda, citizen initiatives and thematic or group-centred councils, encouraging more diverse sources of knowledge as well as fostering respect and mutual trust.

How can local democratic practices and innovations contribute to addressing complex multidimensional inequalities and to giving voice to people who are structurally marginalized?

How can an enabling environment for local democracy be created, as well as an environment for increased involvement of civil society and stakeholders in local decision-making and collaborative governance mechanisms?

Fostering collaborative spaces to co-produce services with civil society and across sectors, promoting grassroots empowerment, government accountability and cross-sectoral approaches. Community-led partnerships and community finance may be used to establish strong ties for long-term engagement.

Recognizing diverse forms of knowledge and data collection by civil society and other local actors, incorporating democratic values and comprehensive rights-based approaches in all activities.

1 Introduction: Complex, contingent links between democracy and equitable urbanization

Democratization may encourage inclusive decision-making processes and equitable development pathways, but making such possibilities a reality is highly contextually specific and often very challenging in unequal cities. Democratic local government is defined by the extent of *citizen control over decisions* and *equality amongst citizens* when it comes to exercizing such control at the local level.[1] There are three key pillars that sustain local democracy: (a) citizenship, equal rights and justice; (b) representative and accountable institutions and processes; and (c) citizen initiatives and participation. However, in the context of rising income inequalities and the long-standing disputes over resources, identities and rights in urban areas, contemporary champions of urban democracy may find themselves facing an uphill battle. For many cities, there is a spatial concentration of disadvantage where socio-economic, racial, ethnic, gender-related and other divides often coincide in particularly deprived neighbourhoods. In response, LRGs can foster social and spatial justice by improving the quality of life of low-income urban residents and promoting the values of democracy, equality and diversity.[2] This chapter will discuss how LRGs can work more effectively to promote citizens' equitable engagement in democratic decision-making processes, particularly focusing on how urban residents' active participation can tackle inequalities in voice and political power. It also considers how LRGs can address discrimination, wealth-based inequalities and spatial segregation.

1 Brechtje Kemp and Mélida Jiménez, "State of Local Democracy Assessment Framework" (Stockholm, 2013), 21–22, https://bit.ly/3wlTU1Y.

2 Susan S. Fainstein, "Urban Planning and Social Justice," in *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory*, ed. Michael Gunder, Ali Madanipour, and Vanessa Watson (London: Routledge, 2017), 13.

LRGs can play several pivotal roles in fostering urban equality. It is widely recognized that improvements in livelihoods, service delivery and human rights will all significantly benefit from more responsive and local democratic state bodies that are accountable to all of their citizens.[3] LRGs typically manage urban space, regulate the immediate consequences of economic activities, and provide essential services to city dwellers.[4] As underlined in previous chapters, LRGs can support several pathways towards equality by: (a) promoting a more equitable *distribution* of material outcomes (e.g. improved access to decent shelter, services, and livelihoods); (b) recognizing *multiple intersecting inequalities*[5] linked to gender, age, migration status, disability, sexual orientation, and/or other factors; (c) fostering *mutual care* and its important benefits for civic life, reciprocal support and solidarity between citizens; and d) promoting *parity political participation* (including via several democratic innovations), which is the main focus of this chapter.[6] Urban areas also face significant inequalities that are political in nature, such as stark disparities in levels of participation and multiple forms of power that may effectively exclude certain groups.[7] LRGs can adopt numerous strategies to reduce political inequalities. This can become an end in itself and provide a route towards improving the effectiveness of the state at reducing other inequalities.

While this chapter analyzes how LRGs can foster democratization and encourage citizen involvement in local decision-making (thereby promoting participatory and deliberative democracy), its findings complement those of Chapter 4 on *Commoning*, where the key locus of change is civil society action. Chapter 9 illustrates how LRGs can promote a favourable context for bottom-up, citizen-led initiatives and effectively partner with civil society organizations including in

Source: John Englart, Flickr.
Change, Freedom, Social Justice - Egypt Uprising protest in Melbourne, Australia, 2011.

the coproduction of goods and services (building on Chapter 4). In both chapters, this Report will repeatedly underline **the need to create inclusive spaces for engagement and for promoting more egalitarian interactions between citizens, local organizations and LRG officials**. As suggested by findings from Brazil's participatory budgeting initiatives, opportunities for equitable transformations are strongly shaped by the capacities of grassroots organizations and the nature of relations between LRGs and civil society.[8] Although Chapter 9's main concern is government interventions (rather than those of civil society), it will highlight the potential that LRGs have to encourage and scale-up the democratizing practices associated with civic action. Identifying the particular source of innovation can be tricky, given the potential synergy between LRGs and civil society actors.[9] Using examples from cities and territories of various sizes across the globe, Chapter 9 will analyze key enabling conditions for local democratization and how civil society actors have worked constructively with local officials.

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3 Helena Bjuremalm, Alberto Fernández Gibaja, and Jorge Valladares Molleda, "Democratic Accountability in Service Delivery. A Practical Guide to Identify Improvements through Assessment" (Stockholm, 2014), https://bit.ly/3vWJbMB; Ramon Canal, "Social Inclusion and Participatory Democracy. From the Conceptual Discussion to Local Action" (Barcelona, 2014), https://bit.ly/3M3ZBbK.

4 David Satterthwaite and Diana Mitlin, *Reducing Urban Poverty in the Global South* (London: Routledge, 2014).

5 Andrea Rigon and Vanesa Castán Broto, *Inclusive Urban Development in the Global South. Intersectionality, Inequalities, and Community* (London: Routledge, 2021).

6 Christopher Yap, Camila Cociña, and Caren Levy, "The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

7 John Gaventa and Bruno Martorano, "Inequality, Power and Participation – Revisiting the Links," *IDS Bulletin* 47, no. 5 (2016): 11–30, https://bit.ly/3L38SiK.

8 Gianpaolo Baiocchi, Patrick Heller, and Marcelo Kunrath Silva, *Bootstrapping Democracy. Transforming Local Governance and Civil Society in Brazil* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

9 Elinor Ostrom, "Crossing the Great Divide: Coproduction, Synergy, and Development," *World Development* 24, no. 6 (1996): 1073–87.

This chapter proceeds as follows. Section 1 offers detailed definitions of local democracy and discusses the significant challenges encountered in unequal local contexts. Section 2 provides a framework for cross-cutting priorities and opportunities to enhance local democratization, including through participatory mechanisms. It gives particular attention to "democratic innovations" and other similarly promising strategies. In the following sections, the chapter offers in-depth discussions about how LRGs can foster an enabling environment for democratization. They can do this through commitments to open governance, transparency and accountability, the rule of law and human rights (Section 3). Other potential pathways towards local democratization involve: creating instruments and spaces for deliberation (Section 4), participation (Section 5), and also multilevel, multistakeholder collaborations (Section 6). These strategies stand at the core of the democratization debate, and different practices, trends and challenges from around the world will be presented. For these instruments to achieve transformative change, it will be necessary to recognize the rights, needs and aspirations of marginalized groups (Section 7) and to adopt place-based, holistic approaches (Section 8). These strategies jointly comprise key elemental principles and foci that should help to achieve the ultimate goal of leaving no one and no place behind in local democratization practices. Chapter 9's conclusions summarize how policymakers can effectively engage with citizens and with grassroots organizations to foster urban equality, promote human rights and deepen democracy.

Source: participedia.net/case5248,
Gender-Responsive Participatory Budgeting in Wenling, China.

1.1 Understanding local democracy: The possibilities and pitfalls in unequal cities

While democracy and equal rights conceptually sit side-by-side, residents of democratic urban areas and territories may still experience stark inequalities in assets, incomes, access to public services, and levels of political recognition. The ideal of democratic LRGs is for policymakers to make difficult decisions about reforms that take into account the needs and interests of all urban citizens, as well as then agreeing compensation between the winners and losers of policy and programme changes.[10] Such an ideal assumes there is adequate knowledge, ample resources and relatively equal voices, but these conditions are difficult to deliver in contemporary democracies. **It is extremely challenging to combat inequalities, even under democratic regimes, when stark disparities often threaten democratic institutions.** Inequalities can lead to "imbalances in voice [and] representation [that] disenfranchise segments of the population, undermine trust in and support for democratic institutions".[11] Politicians and administrations may be captured by powerful elites, who typically fail to consider the perspectives, needs and interests of citizens from disadvantaged backgrounds.[12]

Although often understood as "rule by the people", definitions of democracy can range from a narrow focus on elections (minimalist definition) to broader visions that seek to fulfil an array of rights and freedoms. The narrow conception of a representative democracy that is limited to elections, which some authors call "elec-

10 In the following discussion, "citizenship" is used to refer to all those with a desire to participate fully in urban politics, regardless of their legal citizenship status.

11 Alina Rocha Menocal, "Why Inequality Is Democracy's Catch-22," in *Research Handbook on Democracy and Development*, ed. Gordon Crawford and Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021), 392–407.

12 Rocha Menocal.

toral democracy", highlights solely procedural aspects such as free and fair elections held on a regular basis. Other conceptualizations emphasize civil rights and liberties, checks and balances, and the rule of law.[13] Alternative definitions can offer a multifaceted conceptualization of democracy, with important potential to foster equitable and inclusive cities. Based on the premise that participation is a right, *participatory democracy* seeks to deepen residents' engagement in democratic decision-making and to usher in structural transformation.[14] *Deliberative democracy* is focused on respectful deliberations that utilize well-informed and reasoned justifications, which seek to persuade fellow citizens and to develop an inclusive political process.[15] *Collaborative democracy* is centred upon power-sharing and consensual decision-making, with power often being delegated to independent bodies or non-state actors.[16] As discussed below, these multilayered understandings of democracy can be promoted through utilizing different, but complementary, mechanisms for fostering urban equality.

Cities and territories vary significantly in their institutional and electoral systems, as well as in their local democratic processes, all of which influence the opportunities for promoting equitable, inclusive local governance. LRGs may differ in their electoral systems, the frequency of their elections and the mechanisms that they use to promote participation by, and the representation of, marginalized groups.[17] For example, some local executives may be elected (e.g. directly elected mayors with extensive powers), while other cities may have an executive committee in charge of the council and/or a city manager overseeing the implementation of local decisions. These different modalities can have different consequences on the decision-making capacity and accountability of mayors to their respective communities. **Rethinking institutional design and promoting equitable rules could encourage more inclusive local decision-making.** For

instance, constitutional mechanisms could be used to support gender parity in urban governance: in Mauritius, the Constitution permits gender quotas at the local, but not at the national level of government.[18] This is a critical issue, since in 2018 women represented only 20% of the world's mayors. In addition, there are great intraregional differences: in Latin America, for example, women make up 47% of elected mayors in Cuba, while this figure goes down to 0% in Belize and 3% in Peru and Guatemala, with the regional average being 15%.[19]

There is also a need for governments to adopt an intersectional approach that seeks to tackle overlapping, and often interrelated, inequalities based on factors such as gender, disability, race/ethnicity, age, income, and sexual orientation, amongst others.[20]

Even in thriving democracies, it can be difficult to address the complex inequalities found in many cities, and there are often multiple, highly contingent links between democratization and equitable development. Democratic regimes will need to bring multiple "veto players" on board and persuade elites to work in the public interest, but this may prove troublesome, especially if informal institutions and powerful groups are opposed to equality.[21] This is also challenging in contexts where resources are scarce and development trajectories are highly contested. **The potential for democracy to address inequalities between groups often depends, simultaneously, upon informal norms and formal rules. This also often applies to who can vote and the nature of local voting systems.**[22] Other key factors that influence how democracies can tackle inequalities may include the type of government (based on majority rule or power-sharing), the extent of decentralization, the nature of political coalitions, demographics and/or other differences between populations. Inequalities can potentially undermine democracy, with damaging effects on its social cohesion, legitimacy and

13 Svend-Erik Skaaning, "Democracy: Contested Concept with a Common Core," in *Research Handbook on Democracy and Development*, ed. Gordon Crawford and Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021), 27–44.

14 Carole Pateman, "Participatory Democracy Revisited," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 1 (2012): 7–19.

15 Jane Mansbridge et al., "A Systemic Approach to Deliberative Democracy," in *Deliberative Systems*, ed. John Parkinson and Jane Mansbridge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1–26.

16 Skaaning, "Democracy: Contested Concept with a Common Core."

17 Kemp and Jiménez, "State of Local Democracy Assessment Framework."

18 Elliot Bulmer, "Local Democracy" (Stockholm, 2017), https://bit.ly/3kYKpAQ.

19 UCLG Women, "The Transformative Commitment of Cities and Territories to Generation Equality," 2021, https://bit.ly/3LddxyT.

20 Vanesa Castán Broto and Susana Neves Alves, "Intersectionality Challenges for the Co-Production of Urban Services: Notes for a Theoretical and Methodological Agenda," *Environment and Urbanization* 30, no. 2 (2018): 367–386; Vanesa Castán Broto, "Queering Participatory Planning," *Environment and Urbanization* 33, no. 2 (2021): 310–329.

21 Rocha Menocal, "Why Inequality Is Democracy's Catch-22," 404.

22 Frances Stewart, "Horizontal Inequalities and Democracy," in *Research Handbook on Democracy and Development*, ed. Gordon Crawford and Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021), 420–440.

representation, particularly when elites can influence the rules to their own advantage.[23]

It is evident that the relationship between democracy and reducing inequalities is shaped by many contextual factors, all of which can influence pathways towards equality. Democracy can directly address political inequalities and support moves to establish a more level playing field, such as when citizens are equally involved in decision-making and holding service providers to account. **However, mechanisms to ensure accountability in local service delivery may not function properly, and service delivery may also be biased against particular groups (e.g. those with lower incomes and different identities) for a number of reasons (e.g. fees, land entitlements).[24]** Democracies can certainly facilitate more equitable decision-making processes and explicitly seek to incorporate marginalized groups (as explained in Section 7, which refers to migrants and refugees). Yet due to information gaps and power asymmetries, it can be a very laborious task to ensure that government action can reduce inequalities. More fundamentally, global capitalism is generating a series of pervasive economic inequalities that local governments are often ill-equipped to tackle, with many of these being associated with structural challenges.

Nevertheless, this chapter will explore important opportunities for democratic innovation utilizing different modes of participation and decision-making, alongside consideration of various mechanisms and frameworks to foster democratic local governance. Some cities have recently sought to reinvigorate accountable, transparent and inclusive local democracies as part of the "New Municipalist" movement, which has generated ongoing opportunities for mutual learning and knowledge-sharing across cities.[25] Other LRGs have used floods or other extreme weather events to create equitable alternatives and reframe the social contract with their most marginalized citizens (see Section 8, below). It is important to note that this chapter does not offer ready-made models or easy solutions to foster democratization. Indeed, strategies need to be tailored to address local contexts and citizens' priorities.

1.2 Ongoing trends in local democratization: Deterioration or revitalization?

In many urban areas, the national political context largely conditions the progress of local democracy. This section will briefly review transnational data on democratization, while noting their limited ability to capture emergent transformations at the urban and regional scales. Based on national data, recent studies have highlighted evidence of democratic backsliding and rising levels of political, social, and economic polarization across the globe. Freedom House's latest report, entitled *The Global Expansion of Authoritarian Rule*, found that in 2022 the proportion of "not free" countries had reached its highest level since 1997, with only about 20% of the world's population living in a "free" nation.[26] Similarly, the Varieties of Democracy Institute (V-Dem) uncovered a substantial erosion of democracy with populations living in liberal democracies down to the levels in 1989.[27] Many autocratic leaders have restricted the media, academia and civil society, and exacerbated polarization through demonization of opposition parties and by spreading misinformation that shapes domestic and international opinion, as well as by attacking elections and formal institutions. **Democratic decline has sometimes been linked to COVID-19, as many states have increased restrictions on the media and on personal expression, combined with increasing surveillance and limiting transparency, often under the justification of emergency powers.** Punitive responses during the COVID-19 crisis have led to human rights violations, including forced evictions and elevated levels of police brutality.[28]

23 Rocha Menocal, "Why Inequality Is Democracy's Catch-22," 393–95.

24 Bjuremalm, Fernández Gibaja, and Valladares Molleda, "Democratic Accountability in Service Delivery. A Practical Guide to Identify Improvements through Assessment."

25 Barcelona en Comú, Debbie Bookchin, and Ada Colau, *Fearless Cities: A Guide to the Global Municipalist Movement* (Oxford: New Internationalist Publications, 2019).

26 Sarah Repucci and Amy Slipowitz, "Freedom in the World 2021: Democracy under Siege" (Washington, DC, 2021), https://bit.ly/3ysZJh5.

27 Nazifa Alizada et al., "Democracy Report 2021: Autocratization Turns Viral" (Gothenburg, 2021).

28 Amnesty International, "COVID-19 Crackdowns: Police Abuse and the Global Pandemic" (London, 2020), https://bit.ly/3wp2UUq; Human Rights Watch, "Future Choices: Charting an Equitable Exit from the Covid-19 Pandemic" (New York, 2021), https://bit.ly/39Sg8BI.

However, this gloomy cross-national picture may miss important variations at the urban and regional levels, where significant democratic innovations are already underway. V-Dem's data suggest mixed trends in local elections, underscoring the need for finer-grained analyses at the subnational level (see Figure 9.1). From 1999 to 2021, some countries (those in green), including Iraq, Burundi, Lesotho and Tunisia, substantially strengthened the levels of local democracy in their elected local governments. However, other countries (represented by red dots in the figure) experienced an erosion of local democracy over this same period. Additional analyses

are needed to understand and promote the deepening of local and regional democracy. As backsliding continues in once-established democracies, "greater attention should be given to strengthening democracy at the state, provincial, territorial, and local levels".[29] Moving forward, democratization strategies can play a key role in generating a transformative recovery from COVID-19 and supporting more equitable urban development (as explained below).

Figure 9.1

V-Dem Local government index 1999-2021[30]
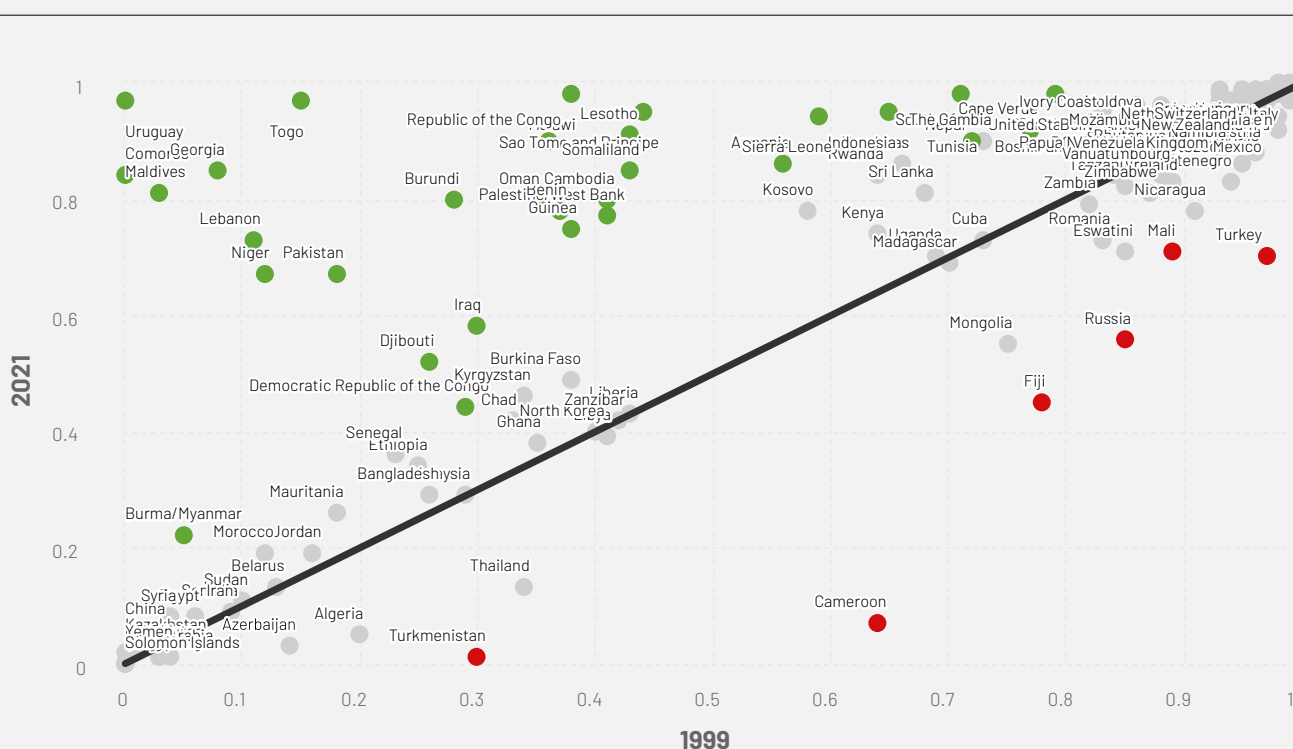
Source: V-Dem Institute, "Regional Comparison," Varieties of Democracy, 2022, https://bit.ly/3FzpRYZ.

Note: Certain considerations are needed to understand this index. One of these is the fact that this index does not consider intermediary levels of government, such as departments in Uruguay (the country's municipalities were created by the 2009 Decentralization Law, but in 1999 Uruguay already had elected departmental officials). Another consideration is that unexpected events can turn progress upside down in a very short time (e.g. the 2021 coup d'état which effectively annulled the progress made in Myanmar prior to 2020).

29 Repucci and Slipowitz, "Freedom in the World 2021: Democracy under Siege."

30 The scores are from 0 to 1, with zero being reserved for countries without elected local governments. Meanwhile, "a medium score would be accorded a country with elected local governments but where those governments are subordinate to unelected officials at the local level perhaps appointed by a higher-level body. A high score would be accorded to a country in which local governments are elected and able to operate without restrictions from unelected actors at the local level, with the exception of judicial bodies." See data available at: V-Dem Institute, "Regional Comparison," Varieties of Democracy, 2022, https://bit.ly/3FzpRYZ.

2 A framework for equitable, democratic urban pathways: Cross-cutting lessons and innovative mechanisms for participation

This section considers key factors and cross-cutting strategies that can facilitate urban democratization and also identifies significant challenges. It analyzes key lessons, but it does not seek to review the vast literature on urban politics, democratization and inequalities.[31] The following text acknowledges, but cannot do justice to, the heterogeneity in urban contexts and the political, social and economic inequalities facing contemporary municipal policymakers. In this solutions-orientated discussion, the text explores the **need to implement participatory, deliberative and collaborative mechanisms, meaningful decentralization and supportive legal and institutional frameworks in order to enhance democratization**. At the same time, it discusses the practical concerns and power-related struggles that face decision-makers when they seek to address the subject of urban inequalities.

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31 Patrick Le Galès, "The Rise of Local Politics: A Global Review," *Annual Review of Political Science* 24, no. 1 (2021): 345–63; Alison E. Post, "Cities and Politics in the Developing World," *Annual Review of Political Science* 21, no. 1 (2018): 115–33.

2.1 Democratization and participation in unequal cities and territories

Participatory mechanisms and strategies have proliferated globally. Many LRGs have embraced "participatory" strategies to engage with civil society groups and local stakeholders in order to better recognize local needs and aspirations and to make decision-making more inclusive and responsive. However, these approaches may struggle to fulfil their potential to enhance democratic governance in the context of profound urban and territorial divisions. Participation can be consistent with expanded inequalities if initiatives are dominated by professional or elite actors while low-income groups are marginalized, or if higher-income groups use the available participatory spaces to further their own needs.[32] **Residents may face inequalities of access due to a lack of time, skills and other resources, which produces disparities in participation.** This is especially a problem when participatory strategies are spearheaded by political actors ("invited spaces") rather than "popular" or "claimed" spaces created by bottom-up organizations.[33] High levels of poverty associated with limited resources have often led to clientelist relations between low-income residents and government.[34] Entrenched inequalities have also compromised the possibility of establishing meaningful participatory processes at scale.[35] But some processes, such as participatory budgeting and participation in

urban planning, have been recognized as "essential both for equitable democratic citizenship and for effective interventions".[36] **Understanding how to reinvigorate participation and promote democratization in unequal territories calls for a close analysis of experiences in particular contexts. This implies studying the types and quality of local participatory spaces, the forms of relationships between civil society and government, and the possibility of establishing equitable alliances at various scales.**

There are contradictory patterns regarding participation in the face of stark inequalities, and these varying outcomes underscore the need to pay careful attention to the actors and spaces in question. Participation in formal governance structures may dwindle in the face of major political or economic divides: marginalized residents with limited time, money and civic skills may exhibit declining trust in political institutions, as well as a sense of powerlessness that could further inhibit their participation.[37] These socially or economically excluded residents may reject state-led participatory processes, potentially creating a vicious circle in which inequalities contribute to rising political instability. This may further deepen inequalities alongside declining participation and trust in formal politics.[38] At the same time, it is important to consider other (bottom-up) spaces for participation that may foster democratization and help combat inequalities. Whilst inequalities may curtail participation in formal political spaces, there may still be vibrant social movements whose members could subsequently be brought into formal politics as voter preferences shift (e.g. the election of anti-corruption activist Tomislav Tomašević as the Mayor of Zagreb, in 2021[39]). More generally, **civil society groups seeking to foster transformative change can work across different spaces, scales, and power structures by developing coalitions with sympathetic officials and/or other stakeholders**.[40]

32 Edward T. Walker, Michael McQuarrie, and Caroline W. Lee, "Rising Participation and Declining Democracy," in *Democratizing Inequalities: Dilemmas of the New Public Participation*, ed. Caroline W. Lee, Michael McQuarrie, and Edward T. Walker (New York: New York University Press, 2015).

33 Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari, *Participation: The New Tyranny?* (London: Zed Books, 2017).

34 Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson, *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Adam Michael Auerbach and Tariq Thachil, "How Clients Select Brokers: Competition and Choice in India's Slums," *American Political Science Review* 112, no. 4 (2018): 775–91.

35 Diana Mitlin, "Editorial: Citizen Participation in Planning: From the Neighbourhood to the City," *Environment and Urbanization* 33, no. 2 (2021): 295–309.

36 Mitlin.

37 Gaventa and Martorano, "Inequality, Power and Participation – Revisiting the Links," 13.

38 Gaventa and Martorano, 15.

39 Anja Vladisavljevic, "Former Activist and MP Tomislav Tomasevic Won the Mayoralty in a Second-Round Run-off Vote in the Croatian Capital Zagreb, Comfortably Beating His Right-Wing Rival," *Balkan Insight*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3sq3K1K.

40 John Gaventa, "Linking the Prepositions: Using Power Analysis to Inform Strategies for Social Action," *Journal of Political Power* 14, no. 1 (2021): 109–30.

While challenging to achieve in practice, scaling-up participation in cities can potentially offer substantial benefits for democratization, as well as support for more effective and equitable interventions. For instance, linking-up grassroots groups across a city can help to overcome the isolation of associations of low-income residents, thereby bolstering social capital and inclusion.[41] As shown by Thailand's Community Organizations Development Institute, local government and grassroots actors can collaborate effectively to transform informal settlements at scale and also to reach other goals, particularly when they are empowered to do so by their national governments (see Section 6, below, and Chapter 4, Section 2.6). Scaled-up participation can enable LRGs to rationalize investments with the aid of inputs from community leaders, as local officials may otherwise struggle to reach the same scale. By expanding and deepening levels of participation across cities, officials can ensure that no single community can exert a disproportionate influence upon local policy development. Relatedly, **scaled-up participation can help local officials to develop more appropriate strategies if they understand and can adequately respond to the priorities of different groups**.[42]

There are several possible strategies that may help local officials seeking to promote meaningful participation, tackle urban inequalities, and address challenges such as cooptation or the exclusion of structurally discriminated groups. Key practical suggestions include holding participatory meetings at **convenient times and in convenient spaces**. This is particularly relevant for women who may otherwise struggle to juggle their caring duties with their other roles.[43] In a similar vein, it is important to choose what could be considered **appealing locations** for the intended participants.[44] Officials should also seek to **avoid "hijacking" vulnerable people's voice**. This occurs when some participatory initiatives unhelpfully substitute the direct participation of low-income residents with that of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or local elites, or coopt marginalized residents rather

Source: Logan Weaver via Unsplash

than amplifying their voice in decision-making.[45] More broadly speaking, it is important to **ensure that participation can effectively reach disadvantaged groups** and not just those who are most accessible; this may entail communicating in several **different languages** spoken in the city or territory in question.[46] Possible LRG responses may include **partnering with trusted intermediaries and bottom-up organizations**: for example, refugee-led organizations can often help to reach displaced populations, as in the context of the COVID-19 crisis.[47] A further strategy is to **network local groups and organizations**, enabling them to amplify their voices through city-wide platforms (see Section 6, with reference to Thailand). As discussed in the next subsection, **it is crucial not only to institutionalize participation, but also to develop strategies that can couple participatory practices with other parts of the democratic system**.[48]

41 Mitlin, "Editorial: Citizen Participation in Planning: From the Neighbourhood to the City."

42 For Roma residents' participation in Serbian planning, see: Zlata Vuksanović-Macura and Igor Miščević, "Excluded Communities and Participatory Land-Use Planning: Experience from Informal Roma Settlements in Serbia," *Environment and Urbanization* 33, no. 2 (2021): 456–477.

43 Yap, Cociña, and Levy, "The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality."

44 Yves Cabannes, "Participatory Budgeting: Contributions to Reversing Social and Spatial Priorities," in *Research Handbook on Democracy and DevelopmentDevelopment*, ed. Gordon Crawford and Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021), 442–461.

45 Cabannes.

46 Cabannes.

47 Alexander Betts, Evan Easton-Calabria, and Kate Pincock, "Refugee-Led Responses in the Fight against COVID-19: Building Lasting Participatory Models," *Forced Migration Review* 64 (2020): 73–76.

48 Graham Smith, "Reflections on the Theory and Practice of Democratic Innovations," in *Handbook of Democratic Innovation and Governance*, ed. Stephen Elstub and Oliver Escobar (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019), 572–582.

2.2
Decentralization, democratization and a supportive legal and institutional framework for local democracy

Decentralization reforms have proliferated across the globe and have often sought to foster local democratization. Decentralization in the Global South began in the 1980s and 1990s, with many LRGs gaining increased access to funds and assuming new responsibilities for delivering public services (see Chapter 3, and particularly Box 3.3, for a definition of "decentralization").[49] The sequencing of decentralization reforms can be crucial: if political and fiscal decentralization occurs early in the process, this tends to increase the democratic power of mayors and governors. In several regions, local politics are increasingly important due to three interrelated and ongoing processes: democratization, urbanization and decentralization, but there is no automatic connection between decentralization and democratization.[50] Key challenges related to democratic decentralization may revolve around corruption, elite capture, and other exclusionary practices (such as clientelism). **As with participatory initiatives, the links between democratization and decentralization must be carefully scrutinized and cannot be assumed to inevitably lead towards greater equality.**

Decentralization is often proposed as a strategy to improve accountability, responsiveness and service delivery, but such benefits are often difficult to achieve in practice. Strained central-local relations and the

inadequate devolution of funding, unclear or overlapping lines of authority, and other challenges to the implementation of decentralization reforms have been common in many countries.[51] Even when residents can participate in well-structured political mechanisms, "they may disengage from local democratic processes if they do not feel they receive sufficient benefits from local governments, [such as when LRGs] have weak fiscal and administrative means to deliver services".[52] In many regions, insufficient fiscal resources are available at the local level to deliver services ("unfunded mandates").[53] Opposition parties have sometimes been elected to LRGs but have then come into conflict with central governments. This type of situation can hamper both service delivery and democratization.[54] Difficulties in central-local government relations may also include fiscal and resource management, and disagreements over how to support the rights and inclusion of migrants and/or other marginalized residents.[55] The text below considers how innovative approaches may help to address such challenges and foster more equitable urban development.

Brazil has shown that **local democratic reform can be founded upon supportive legislation and institutions at multiple levels and political commitment to equitable development**. Brazil's Constitution and its City Statute (dating from 1988 and 2001, respectively) established a pioneering framework to foster social justice and combat inequalities (particularly with respect to access to land and housing), while also promoting democratic participation in cities. Responding to mobilizations by social movements and other progressive groups, the Constitution and City Statute helped usher in participatory approaches to policymaking and planning alongside the regularization of informal settlements.[56] The City Statute created an array of processes, mechanisms, and tools that helped to ensure collective rights and to regularize informal settlements; it also sought to prevent speculation

49 Post, "Cities and Politics in the Developing World." For a definition of "decentralization", see Chapter 3 of this Report.

50 Galès, "The Rise of Local Politics: A Global Review," 14–15.

51 Paul Smoke, "Rethinking Decentralization: Assessing Challenges to a Popular Public Sector Reform," *Public Administration and Development* 35, no. 2 (2015): 97–112.

52 Smoke, 100.

53 Victoria A. Beard, Anjali Mahendra, and Michael I. Westphal, "Towards a More Equal City: Framing the Challenges and Opportunities," World Resources Institute Working Paper (Washington, DC, 2016), https://bit.ly/3M4ZoVx.

54 Danielle Resnick, "Urban Governance and Service Delivery in African Cities: The Role of Politics and Policies," *Development Policy Review* 32, no. 1 (2014): 3–17.

55 Kemp and Jiménez, "State of Local Democracy Assessment Framework," 27.

in land and property.[57] The City Statute contains a mechanism that compels the development of under-utilized urban properties and legalizes land occupied by low-income residents. It also, more generally, tasks the state with promoting social justice via several instruments that foster greater equality. Through further precedent-setting measures, the City Statute helped to decentralize and democratize urban governance by requiring cities to develop participatory master plans and budgets. To help lead and implement these reforms across several scales of government, Brazil set up a Ministry of Cities and the National Council of Cities; it also established related pieces of legislation to further promote transparency and integrated planning. A law on access to information (2011) mandated public access to all state-generated data. This also led to the establishment of online municipal portals that allow citizens to monitor local government activity (thereby supporting open government and accountability).[58] Taking all of these measures together, Brazil has shown how significant urban reforms can be implemented through the introduction and use of concrete tools, legislative requirements and new institutions, and an overarching commitment to fostering social justice.

Nevertheless, the significant challenges encountered in establishing Brazil's City Statute and realizing its potential suggest that institutionalization is necessary, but insufficient, to support equitable, democratic urban development. Despite the Statute's avowed aims, socio-spatial segregation and rampant speculation continue in Brazil's cities, while "participatory" processes often favour property developers and wealthier groups.[59] Citizen participation remains non-binding and is often ignored. Institutionalized participation does not require the executive and legislative branches of Brazil's administration to ensure implementation in practice. Many

cities have simply copied and formally endorsed the City Statute's text on the prevention of speculation, but have rarely enforced it in practice. Litigation is often utilized to prevent the violation of basic rights, rather than in the affirmative way envisaged by the City Statute.[60] Furthermore, Brazil still lacks complementary policies needed to reform relevant legislation (e.g. governing taxation and land rights) and to coordinate interventions across multiple tiers of government, and there has been only limited emphasis on addressing historic injustices.[61] Nevertheless, there are significant opportunities for Brazil's social movements and other civil society groups to develop their methods of insurgent citizenship both within, and outside, formal spaces.[62] These lessons are also relevant for other urban contexts where the institutionalization and uptake of democratic reforms may again prove quite challenging. However, with longer-term time horizons and an array of innovative tools, LRGs can substantially promote democratization and tackle the complex problem of urban exclusion.

2.3 "Democratic innovations" to foster equitable urban and territorial development

"Democratic innovations"[63] can take several forms and occur in multiple domains. They may be sparked by a variety of actors, and it is crucial to examine their implications for more equitable urban trajectories. Many

56 Edesio Fernandes, "Urban Planning at a Crossroads: A Critical Assessment of Brazil's City Statute, 15 Years Later," in *The Routledge Companion to Planning in the Global South*, ed. Gautam Bhan, Smita Srinivas, and Vanessa Watson (London: Routledge, 2017), 11; Teresa Caldeira and James Holston, "Participatory Urban Planning in Brazil," *Urban Studies* 52, no. 11 (2015): 2001–2017.

57 The Statute "firmly replaced the traditional legal definition of unqualified individual property rights with the notion of the social function of property so as to support the democratisation of the access to urban land and housing [...] [It emphasized] the capture for the community of [some] surplus value generated by state action that has been traditionally fully appropriated by land and property owners". Fernandes, "Urban Planning at a Crossroads: A Critical Assessment of Brazil's City Statute, 15 Years Later," 49, emphasis added.

58 Abigail Friendly and Kristine Stiphany, "Paradigm or Paradox? The 'cumbersome Impasse' of the Participatory Turn in Brazilian Urban Planning," *Urban Studies* 56, no. 2 (2019): 271–287.

59 Caldeira and Holston, "Participatory Urban Planning in Brazil."

60 Raquel Rolnik, "Ten Years of the City Statute in Brazil: From the Struggle for Urban Reform to the World Cup Cities," *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 5, no. 1 (2013): 54–64.

61 Fernandes, "Urban Planning at a Crossroads: A Critical Assessment of Brazil's City Statute, 15 Years Later."

62 Caldeira and Holston, "Participatory Urban Planning in Brazil."

63 The concepts "democratic innovation" and "democratic innovation family" build on Elstub and Escobar's extensive work on democracy and governance and their "Democratic innovation families" framework. Stephen Elstub and Oliver Escobar Rodriguez, *Handbook of Democratic Innovation and Governance* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019).

of these innovations have been put into practice by LRGs, either during the past decade or even earlier. In the text below, rather than suggesting novelty, "innovations" in democratization practices will be highlighted if they can move towards the promotion of urban and territorial equality. Studies of innovations can uncover how, by whom, and where change can occur (including from the neighbourhood to regional scales) and also acknowledge any shortcomings in practice. There is a need to examine the innovative actions of elected officials, local administrations and civil society organizations, all of whom may offer important insights. Many democratic initiatives have already demonstrated that they can potentially foster deep societal transformation; these can occur in several fields outside of formal politics, such as cultural activities and civil society initiatives.[64] In past debates about democratic innovations, researchers and practitioners have often overlooked their failures and/or unintended negative consequences, particularly in relation to their capacity to address the needs and aspirations of different groups within society.[65]

This chapter addresses these debates and gaps and argues that there are different, but complementary, instruments and mechanisms available through which democratic innovation can take place. Drawing on relevant insights from researchers and practitioners, as well as on the contributions to the GOLD VI process, this chapter argues that **LRGs can advance democratizing pathways for urban and territorial equality via several distinct instruments that jointly improve democratic practices**. These instruments relate to three spaces for democratic practices promoted by LRGs, as follows:

(a) Deliberative spaces: instruments of democratization aimed at promoting and improving spaces for deliberation, including mini-publics (such as citizens' juries and citizens' assemblies, selected by sortition), as well as referenda and citizens' initiatives (see Section 4).[66]

(b) Participatory spaces: instruments of democratization that aim to improve and promote spaces for participation through joint decision-making. These include participatory budgeting and planning, and other participatory strategies that utilize self-selection and aggregation to formulate and make decisions (see Section 5).

(c) Spaces for collaborative governance: instruments of democratization that aim to provide and promote spaces for collaborative governance. These include a wide range of possibilities and fields of action, such as coproduced services and housing delivery, as well as other strategies based on building consensus (see Section 6).[67] Formal financial mechanisms, such as community development funds supported by local or national governments, may help to enhance inclusive economic development and responsive local governance. Collaborative governance may also involve cooperation with, and between, different levels of government, as shown by several examples of successful metropolitan governance.

Some of these innovations use digital tools ("civic technology") to foster deliberation and broader participation, although their impact on inclusion has had mixed results (see Box 9.1). The instruments created for these spaces will not, however, be capable of fully democratizing urban and territorial governance by themselves. **LRGs should also ensure that these instruments are implemented in a way that leaves no one and no place behind**, following the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Firstly, **for these mechanisms to achieve truly effective pathways to urban and territorial equality, they will need to establish democratic arrangements that respond to a diverse range of citizen needs and aspirations**. The innovations analyzed in Section 7 focus on recognizing the intersecting needs of structurally discriminated groups, who are often excluded from deliberative, participatory and/or collaborative spaces. Section 7 therefore emphasizes ways in which democratic practices can acknowledge and promote the different forms of knowledge and rights of marginalized groups (such as refugees, migrants, older people, young people and the LGBTQIA+ community). Relatedly, innovations in cultural rights can generate significant opportunities to recognize diverse needs and aspirations, thereby helping to foster urban equality and deepen democratizing pathways.

64 Hans Asenbaum, "Rethinking Democratic Innovations: A Look through the Kaleidoscope of Democratic Theory," *Political Studies Review*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3l2c9oc; Eva Sørensen and Signy Irene Vabo, "A Public Innovation Perspective on Change in Local Democracy," *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal* 25, no. 1 (2020): 1–20.

65 Paolo Spada and Matt Ryan, "The Failure to Examine Failures in Democratic Innovation," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50, no. 3 (2017): 772–78.

66 Mansbridge et al., "A Systemic Approach to Deliberative Democracy"; OECD, *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).

67 Elstub and Escobar Rodríguez, *Handb. Democr. Innov. Gov.*

Source: Angula Berria, Flickr.
Grafitti claims for citizen participation.

Secondly, GOLD VI contributions have also outlined **the importance of incorporating spatial policy and planning considerations** to build democratizing pathways towards urban and territorial equality. Area or place-based approaches can help tackle inequalities in marginalized areas through informal settlement upgrading, neighbourhood renewal strategies, and climate or disaster planning. When upgrading programmes use participatory planning approaches and cocreate multisectoral interventions with residents (e.g. by improving housing, livelihoods, and public spaces), they provide opportunities to tackle the multiple inequalities facing excluded groups and populations (see Section 8). It is important for area-based strategies to not only work at the appropriate spatial scale and to respond to multisectoral concerns, but also to effectively partner with local grassroots organizations and civil society groups. In turn, there is a need to **establish the most suitable scale for democratizing pathways, which must be rooted in particular local contexts and concerns**.

Finally, the GOLD VI contributions have highlighted the pivotal role of an **enabling environment for democratic institutions and practices**, in order to achieve their mission to improve urban and territorial equality. These conditions are associated with processes of decentralization and open governance, and also with the existence of legal and institutional apparatuses that promote human rights frameworks. Apart from setting the scene for the above-mentioned instruments and democratic arrangements to be effective, efforts to promote an enabling environment can also offer a site

for democratic innovations that can help to promote urban and territorial equality.

Participatory and deliberative approaches to democracy can potentially be melded, and together they can offer useful pathways towards creating more equitable, inclusive cities and territories.[68] It is entirely possible to "combine participatory and deliberative logics by sequencing them as part of an overarching process that [can realize] democratic goods, such as inclusion [and] popular control".[69] Not only can LRGs utilize both participatory and deliberative mechanisms, but civil society actors may also gain from engaging with public authorities in several different ways in order to bring about change and prom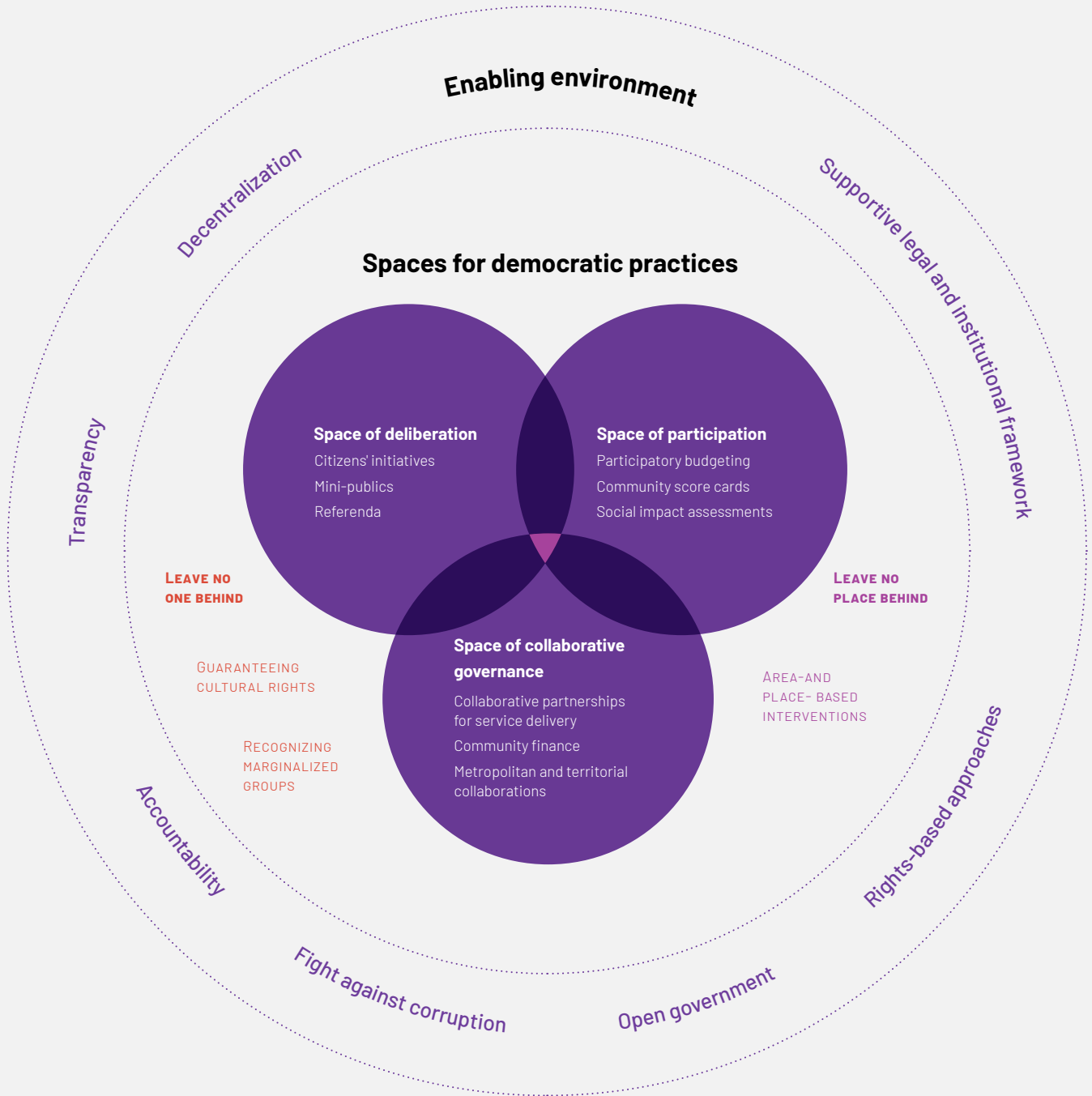ote more vibrant democracies. **Significantly, democratic innovations can incorporate a blend of deliberative, participatory and collaborative instruments, which can be combined with an array of other mechanisms for promoting democratization.** While these strategies must respond to local contexts and priorities established by local citizens, it is important for LRGs to continue developing innovative experiments capable of seizing upon new opportunities to deepen local democracy.

The following sections will delve into the instruments, spaces, principles and considerations required for democratic innovation, which may offer complementary pathways towards greater urban and territorial equality (see Figure 9.2 for a graphic visualization of all these elements). Section 3 examines key principles and mechanisms that can help create an enabling environment for establishing democratizing pathways. The rest of the chapter then focuses on innovations associated with the three spaces of participatory, deliberative and collaborative democracy (Sections 4, 5 and 6). Understanding that the principle of leaving no one and no place behind is fundamental if these instruments and spaces are to have significant impact, the chapter then discusses two questions. The first one involves how to recognize the diverse needs and aspirations of different marginalized groups and individuals (Section 7). The second one focuses on how to cocreate and implement place-based approaches to democratizing, using evidence from initiatives in historically excluded urban areas (Section 8).

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68 Canal, "Social Inclusion and Participatory Democracy. From the Conceptual Discussion to Local Action."

69 Elstub and Escobar Rodríguez, *Handb. Democr. Innov. Gov.*, 17.

Figure 9.2
Elements for democratic innovation

Enabling environment

Decentralization

Supportive legal and institutional framework

Transparency

Spaces for democratic practices

Space of deliberation
Citizens' initiatives
Mini-publics
Referenda

Space of participation
Participatory budgeting
Community score cards
Social impact assessments

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

LEAVE NO PLACE BEHIND

GUARANTEEING CULTURAL RIGHTS

Space of collaborative governance
Collaborative partnerships for service delivery
Community finance
Metropolitan and territorial collaborations

AREA- AND PLACE- BASED INTERVENTIONS

RECOGNIZING MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Accountability

Rights-based approaches

Fight against corruption

Open government

Source: authors

3 Creating an enabling environment for democratizing pathways: Innovations to promote open governance, the rule of law and human rights in urban areas

The conditions within which LRGs operate have a direct impact on the extent to which they can promote democratizing pathways towards urban and territorial equality. These conditions are shaped by processes of decentralization (explored in Section 2.2, and also Chapter 3), as well as by systems of governance (associated with transparency, accountability, open governance and the fight against corruption) and legal systems (associated with the rule of law and human rights frameworks). Taken together, **these conditions create the enabling environment that LRGs require to help deepen democracy**. Democracy has traditionally sought to uphold the

rule of law and to defend and extend civil rights.[70] More recently, democratic frameworks have also sought to incorporate and promote social, cultural, environmental, and economic rights. Section 3 examines innovations currently taking place in this enabling environment, including those led by Human Rights Cities, advocates of open government, and related efforts to support transparency and accountability while fighting corruption. Subsequent sections of this chapter will discuss LRGs' strategies to promote economic, social and cultural rights (see Section 7).

3.1 Human Rights Cities

Source: Eden, Janine and Jim, Flickr.
Reproductive Rights = Human Rights, New York, USA.

Although the human rights obligations outlined in international treaties are typically seen as incumbent upon nation-states (rather than subnational levels of government), recent global declarations and ongoing experiences suggest that cities can position themselves in the vanguard when it comes to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights. In the 2011 *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City*, LRGs recognized the dignity of every human being as well as the overarching principles of freedom, equality, justice, social inclusion and democracy. **The Charter-Agenda declared that all urban residents have the right to participate in decision-making processes, to question local authorities, and to live in a city that guarantees public transparency and accountability.[71]** It also importantly recognized the right to exercise collective and individual rights. Local governments also pledged to facilitate the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in policymaking. These principles were underscored in the 2014 *Gwangju Principles*, which note that Human Rights Cities (HRCs) seek to implement the Right to the City "in line with the principles of social justice, equity, solidarity, democracy and sustainability".[72] The *Gwangju Principles* also highlight the role of local political leaders in working to advance human rights. This includes doing this through developing

and coordinating policy, educational initiatives, and institutionalized human rights programmes backed up with sufficient budgets.

Some HRCs have pledged to respect, protect and promote human rights with a specific focus on marginalized groups (e.g. migrants, and people with disabilities, or PWD), while others have mainstreamed rights-based approaches via several different mechanisms, often working in collaboration with CSOs. Strategies to operationalize HRC principles vary widely: from signing declarations and treaties to establishing local human rights offices, boards and ombudspersons.[73] In **Geneva** (Switzerland), in line with the city's Constitution, CSOs can hold local authorities accountable for human rights and can prepare "independent periodic reviews" of fundamental rights.[74] In an alternative approach, **Medellin** (Colombia) has created a human rights unit that collects local data and coordinates its activities with various government agencies and NGOs.[75] In the state of **Coahuila de Zaragoza** (Mexico), the government has adopted a multipronged approach to promoting the

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70 Skaaning, "Democracy: Contested Concept with a Common Core."

71 UCLG-CSIPDHR, "Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City" (Barcelona, 2011), https://bit.ly/3L5308l.

72 UCLG, "Gwangju Guiding Principles for a Human Rights City," 2014, https://bit.ly/3w3BjZT.

73 Barbara Oomen and Elif Durmus, "Cities and Plural Understandings of Human Rights: Agents, Actors, Arenas," *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 51, no. 2 (2019): 141–50.

74 United Nations General Assembly, "Local Government and Human Rights. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights" (New York, 2019), https://bit.ly/3qQtpQC.

75 UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, "Role of Local Government in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights : Final Report of the Human Rights Advisory Committee" (Geneva, 2015), 15–18, https://bit.ly/3MdMXHd.

rights of marginalized groups: it has (a) established a right to identity, regardless of immigration status; (b) trained law enforcement officials in migrant rights; (c) developed a law on the inclusion of people living with disabilities; and (d) worked with academics, civil society, and the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights to develop an anti-discrimination law and advance LGBTQIA+ rights.[76]

However, HRCs may still face several practical and political challenges, particularly when adapting universal norms to concrete, actionable approaches in urban areas. There is an "intensely political process [when] translating universal and abstract norms into [relevant] values and indicators [at] the local level".[77] Furthermore, some critics argue that rights-based approaches are often too vague or difficult to enforce, making them more aspirational than legally binding.[78] **Although many HRCs have created valuable alliances between government, academics and civil society, human rights norms almost "invariably remain contested" and social movements often adopt more radical stances than local governments.**[79] Further challenges may include: insufficient political will (either at local or national levels of government); lack of resources and capacity at the municipal level; inadequate coordination with government agencies and/or CSOs; and limited awareness of human rights.[80] **Bandung** (Indonesia) declared itself the country's first HRC in 2015, but local officials and stakeholders have often struggled to implement rights-based initiatives due to factors such as: their different interests; the municipality's predominantly top-down approach; challenges in localizing international norms; and difficulties in collaborating effectively with CSOs.[81] On a more positive note, some obstacles may be overcome by empowering civil society groups and supporting local efforts to provide

education about human rights. **Seoul** (Republic of Korea) has established a human rights division with related policies, ordinances and ombudspersons, which has conducted education programmes and coordinated its efforts with local CSOs.[82] As discussed below, recent efforts to promote open government may also foster greater accountability and the development of a rights-based culture.

3.2 Initiatives to support transparency, accountability and open government

Open government is increasingly recognized as a key cross-cutting priority. It is associated with the inter-related principles of transparency, collaboration and participation, and can help to foster trust and improve accountability to citizens. In a recent manifesto on transparency and open government, LRGs affirmed the need to "build trust through participatory and accountable democracy".[83] According to the manifesto, greater **transparency and participation are key to rebuilding trust between government actors and citizens, while transparency is also an integral part of achieving the 2030 Agenda**. The manifesto called upon LRGs: (a) to promote conditions to enable greater transparency; (b) to foster transparency both in institutions and in cocreating policies; and (c) to encourage a "culture of disclosure" amongst government actors and partners. This manifesto complemented the 2011 *Open Government Declaration*,[84] which committed to "promoting

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76 United Nations General Assembly, "Local Government and Human Rights. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights."

77 Barbara M. Oomen, "Introduction: The Promise and Challenges Ofhuman Rights Cities," in *Global Urban Justice. The Rise of Human Rights Cities*, ed. Barbara Oomen, Martha F. Davis, and Michele Grigolo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 1–20, https://bit.ly/3sptU4D.

78 Oomen, 12–14.

79 Michael Goodhart, "Human Rights Cities: Making the Global Local," in *Contesting Human Rights*, ed. Alison Brysk and Michael Stohl (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019), 142–58, https://bit.ly/3w4n1Z2.

80 UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, "Role of Local Government in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights : Final Report of the Human Rights Advisory Committee," 9–10.

81 Mireille Marcia Karman, Rizky Widian, and Sylvia Yazid, "Challenges in Norm-Localization at the City Level: The Case of Localizing the Human Rights City Concept in Bandung, Indonesia," *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, 2020, https://bit.ly/3w2uWFZ.

82 UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, "Role of Local Government in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights : Final Report of the Human Rights Advisory Committee," 16.

83 UCLG, "Manifesto on the Future of Transparency and Open Government" (World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders, 2020), 3, https://bit.ly/39N263P.

84 See: Open Government Partnership, "Open Government Declaration," 2011, https://bit.ly/3w21Uqc.

increased access to information and disclosure about governmental activities at every level of government" (e.g. the publication of additional data on spending and public services). The 2011 declaration also affirmed the importance of "enhancing civic participation and collaboration" between government and civil society; pledged to implement the "highest standards of professional integrity"; and aimed to enhance access to "new technologies for openness and accountability".

Nevertheless, several key debates about open government remain pending. For instance, there are questions as how to enact its principles and tackle potential tensions, including those related to the right to privacy and other civil rights. Transparency will require not merely providing information, but also ensuring that it is useful and can be understood by different local stakeholders.[85] There are five interrelated dimensions of open government: transparency; participation; the availability of information; collaboration; and information technologies (or IT), which can itself encourage participation and accountability. In addition to the timeliness, open access and trustworthiness of open data, open government has other implications for democracy that are highly dependent upon *how* information is shared.[86] Transparency is meant to help overcome information asymmetries, but some findings may be inaccurate or even manipulated, as demonstrated by the proliferation of fake news.[87] Data transparency has been more thoroughly examined than collaboration or participation, but there is, to date, only limited overarching guidance on how to implement open government principles.[88] This is also related to the current scarcity of available information on the implementation of open government initiatives. IT-enabled strategies are typically utilized by already-empowered citizens, but this merely reinforces the digital divide.[89] Advocates of open government will also need to address major concerns regarding privacy, data security, and data storage. Government policies relating to data may prove a source of tension and potentially require

trade-offs regarding civil and political rights.[90] There are further risks related to the marketization and commercialization of data, and the prioritization of purely managerial concerns (associated with efficiency and effective governance) "may hinder rather than foster democracy"[91] (see also Box 9.2 and Chapter 3). As with any democratic innovation, it will be crucial to explore how open government strategies can be implemented; it is important that LRGs prioritize equity and inclusion so that these novel strategies can reduce, rather than exacerbate, existing urban divides.

There are important opportunities to harness transparency, accountability and participation and to use them to develop pathways towards equitable urbanization. This can be done provided that LRGs prioritize meaningful participation and engagement with their citizens. By 2021, nearly 60 local government organizations were members of the Open Government Partnership, whose ongoing action plans and commitments seek to promote greater transparency and accountability.[92] In **Sekondi Takoradi** (Ghana), the Municipal Assembly has committed to enhancing civic input and oversight relating to infrastructure projects. It aims to do this by: (a) publishing information about contracts; (b) enabling citizen groups to monitor its activity and visit infrastructure project sites; and (c) publishing a report on infrastructure projects based on stakeholder engagement and information disclosure.[93] Meanwhile, **Regueb** (Tunisia) has established a *Data Portal* to publish all of its budgetary data and has instituted a new office charged with promoting access to information, reviewing and responding to citizens' complaints, and protecting whistle-blowers.[94]

Government-initiated digital participatory platforms now proliferate throughout the world. Some of them can help to discover novel coproduced solutions involving urban citizens and official actors. While some of these platforms merely aim to inform citizens,

85 J. Ramon Gil-Garcia, Mila Gasco-Hernandez, and Theresa A. Pardo, "Beyond Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration? A Reflection on the Dimensions of Open Government," *Public Performance & Management Review* 43, no. 3 (2020): 483–502.

86 Ricardo Matheus and Marijn Janssen, "A Systematic Literature Study to Unravel Transparency Enabled by Open Government Data: The Window Theory," *Public Performance & Management Review* 43, no. 3 (2020): 503–34.

87 Matheus and Janssen.

88 Kuang-Ting Tai, "Open Government Research over a Decade: A Systematic Review," *Government Information Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2021): 101566.

89 Tai.

90 Cláudia Toriz Ramos, "Democracy and Governance in the Smart City," in *Smart Cities: Issues and Challenges*, ed. Anna Visvizi and Miltiadis D. Lytras (Elsevier, 2019), 17–30, https://bit.ly/38m1UZ4.

91 Toriz Ramos, 26.

92 See: José María Marín, "OGP Local: New Plans, New Commitments," *Open Government Partnerships*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3ysCvHR.

93 See: Infrastructure Transparency Initiative, "First Assurance Report on Five Projects Implemented by STMA and Department of Urban Roads in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis of Ghana" (Sekondi-Takoradi, 2019), https://bit.ly/3wfP9XU.

94 Regueb Mayor's Office, "Action Plan – Regueb, Tunisia, 2021-2023," Committee on Participatory Democracy and Open Governance, 2021, https://bit.ly/3I10zJP.

others have allowed residents to visualize spatial data and query official databases; one such case is *Open City Chicago*, in **Chicago** (USA).[95] Other interactive tools have been used in cities in Ecuador, China, Brazil and New Zealand, where they have helped to enhance service delivery and security. These include platforms that enable citizens to report such problems as criminal incidents, potholes or broken streetlights.[96] More significantly for local democratization, other online platforms can now enable new relations between citizens and their governments. For instance, various French cities have used *Carticipe*[97] as a long-term planning tool with which to coproduce ideas and generate new proposals (see Box 9.2).

3.3 Multiple benefits of urban anti-corruption initiatives

Source: Roberto Poveda.
Demostrations against corruption in Valencia, Spain.

A political culture rooted in cooperation and trust between citizens and LRGs can help to combat corruption. **Anti-corruption efforts can also yield significant benefits for local democracy, including enhanced transparency and service delivery.** In many settings, corruption is facilitated by weak systems of accountability; this is a challenge that recent initiatives have particularly sought to tackle. Following the 2015 elections, **Barcelona** City Council (Spain) established an Office of Transparency and Good Practice that subsequently introduced a *Code of Conduct* and *Anti-Corruption Complaint Box* to support and promote ethical behaviour.[98] The complaint box was created by Xnet activists and enabled citizens to report complaints

anonymously.[99] The tool uses open code and is relatively easy to use; in fact, it has already been adopted by other municipalities in Spain's autonomous communities of **Valencia** and **Catalonia**. Other anti-corruption initiatives have enhanced service delivery and created mechanisms for reporting concerns. These simultaneously foster trust, improve public perceptions of local authorities, and help strengthen relations between citizens and their government bodies. In **Iztapalapa** (Mexico), a municipality with over 1,800,000 inhabitants, the new mayor launched a comprehensive anti-corruption drive and helped to increase access to water service delivery by replacing private providers that had previously demanded bribes for service provision. To institutionalize budget transparency and community engagement, the city established mechanisms such as digital channels to report abuse and independent citizen committees via which residents can raise and address their concerns. In **Hwaseong** (Republic of Korea), the municipality has promoted human rights by strengthening communication channels, handling complaints via in-person meetings, and enhancing safeguards against corruption. Thanks to these efforts and improved cooperation between officials and citizens, the municipality managed to significantly increase its public integrity ratings from rather mediocre to high scores in only 2 years (from 2018 to 2020).

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95 Enzo Falco and Reinout Kleinhans, "Digital Participatory Platforms for Co-Production in Urban Development: A Systematic Review," *International Journal of E-Planning Research* 7, no. 3 (2018): 52–79.

96 Falco and Kleinhans.

97 See: Benjamin Hecht, "Carticipe de repérage urbain," Démocratie Ouverte, 2019, https://bit.ly/3MdbTic.

98 Felix Beltrán, Anxela Iglesias García, and Jordi Molina, "Transparency and the Fight against Corruption," in *Fearless Cities*, ed. Barcelona en Comú, Ada Colau, and Debbie Bookchin (London: Verso, 2018), 124–29.

99 See: Xnet, "Xnet Installs a Whistleblowing Platform against Corruption for the City Hall of Barcelona – Powered by GlobaLeaks and Tor Friendly," 2017, https://bit.ly/3l3zSEg.

4 Innovations to create and strengthen spaces of deliberation

LRGs have sought to enhance the quality of decision-making by increasing the diversity of perspectives that feed into decision-making processes, thereby sharing voters' aggregated preferences and/or helping to mandate policy decisions.

A deliberative approach to democracy utilizes dialogue-based strategies that seek to promote persuasion and debate between citizens, rather than oppression and the suppression of alternative views. **A key democratic function of deliberation is to promote an inclusive, equitable political process that may also offer benefits such as legitimacy and mutual respect.[100]** Examples of deliberative spaces include "mini-publics", which may be chosen by sortition[101] (selection by the drawing of lots) and include citizens' juries and citizens' assemblies which can discuss such issues as climate change, healthcare, social policy, constitutional reforms

and other key policy priorities. Participatory approaches typically emphasize empowerment and social learning, rather than improving deliberation.[102] There are often starkly different visions of change and contrasting understandings of the role of conflict in deliberative, participatory, and other paradigms of democratic governance. However, and as discussed below, when participation and deliberation are viewed as part of a diverse set of opportunities through which LRGs can engage with citizens, there may be many more opportunities to deepen democracy, even in unequal cities.

In urban areas where inequality is an important problem, there is a need to foster inclusive deliberation and to understand the variety of spaces, actors, and citizens' strategies that can be used within a complex deliberative system. Potential challenges may include power asymmetries, biases that shape residents' reasoning, and the potential for cooptation when deliberation is controlled by external authorities.[103] In addition, deliberative bodies are often short-lived and poorly integrated into political cycles and the general system of

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100 Mansbridge et al., "A Systemic Approach to Deliberative Democracy."

101 Sortition involves the selection of a representative, random sample of participants for inclusion in a forum of governance. Individuals selected through sortition are typically invited to make decisions or pass collective judgement as part of an informed, deliberative and fair process. The key aspect of sortition, compared to other methods of participant recruitment and/or selection, is that everyone has an equal possibility of being chosen for the assembly. See: Participedia, "Sortition," Méthode, 2022, https://bit.ly/3wnRwbh.

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102 Pateman, "Participatory Democracy Revisited."

103 Francesca Polletta, "Public Deliberation and Political Contention," in *Democratizing Inequalities*, ed. Caroline W. Lee, Michael McQuarrie, and Edward T. Walker (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 222–44.

government; they are also, typically, unconcerned with changing power structures and institutions that could serve to deepen democracy.[104] However, **by adopting a more systemic approach and encompassing a constellation of deliberative democratic spaces and actors, it may be possible to identify new ways to foster inclusive democratization**.[105] To achieve this, however, it is crucial to recognize the role that inter-mediaries can play in facilitating more inclusive and meaningful participatory processes, as professionals and government officials may be biased (particularly against marginalized voices and experiences). Intermediaries can help to facilitate coproduction by translating priorities and ensuring that different forms of knowledge are being heard and used. They can also provide support to develop recommendations that can better reach citizens, professionals and government officials, who may then be persuaded to change their opinions or moderate their views of opposing sides. Importantly, participatory approaches can form part of a deliberative strategy aimed at encouraging more diverse sources of knowledge as well as fostering respect between participants from all backgrounds. If deliberative processes break down, or prove inaccessible to marginalized citizens, bottom-up organizations can develop new tactics, including protests and counter-movements.[106]

4.1 Mini-publics

Mini-publics are comprised of (near) random samples of citizens who typically debate and synthesize evidence to develop recommendations; they typically do this in the final stages before producing reports or other outputs. Such initiatives offer important opportunities for meaningful deliberation: small group discussions are typically led by external facilitators and citizens who listen to evidence from key experts; this offers valuable opportunities to debate pressing topics.[107] Whilst random selection is meant to encourage a diverse array of views, participation is not mandatory and past evidence suggest that better-off citizens tend to be overrepresented in such forums and/or

that they may reproduce gender-related and other inequalities.[108] Women, less educated people and/or lower-income citizens typically contribute less than others to mini-publics, even when active facilitation is provided.[109] Policymakers may also cherry-pick the ensuing recommendations, treat them as "tokenistic consultative initiative[s]" or simply postpone decisions on contentious issues.[110] Some mini-publics may lack mechanisms for guaranteeing accountability to the broader public, leading to potential questions relating to legitimacy.[111]

Nevertheless, there are several promising measures that can promote the equitable design and implementation of mini-publics, while simultaneously ensuring that they have a greater impact on policy. Quotas can help to guarantee the participation of marginalized groups, such as indigenous citizens or ethnic minorities. In **British Columbia** (Canada), the Citizens' Assembly selected to reform the provincial electoral system included 158 participants who were randomly selected (one man and one woman per electoral district). Initially this did not include any First Nations representatives, so male and female indigenous members were subsequently added.[112] Partnering with grassroots organizations and encouraging CSO participation (through such measures as providing travel allowances, honoraria, and provision of childcare) can also foster more equitable participation.[113] A one-day *G1000*[114] citizens summit organized in Belgium brought together 600 randomly selected participants.[115] A total of 10% of the seats in that assembly were allocated to citizens considered "difficult to reach". Those convening the Belgian *G1000* worked closely with grassroots organizations to ensure that homeless people and ethnic minority groups were also represented.[116] Although this experience did not directly influence Belgian decision-makers, it has inspired other *G1000* initiatives, including several in

104 Pateman, "Participatory Democracy Revisited," 10.

105 Mansbridge et al., "A Systemic Approach to Deliberative Democracy."

106 Diana Mitlin, "Beyond Contention: Urban Social Movements and Their Multiple Approaches to Secure Transformation," *Environment and Urbanization* 30, no. 2 (2018): 557–74.

107 Mansbridge et al., "A Systemic Approach to Deliberative Democracy."

108 Graham Smith and Maija Setälä, "Mini-Publics and Deliberative Democracy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy*, ed. Andre Bächtiger et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 300–314.

109 Smith and Setälä.

110 Clodagh Harris, "Mini-Publics: Design Choices and Legitimacy," in *Handbook of Democratic Innovation and Governance*, ed. Stephen Elstub and Oliver Escobar Rodriguez (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019), 53.

111 Smith and Setälä, "Mini-Publics and Deliberative Democracy."

112 Harris, "Mini-Publics: Design Choices and Legitimacy," 49.

113 Harris, "Mini-Publics: Design Choices and Legitimacy."

114 See: G1000, "Platform for Democratic Innovation," 2022, https://bit.ly/37zQkZS.

115 Harmen Binnema and Ank Michels, "Does Democratic Innovation Reduce Bias? The G1000 as a New Form of Local Citizen Participation," *International Journal of Public Administration*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3l16Oxf.

116 Harris, "Mini-Publics: Design Choices and Legitimacy."

Source: Allen Watkin, Flickr.
Street in Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

Dutch cities. In the Dutch *G1000* discussions, the participants drew up an *Agenda for the City* during a series of small-group dialogues. The participants discussed key priorities for the next four years and identified their own contributions to help achieve them.[117] The ensuing Agenda offers valuable insights into the concerns of citizens and some of the initiatives have been organized in small cities (e.g. **Borne** and **Gemert-Bakel**) as well as in larger municipalities like **Groningen** and **Eindhoven**.

To support more diverse and influential mini-publics, policymakers can utilize several inclusive strategies and respond promptly to their priorities. Facilitators can help to ensure that citizens have equal opportunities to contribute, develop clear decision-making rules, and foster a respectful tone of discussion. Mini-publics can certainly help to deepen democratic processes, especially if they are coupled with other aspects of democratic governance. However, **it remains essen-**

tial to understand why, how and who participates in mini-publics so that they can help to catalyze constructive change.[118] Speaking more generally, politicians will need to "embed inclusion and popular control at all stages in the process", as well as allow open agenda-setting, provide mini-publics with adequate resources, and develop prompt, constructive responses to their recommendations.[119] It is also crucial to make it clear how the outcomes of any deliberations will be used to enhance their legitimacy and relevance and how their findings will contribute to the broader political sphere.[120]

In further innovations, spaces for participation and deliberation may be combined, as explained in Box 9.1.

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117 Binnema and Michels, "Does Democratic Innovation Reduce Bias? The G1000 as a New Form of Local Citizen Participation."

118 Smith and Setälä, "Mini-Publics and Deliberative Democracy."

119 Harris, "Mini-Publics: Design Choices and Legitimacy," 55.

120 Binnema and Michels, "Does Democratic Innovation Reduce Bias? The G1000 as a New Form of Local Citizen Participation."

Source: Stephen Downes, Flickr.
Street in Belgium.

Box 9.1
The *Ostbelgien Model*: Combining several democratic innovations[121]

Providing important lessons for institutional design, the German-speaking region of **Ostbelgien** (Belgium) has recently launched a permanent participatory process that includes a standing citizens' council and recurrent assemblies that are prepared to deliberate on specific issues. The local officials of Ostbelgien, which has a population of 77,000 (largely distributed in rural areas near two small cities), usually have second jobs, but they engage regularly with their citizens. Despite voting being mandatory, the area had previously experienced substantial democratic decline and widespread disaffection. Following a positive experience with a citizens' assembly on child policy in 2016, political experts helped to develop a participatory process that created a permanent citizens' council, whose members are drawn by lot and who serve for periods of 18 months. The council helps to select the subjects debated by the citizens' assemblies. The assembly's first topic was the conditions of healthcare workers,[122] which was a prescient choice before the COVID-19 pandemic. The assembly has 25 to 50 members, who are drawn by lot and stratified by age, gender, geographic origin and socioeconomic profile, to ensure the most diverse representation possible.

The model also has a quasi-institutional connection to the local legislature: after the assembly's deliberations, recommendations are relayed to a relevant parliamentary committee, and then a public session is organized involving the assembly and relevant legislative officials. Legislators give opinions on all the assembly's recommendations and indicate whether and how they will be implemented; any rejections must also be justified. It is still too soon to know how well the assembly's recommendations will be implemented. However, this innovative institutional design has already helped to expand deliberative democracy and created a clear chain of sovereignty.[123] Indeed, it has linked its participants to legislative officials in ways that could significantly strengthen local democracy. The *Ostbelgien Model* has therefore generated novel mechanisms that not only combine deliberative and participatory democracy but which can also enhance representative democracy. Much has been achieved thanks to the fact that the assembly's recommendations are submitted to local legislators, who are obliged to respond to them. Above all, this example highlights how innovations can simultaneously address several different facets of democracy and encapsulates how LRGs can, creatively and equitably, work with a diverse range of citizens.

121 Laura Roth, "Democracy in Cities and Territories," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022); Christoph Niessen and Min Reuchamps, "Designing a Permanent Deliberative Citizens Assembly: The Ostbelgien Modell in Belgium," Centre for Deliberative Democracy & Global Governance Working Paper Series, 2019, https://bit.ly/39Y7PnF.

122 See: Ted Wachtel, "One of the Smallest Legislatures Leads the World in Democratic Innovation," Building a New Reality, 2022, https://bit.ly/3L77lbB.

123 Baiocchi, Heller, and Silva, *Bootstrapping Democracy. Transforming Local Governance and Civil Society in Brazil*.

4.2 Referenda and citizens' initiatives

Referenda and other citizen-initiated direct democratic procedures are common amongst LRGs. Supportive rules can make these initiatives more accessible to structurally discriminated groups. This can be achieved, for instance, by reducing the requirements for a certain number of signatures, by using online platforms, and by allowing generous time limits in which to gather signatures; all of these actions can encourage citizens' initiatives.[124] In Switzerland, citizens are required to gather 100,000 signatures over a period of 18 months, while Finland allows online platforms to collect signatures. Referenda can be led by voters in Switzerland and **California** (USA), which promotes issue-by-issue accountability, although special or political interests often seek to capture the fruits of these efforts. California's rules are fairly inflexible (preventing amendments or deliberations about content) and corporate and other wealthy groups may shape efforts to their own advantage, thereby undermining the initiatives' potential to achieve greater equity and inclusion. Other referenda may be government-initiated, at various stages of policymaking, and may be either binding or merely advisory. With diverse potential effects regarding inclusion and representative deliberation, referenda can offer opportunities to amplify both minority and majority opinions. They must therefore be carefully designed if they are to achieve widespread comprehension and enjoy meaningful citizen engagement, rather than simply favouring established corporate or political interests.

Meanwhile, an innovative model from **Oregon** (USA) illustrates how citizens' initiatives can enhance voter awareness and strengthen deliberative democracy.[125] Since 2010, Oregon's Citizens' Initiative Review has evaluated successful ballot initiatives before their submission to a popular vote; the Review helps citizens to make sound political judgments by providing background materials and encouraging critical judgments on key issues. The

Review serves as a citizens' jury (comprising 18-24 Oregon voters selected via a stratified random sample) and is typically convened for three to five days, when it takes evidence on successful citizens' initiatives before a popular ballot is held on these issues. After taking evidence, the Review issues a one-page statement based on evidence provided by both proponents and opponents, which is then shared with all households before elections. The Review shows how democratic innovations can be effectively combined (i.e. ballot initiatives, referenda and citizens' juries) to enhance citizen engagement, help ensure a better informed public, and foster meaningful deliberations. Finally, Box 9.2 explores how digital tools can foster deliberative democracy and innovative solutions while also facing some stubborn challenges, particularly regarding inclusion in the face of digital divides.

Source: Gayatri Malhotra, Unsplash. White house, Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest. Washington, DC, USA.

124 Maija Jäske and Maija Setälä, "Referendums and Citizens' Initiatives," in *Handbook of Democratic Innovation and Governance*, ed. Stephen Elstub and Oliver Escobar Rodríguez (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019), 90–104, https://bit.ly/37l5RHg.

125 Smith and Setälä, "Mini-Publics and Deliberative Democracy"; Jäske and Setälä, "Referendums and Citizens' Initiatives."

Box 9.2

Digital tools to enhance deliberations and to facilitate creative, equitable solutions

Digital tools have helped to scale-up participation and foster more transparent governance, but there are still major concerns about digital divides. As noted in Chapter 6, many governments and CSOs have developed digital tools ("civic technology") to increase and deepen democratic participation. They have done so by creating channels for citizen feedback as well as by promoting greater accountability and transparency. In **Washington DC** (USA), for instance, the website *Grade.DC.Gov* encourages citizen feedback on service delivery and provides a public record of citizen-identified priorities that could inform future interventions.[126] The *Commonwealth Connect* app, created in **Boston** (USA), has facilitated two-way communication between residents and municipal employees. Local issues are directly reported to the correct agency, which can promote improved responsiveness and enhanced quality of life. Many cities have similarly developed apps to enable residents to provide comments and feedback on projects, to report non-emergency problems, and to track progress; such initiatives offer significant potential for enhancing local government performance.

Following the election of a new municipal government in **Barcelona** (Spain), the *Decidim* (*We Decide*) platform was launched in 2016. This digital space forms part of a highly participatory process in which citizens have generated, vigorously debated, and selected proposals that have later been implemented.[127] *Decidim* uses open-source software and open code that can be readily built upon; its combination of a participatory model and an open technological platform has been subsequently replicated in several other cities around the world. During the platform's first phase (February to April 2016), a total of 42,000 citizens from across Barcelona participated in the exercise, and 70% of the proposals received were later included as 1,500 actions in the city's strategic plan. The approved results were then taken as binding, which helped to support the intervention's legitimacy as well as the empowerment of the local citizens. This online process was complemented by over 400 face-to-face events with the participation of 1,700 organizations. This avoided digital exclusion and also built upon local expertise. As well as increasing support for deliberation (by encouraging online debates and feedback), the transparency of this initiative and the government response notably helped to bring officials closer to local citizens. Many *Decidim* tools are utilized at the district and neighbourhood level, forming part of an area-based approach (see Section 8). *Decidim* has evidently increased active citizenship and may prove a meaningful complement to other measures aimed at promoting more representative democracy via the use of collaborative and transparent strategies that can create innovative solutions.

In **Rio de Janeiro** (Brazil), the LRG developed a *Smart City Plan* in parallel with a *Digital Inclusion Programme* focussed on enhancing the participation of disadvantaged citizens.[128] Rio also launched the *Knowledge Spaceships* programme, which created an array of citizen participation programmes. For instance, between 2014 and 2019, a political innovation lab called *LAB.Rio* was established to encourage citizens to test and generate participatory initiatives such as the Youth Council. The *Ágora Rio Challenge* similarly created a social network in which hundreds of ideas were presented regarding the Olympics and Rio's *Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan*. In its first stage, proposals were collected and discussed on the platform. The municipality subsequently commented upon them. Dialogue meetings were then held between residents and city hall representatives; shortly afterwards, a conference was organized to explain which proposals had been chosen. The selected initiatives, which included improving cycle infrastructure and reorganizing the bus routes, helped to enhance mobility for low-income residents.

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126 Hollie Russon Gilman and Tiago Carneiro Peixoto, "Digital Participation," in *Handbook of Democratic Innovation and Governance*, ed. Stephen Elstub and Oliver Escobar Rodríguez (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019), 105–18, https://bit.ly/3l8lhGJ.

127 Ismael Peña-López, "Decidim. Barcelona, Spain," Voice or Chatter? Case Studies. IT For Change (Barcelona, 2017), https://bit.ly/3McoMJ0.

128 UCLG Digital Cities, 'Open Governance for a More Consensual and Inclusive Policy Making', GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

Source: HeatherMount, Unsplash.
Denton county courthouse on the square museum, Denton, USA.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, IT solutions have helped to support democratization by enhancing access to information and fostering solutions cocreated in conjunction with citizens. In **Kochi** (India), the official data portal was complemented by WhatsApp data and other everyday tools (e.g. Excel sheets) in order to coordinate responses to COVID-19, support surveillance, and strengthen contact-tracing.[129] These formal and informal efforts have been used to fight misinformation, while also gaining public support and helping to monitor virus transmission. Meanwhile, the Mayor's Office in **Bogota** (Colombia) worked with community-based organizations to launch a hackathon in which local citizens were able to share proposals regarding how public transport could be improved and help curtail virus transmission.[130] However, it is important to note that some governments have also collected extensive personal data during COVID-19 and that this may threaten the right to privacy if it is inadequately managed. Some tools may also be inappropriate for low-income residents who lack reliable access to mobile phones or the internet.[131]

While such tools can certainly increase transparency and foster deliberation, there are broader concerns about inclusiveness, and additional strategies are often needed to tackle digital inequalities.[132] Marginalized residents, such as older people, PWD, refugees, and migrants may struggle to access such technology (or further adaptation may be required for them to be able to use it effectively). Based on experiences of mapping initiatives in informal settlements, interventions are often skewed towards middle-class priorities (e.g. improving roads), rely heavily on external funding, or may entail a loss of privacy and community ownership.[133] Although civic technology can substantially reduce the transaction costs of democratic participation, most citizens may only be involved in rather superficial ways, or the priorities of marginalized groups may be side-lined. Given these mixed experiences, **LRGs may need to complement digital tools with other strategies and use carefully selected outreach programmes to ensure that disadvantaged citizens can better use IT, thereby maximizing its potential for local democratization**.

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129 Jaideep Gupte et al., "Smart Cities and COVID-19: Implications for Data Ecosystems from Lessons Learned in India," Briefings, 2021, https://bit.ly/3wqTE1M.

130 Isabel Duque Franco et al., "Mapping Repertoires of Collective Action Facing the COVID-19 Pandemic in Informal Settlements in Latin American Cities," *Environment and Urbanization* 32, no. 2 (2020): 523–46.

131 Human Rights Watch, "Future Choices: Charting an Equitable Exit from the Covid-19 Pandemic."

132 Ellen Johanna Helsper, "The Social Relativity of Digital Exclusion: Applying Relative Deprivation Theory to Digital Inequalities," *Communication Theory* 27, no. 3 (2017): 223–42.

133 Richard Heeks and Satyarupa Shekhar, "Datafication, Development and Marginalised Urban Communities: An Applied Data Justice Framework," *Information, Communication & Society* 22, no. 7 (2019): 992–1011.

5 Innovations to generate and enhance spaces for participation

To address inequalities in political influence and decision-making, some LRGs have promoted processes that delegate decision-making to groups of local citizens. Disadvantaged social groups can, in this way, help to influence policy and to participate in programming decisions relevant to them. Participatory budgeting programmes have also delegated investment decisions to residents' committees in low-income neighbourhoods. The discussion begins by considering how participatory scorecards and impact assessments can enhance the provision of local government services (Section 5.1). Section 5.2 then goes on to summarize different experiences with participatory budgeting, including initiatives conducted at different spatial levels.

Source: Doğan Kütükçü, Muratpaşa Municipality. First meeting of the older persons' assembly in Muratpaşa together with Mayor Ümit Uysal and his co-workers in the social services department. Muratpaşa, Turkey.

5.1 Mechanisms for participatory accountability: Community scorecards and social impact assessments

Citizen feedback informing local authorities regarding basic service provision can help to improve the quality of delivery. Furthermore, scorecards can promote LRGs' responsiveness and accountability to citizens, thereby enhancing democratization. In Uganda, citizen report cards have helped to "deepen democratic decentral-

Source: Stefan Müller, Flickr.
Climate march in London, UK

ization by creating healthy competition among local leaders, which enhances their performance".[134] Thanks to the scorecards, citizens can track local councillors' performance over time, which is crucial for accountability in the run-up to elections. Furthermore, civic engagement action plans have been created to prioritize key issues identified in Uganda's scorecards and help to hold officials to account.

During a programme to build participatory accountability systems in **Chimbote** and **Trujillo** (Peru), **Tarija** and **La Paz** (Bolivia), and **Rio de Janeiro** and **Niteroi** (Brazil), local officials, civil society, and other stakeholders engaged in planning activities that cocreated inclusive solutions and advanced the 2030 Agenda.[135]

After assessing the local context and identifying key challenges, stakeholders worked together and developed action plans. In **Tarija** (Bolivia), local government officials and a local NGO gathered background data on the city's socio-economic profile, relevant indicators for SDG 11 ("Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable"), and other data on shelter, participation and transparency. Some cities developed Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) that proved useful in social monitoring, assessing local SDG progress, and identifying areas for improvement. For example, having published its VLR, the local government of **Niteroi** (Brazil) will encourage further dialogue with citizens and continue to develop participatory processes until 2030. Although still ongoing, this process has already generated a toolkit that can be used to inform similar participatory monitoring and accountability systems with the potential to advance the 2030 Agenda as well as other local priorities.

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134 Lillian Muyomba-Tamale and Kiran Cunningham, "Holding Governments Accountable for Service Delivery: The Local Government Councils Scorecard Initiative in Uganda," *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance* 20 (2017): 187–205.

135 UN-Habitat, "Building Participatory Accountability Systems for City Policies - Handbook" (Nairobi, 2021), https://bit.ly/39dNPwP.

5.2 Participatory budgeting

Source: Kota Kita.
Kota Kita's co-design initiative with residents to improve living spaces in Kampong Ngampon, Indonesia.

Beginning in 1989, as a response to the failings of representative democracy, residents' associations of **Porto Alegre** (Brazil) sought to secure more direct access to municipal budgets.[136] The local authority in Porto Alegre agreed, and an innovative programme was developed to enable communities to have more control over municipal investment priorities in their neighbourhoods. Participatory budgeting (PB) has subsequently been widely replicated: by 2018, over 6,000 examples had been recorded in 40 different countries.[137] While there is considerable heterogeneity regarding PB's significance, it has frequently transformed access to services and strengthened the accountability of municipal authorities. This subsection identifies several promising approaches and challenges based on past PB exercises, but the discussion is illustrative rather than comprehensive.

In Cameroon, a civil society organization called ASSOAL has promoted PB at the local level to enhance equitable development. This has produced significant gains in trust and revenue collection. Since its beginning in 2009, **Yaounde**'s PB process has led to enhanced access to energy, water, sanitation, and paved roads, as well as strengthened relations between citizens and local officials.[138] Although the city still faces several challenges linked to clientelism, PB has helped to improve both service delivery and tax collection. The latter is explained by PB's ability to foster fiscal transparency, as well as to improve relations between residents and municipal staff during cycles of the yearlong PB process. The mayor still makes final decisions on the funding of PB projects, but local citizens are encouraged to hold officials accountable and assume local ownership of related initiatives. From just 350 participants in 2009,

participation in Yaounde's PB rose markedly to over 11,000 in 2011 (partly due to enhanced outreach via SMS). Even so, relatively few women and young people have participated in this initiative to date.

In Indonesia, the NGO Kota Kita has promoted PB and efforts to deepen democracy, including through the use of digital tools and capacity-building efforts to support meaningful participation.[139] Kota Kita's research has analyzed the main factors that influence the implementation of national PB legislation in Indonesian cities, which include capacity shortfalls at the local level, the lack of a culture of community participation, and the way in which residents perceive participatory spaces. To foster trust and greater transparency, there is a need to work with communities to develop monitoring mechanisms and feedback opportunities related to the accepted PB proposals. After identifying challenges facing the city of **Solo** (Indonesia), such as residents' lack of information about project prioritization and elite domination during the PB process, Kota Kita has established neighbourhood profiles and set up a tracker providing information about project implementation.

There are several possible models for implementing PB approaches, all of which can support political and social inclusion and offer multiple benefits for democratization. Some PB exercises have adopted a territorial focus, based upon certain districts or neighbourhoods, while others use either a sector-specific approach (e.g. housing, environment, etc.) or an actor-based strategy, focusing on different parts of the population: young people, women, migrants, the LGBTQIA+ community, or other structurally discriminated groups, or even a blended approach.

136 Rebecca Abers, "From Clientelism to Cooperation: Local Government, Participatory Policy, and Civic Organizing in Porto Alegre, Brazil," *Politics & Society* 26, no. 4 (1998): 511–37.

137 Gianpaolo Baiocchi and Ernesto Ganuza, *Popular Democracy: The Paradox of Participation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016).

138 Based upon: Adrià Duarte, Amanda Fléty, and Jaume Puigpinós, "Local Institutions for Civic Participation, Participatory Budgeting and Planning," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022); and: Participedia, "Sortition."

139 Global Platform for the Right to the City, "Democratic Planning and Urban Governance, Brazil and Indonesia," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

6 Innovations to foster collaborative governance

Collaborative governance is defined by an ongoing process of collaboration between citizens and state officials. Successful outcomes are more likely in contexts with greater levels of trust, with clear communications, and where the main actors share similar goals. For instance, residents of Whitley (a disadvantaged area in the city of **Reading**, UK) collaborated with academics, local government and transport providers to develop solutions based on participatory action-research.[140] Following the publication of a participatory action-research report, bus routes were modified in line with residents' proposals. The local authority also refurbished a building that became a community hub run by a new grassroots association. Moreover, the local government came to recognize low-income residents as legitimate stakeholders and developed further scoping work on financial inclusion and social housing, with inputs from local youth and students. The initiative was initially supported by national lottery funding, although the partners have continued to seek funds to take the partnership forward. Academics helped to establish ties between local government and community members, fostering long-term engagement via action research labs and setting up a forum involving the local council and community organizations from Whitley. Intermediaries and other leaders have been able to play a key role through the creation of shared framings

and understanding of the challenges faced, while they have also helped to align incentives and expectations to foster continued collaboration.[141]

Another initiative based on action-research and involving marginalized residents led Indonesian cities to discover the complex social, economic, spatial and intersectional inequalities facing PWD; this work has since helped to inform more inclusive strategies. According to research carried out in **Banjarmasin** (Indonesia), involving almost 3,900 PWD, as many as 45% never travel and over 50% of school-age children with disabilities do not attend school.[142] Barriers to education were also gender-related: over 65% of women with disabilities had received no education, as compared to 38% of men. Disadvantages were often compounding and long-term, with many PWD suffering elevated levels of stigma, low incomes, and entrenched cycles of poverty. Political exclusion was deep-seated, and just 1% of PWD had previously participated in participatory planning and budget meetings in the city. However, following this research, Banjarmasin implemented local policies and regulations that were more responsive to the needs of PWD, and during COVID-19 the city has used the data collected by the NGO Kota Kita to help to target the delivery of relief aid to PWD.[143] This section discusses wide-ranging examples of collaborative

140 Sonia Bussu, "Collaborative Governance: Between Invited and Invented Spaces," in *Handbook of Democratic Innovation and Governance*, ed. Stephen Elstub and Oliver Escobar Rodríguez (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019), 60–76, https://bit.ly/3L7JDMw.

141 Bussu.

142 Nina Asterina, Barry Beagen, and Hasanatun Nisa Thamrin, "Banjarmasin City: A Disability-Inclusive City Profile" (Jakarta, 2019), https://bit.ly/3PjXlim.

143 See: Vanesha Manuturi and Nina Asterina, "Participatory Data Collection: From Crisis Response to Inclusive Citizenship," UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab, 2021, https://bit.ly/3Ln6VhD.

governance in service delivery and housing provision that have been similarly founded upon sustained, respectful, and trusting relationships between citizens and official actors.

6.1 Collaborations to support the rights to housing, land delivery and sanitation: The importance of institutionalizing partnerships

Collaborative partnerships can promote affordable shelter and service provision by developing solutions through collaborations between grassroots organizations, academics and government officials working across several scales. Gobabis (Namibia) has a population of 20,000 inhabitants, of which about 70% live in informal settlements.[144] Its experience, which is described in Chapter 4 (Box 4.1), demonstrates how an initially community-led participatory project has become a substantive effort in collaborative governance and helped to promote access to adequate housing. Organized communities in Freedom Square managed to develop their capabilities for participatory upgrading. The local authority's commitment has enabled low-income communities and government to codevelop a new approach to addressing grassroots needs. Staff from the local, regional and national governments have provided support for this venture: in addition to a financial contribution from the national government, local officials have supported the participatory upgrading plan and interventions. This financial contribution has also been accompanied by a recognition of the residents'

knowledge and organizing capabilities. Within the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia, a women-led process has enabled even the most disadvantaged citizens to take part. Participatory processes have led to smaller planning clusters, with 40 households working together to strengthen associational activities and deepen social capital. Key outcomes include enhanced access to affordable shelter, land and services, with benefits for social inclusion and spatial justice. In addition, the aim is to create more responsive relationships and new modes of equitable, inclusive collaboration between government officials (at several scales) and low-income urban citizens.

Community-led partnerships for service delivery not only foster health and wellbeing; they can also promote grassroots empowerment and governmental accountability, while helping to tackle intersecting inequalities. Inadequate urban sanitation has particularly burdened women, girls, older people and PWD,[145] but improving sanitation can foster gender equality through further gains in dignity and responsive governance. For instance, the Orangi Pilot Project in **Karachi** and other Pakistani cities has spearheaded low-cost, simplified sewerage services since 1981, combining internal initiatives involving lane sewers in informal settlements with the provision of external trunk infrastructure by the state.[146] While the initial work was carried out independently of the LRG, its success led to the city giving its support to the initiative and to state investment in a large-scale infrastructure (required to connect community sewers with waste treatment plants). The Orangi Pilot Project model has since been widely replicated in other cities in Pakistan as offers a

144 Guillermo Delgado et al., "Co-Producing Land for Housing through Informal Settlement Upgrading: Lessons from a Namibian Municipality," *Environment and Urbanization* 32, no. 1 (2020): 175–94.

145 Deepa Joshi, Ben Fawcett, and Fouzia Mannan, "Health, Hygiene and Appropriate Sanitation: Experiences and Perceptions of the Urban Poor," *Environment and Urbanization* 23, no. 1 (2011): 91–111; Hazel Jones and Bob Reed, *Water and Sanitation for Disabled People and Other Vulnerable Groups: Designing Services to Improve Accessibility* (Loughborough: Water, Engineering and Development Centre, 2005); Marni Sommer et al., "Violence, Gender and WASH: Spurring Action on a Complex, under-Documented and Sensitive Topic," *Environment and Urbanization* 27, no. 1 (2015): 105–16.

146 The model strongly supports local ownership and has benefited over 107,000 households in Karachi's Orangi neighbourhood, as well as and another 47,000 households across the whole of Pakistan (Satterthwaite et al., 2019). In this complementary arrangement, lane associations "took care of the lane sewers' internal components", while state agencies were "responsible for the secondary and main sewers, drains, and waste treatment plants… To work at scale, community organizations need support from relevant government agencies to have the financial and technical capacity to maintain the system": David Satterthwaite et al., "Untreated and Unsafe: Solving the Urban Sanitation Crisis in the Global South," World Resources Institute Working Paper (Washington, DC, 2019); see also: Arif Pervaiz, Perween Rahman, and Arif Hasan, "Lessons from Karachi: The Role of Demonstration, Documentation, Mapping and Relationship Building in Advocacy for Improved Urban Sanitation and Water Services," Human Settlements Working Paper (London, 2008).

Source: Department of Engineering, University of Cambridge. Victoria Hickman, Flickr.
Discussing the sustainability of urban development with residents of an upgraded slum in Pune, India.

cheaper solution than most conventional approaches (often allowing full cost-recovery) due to its community management and appropriate standards.[147] Similarly, in **Mumbai** and **Pune** (India), residents developed a low-cost sanitation model that was later replicated with state and donor support to meet the sanitation needs of over 500,000 residents.[148] Slum-dweller federations have designed and managed these public toilet blocks with inclusive features (e.g. sex-segregated blocks and smaller children's toilets); conditions are monitored continuously to ensure adequate maintenance.[149] In addition, such experiences can help residents to negotiate agreements over tenure security and additional infrastructure with government officials, as adequate sanitation also depends on providing water, public lighting and other services.[150]

As noted above, **Pune**'s government has actively incorporated civil society groups in scaled-up planning and implementation processes. This has been done by building upon a history of collaboration and developing clear accountability mechanisms. This is exemplified by its work to establish *Basic Services for the Urban Poor*, which is a submission of the *Jawaharlal National Urban Renewal Mission* and was launched in 2007.[151] The expansion of this initiative was only possible because of previous engagements between the city and civil society and, in particular, with the National Federation of Slum Dwellers and its partner organization SPARC, which have worked together to provide community-managed sanitation blocks with 10,000 seats.[152] After some difficulties in phase one of the mission, the city decided that implementation should be via coproduction working with civil society; then, in phase two, contracts were only offered to developers working with NGOs. Pune's success has been rooted in effective decentralization, a history of collaborative governance, the presence of a local champion (the Municipal Commissioner), and vibrant CSOs which have benefitted from government support. The collaborative practices have been built

147 Sundar Burra, Sheela Patel, and Thomas Kerr, "Community-Designed, Built and Managed Toilet Blocks in Indian Cities," *Environment and Urbanization* 15, no. 2 (2003): 11–32.

148 Burra, Patel, and Kerr; Gordon McGranahan and Diana Mitlin, "Learning from Sustained Success: How Community-Driven Initiatives to Improve Urban Sanitation Can Meet the Challenges," *World Development* 87 (2016): 307–17.

149 Sheela Patel and The SPARC Team, "The 20-Year Sanitation Partnership of Mumbai and the Indian Alliance," *Environment and Urbanization* 27, no. 1 (2015): 55–72.

150 Patel and The SPARC Team.

151 Sundar Burra, Diana Mitlin, and Gayatri Menon, "Understanding the Contribution of the BSUP (JNNURM) to Inclusive Cities in India," ESID Working Paper No. 97, 2018.

152 Patel and The SPARC Team, "The 20-Year Sanitation Partnership of Mumbai and the Indian Alliance."

upon key precedents established involving civil society partnerships, including those established during Pune's sanitation block project. The government's recognition of local organizations as key partners (including formalized collaborations with NGOs and grassroots actors) has helped to foster equitable development, using shelter and service delivery as a key pathway towards democratization.

Chapter 8 on *Prospering* puts forward the experiences in **Preston** (UK), **Belo Horizonte** (Brazil) and **Pune** (India), which have sought to develop equitable urban economic development models through collaborative innovations with formal and informal local cooperatives and workers. The example in **Lima** (Peru) shows that social dialogue and equitable policy frameworks can help advance informal labourers' rights to work in public space, while also offering broader benefits for livelihoods and in terms of urban economic development.[153] Approximately 57% of the city's labour force is informal, with nearly one in four of these informal workers being street vendors. From 2011 onwards, municipal staff have seized upon the opportunity to develop an enabling regulatory framework for street vending. This was possible with the help of strong political will from the administration and other allies and support NGOs which already had a history of working with street vendor organizations. The workers' organizations were unified in their demands and this helped the municipality to pass Ordinance 1787 in 2014. This ordinance established a mechanism for a Tripartite Committee comprised of the municipality, street vendors' organizations and neighbourhood representatives, whose mandate is "to coordinate plans and formalization programmes with [street vendors'] democratic participation".[154] The ordinance also established orders of preference for licences for the most marginalized vendors and upgraded the validity of licences, thus promoting social inclusion and greater certainty in business operations. Unfortunately, the political will did not prove long-lasting, and under the subsequent administration some of the more progressive aspects of the ordinance were not fully implemented. **It remains crucial to institutionalize processes for social dialogue**, such as the Tripartite Committee, in order to further promote opportunities for deliberation and to continue operations regardless of periodic changes in local administrations.

6.2 Partnerships and community finance

Local authorities challenged by grassroots organizations to support equitable development in informal settlements have established community funds as an innovative strategy for achieving greater political recognition, increasing participation and promoting citywide community-led solutions (as explained in Chapter 4, and particularly in Section 2.6). Community funds (also known as "urban poor funds" and "community development funds") are pots of money capitalized by both local government and grassroots contributions. **Municipal government provides critical support to enable the scaling-up of local action through its community funds. This can set in motion a virtuous circle that promotes greater political, social and financial inclusion.** Joint committees, involving the participation of community leaders and local officials or politicians, are tasked with managing these funds.[155] Recognition of grassroots efforts through citywide funds can foster the growth of community savings groups, while also demonstrating the government's validation of their work. When grassroots savings schemes work in isolation, they can be vulnerable to manipulation by dominant local leaders seeking to exploit communities for their own self-interest. However, **city-level collaborations between grassroots groups (as well as between communities and local officials) can substantially strengthen systems of accountability, thus improving the performance of both CSOs and government service providers**. Receiving these funds can offer communities the following benefits:

(a) visible recognition and validation of their own processes;

(b) essential capital for service improvements;

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153 WIEGO, "Urban Development and Participatory Governance: Learnings from the Co-Creation of Street Vending Ordinance 1787 in Lima," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

154 Sally Roever, "Informal Trade Meets Informal Governance," *Cityscape* 18, no. 1 (2016): 27–46.

155 Committee members may also be drawn from academia, professional groups, NGOs, and other government agencies with experience of informal settlement upgrading.

(c) additional finance, whether from national governments or international donors; and

(d) scaled-up citywide interventions with significant benefits for spatial inclusion and equitable development.

These interventions often shift from small-scale service delivery to the provision of tenure security, bulk infrastructure, and citywide reforms, all of which considerably advance local democratization. As explained below, community funds have been particularly developed by the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights and Slum/Shack Dwellers International in several Asian and African cities.

In Thailand, community development funds have been organized and successfully scaled-up under the auspices of the Community Organizations Development Institute, a national government agency that has supported upgrading throughout the country (see also Chapter 4, Section 2.6). Since 1996, the city of **Nakhon Sawan** has developed a comprehensive city-wide approach to housing improvements with positive results. By January 2019, "30 of the city's 52 informal communities (with 60% of the city's poor) [were] living in fully upgraded communities, with secure land, good housing and full infrastructure".[156] Critical to this development has been the mayor's willingness to support reforms and develop inclusive solutions over his two-decade period in office. Equally important has been his willingness to approach treasury department officials in order to secure the land that it owned in the city centre, which was subsequently utilized for low-income housing developments.

Although many upgrading initiatives are led by local authorities, the example of Thailand shows the potential for obtaining national government support and institutionalizing these partnerships, while also underscoring the significant role of community finance and grassroots data-collection. The Community Organizations Development Institute has supported LRGs in their work with organized communities and in helping them to upgrade informal settlements within their jurisdictions. This assistance has included providing low-income loans and infrastructure subsidies through the *Baan Mankong* (*Secure Housing*) programme, which was

Source: ACHR.
Members of the Nakhon Sawan community network examine a map of the city where they have worked with the municipal government and CODI to ensure that more than 60% of the urban poor are now living in decent, secure housing. Nakhon Sawan, Thailand.

launched in 2003.[157] From 2007-2008, Nakhon Sawan's community network collaborated with the municipal government to map and survey all the city's squatter settlements, as well as to compile an inventory of vacant land. Some communities have successfully negotiated access to land and developed *in situ* upgrading or reconstruction projects. Those in flood-prone areas or facing eviction threats were subsequently relocated to public land of their choosing. In both cases, the national *Baan Mankong* programme provided soft housing loans and infrastructure subsidies. The local government facilitated negotiations between communities and land-owning agencies, as well as providing trunk infrastructure and services. Residents also codeveloped flexible solutions via a series of planning workshops organized in conjunction with the local government, the Community Organizations Development Institute and a local university. More generally, the Thai upgrading experience has highlighted the catalytic power of community finance and the need to institutionalize

156 Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, "Citywide and Community-Driven Housing Supported by the Baan Mankong Program in Nakhon Sawan, Thailand," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

157 Somsook Boonyabancha, "Land for Housing the Poor — by the Poor: Experiences from the Baan Mankong Nationwide Slum Upgrading Programme in Thailand," *Environment and Urbanization* 21, no. 2 (2009): 309–29; Thomas Kerr and Somsook Boonyabancha, "Lessons from CODI on Co-Production," *Environment and Urbanization* 30, no. 2 (2018): 444–60.

partnerships between government and other stake-holders. In this case, this has been done through the multistakeholder City Development Committee (chaired by the mayor), active community networks, and the city-level community development fund, which has helped to address wide-ranging grassroots needs.

Meanwhile, the Zimbabwe Homeless People's Feder-ation and Dialogue on Shelter (local affiliates of Slum/Shack Dwellers International, together known as the "Zimbabwe Alliance"), have established a citywide fund with **Harare**'s local government that has improved accountability and fostered more equitable urbanization (see Chapter 4, Section 2.2). Harare is the first urban area in Zimbabwe to have adopted a citywide policy framework for upgrading informal settlements (*Harare Slum Upgrading Programme*), and this process has been founded and built upon the previous work and prece-dent-setting projects of the Zimbabwean Alliance.[158] The fund was designed to provide loans for land purchase, home improvement, income generation, and providing water and sanitation. This fund is a vital instrument for achieving the upgrading programme's goals, and has been capitalized with financial contributions from Slum/Shack Dwellers International, the City of Harare, and the Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation.[159] **Not only does this kind of blended finance model create an attractive mechanism to which various parties (both official and grassroots) can contribute, but it also serves as an important democratizing mechanism so that different parties can hold each other accountable and institutionalize improvements in service delivery.** Its constitution has outlined the key roles and responsibilities that the fund can have as well as its configuration; this allows progress to be monitored against agreed-upon rules and structures. However, the fund has recently faced two important challenges: officials have been moved within the City of Harare's political structure (resulting in lower political commitment), and recent economic difficulties have led some borrowers to default on their loan repayments. These findings underscore **the importance of ensuring committed, accountable local government officials and of economic stability enabling community funds to realize their full potential**.

6.3 The roles of metropolitan governance in effective planning and equitable service delivery

Metropolitan areas are often hampered by juris-dictional fragmentation that can stymie efforts to address metropolitan-wide issues. There are, however, also examples of how institutional inno-vation and cooperation can support more effective and equitable solutions. Cross-cutting challenges like housing, land-use and transport, as well as equitable access to employment and services, are increasingly recognized as requiring equitable, collaborative metro-politan governance. In **Metro Vancouver** (Canada), 21 municipalities, one electoral circumscription and a First Nation have worked together since 2007 to provide a collaborative framework for promoting regional growth, supporting liveability and agreeing a vision for, and also action on, regional priorities.[160] Beginning in 1986, the **Metropolitan Area of San Salvador** (El Salvador) has served as an autonomous, decentralized group of 14 municipalities working with private-sector, academic and community partners to promote equitable land use and planning.[161] The metropolitan area is comprised of the Council of Mayors (which aims to manage urban development), the Planning Office, and the Metropolitan Development Council, which coordinates local and central government action. Additionally, the metro-politan area has helped to redistribute investment and support equitable infrastructure delivery, while also monitoring and building technical capacity via its Planning Office. More generally, it remains crucial to

158 Davison Muchadenyika and Jeremy Waiswa, "Policy, Politics and Leadership in Slum Upgrading: A Comparative Analysis of Harare and Kampala," *Cities* 82 (2018): 58–67.

159 The initial contributions were 120,000 USD from the City of Harare, 30,000 USD from the Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation and 50,000 USD from Dialogue on Shelter.

160 Brian Roberts and John Abbott, "Collaborative Governance: Improving Sustainability of Development in Metropolises," in *Steering the Metropolis: Metropolitan Governance for Sustainable Urban Development*, ed. David Gómez-Álvarez et al. (Nairobi: UN-Habitat, 2017), 123–39.

161 Zulma Bolívar and Oscar Chamat, "Participation, Training, Efficiency and Transparency to Promote Social and Territorial Equity," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

Source: William McCue, Unsplash. Manchester, UK

explore how such regional and metro-level institutions can effectively manage common, pooled resources (e.g. urban watersheds) and equitably address key cross-cutting challenges like climate change.[162]

The UK has a highly centralized governance system and acute interregional economic inequalities; many large cities and their hinterlands are much less prosperous than in other countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. However, the UK recently implemented a series of combined city-region authorities within which the constituent local authorities cede and pool many aspects of their sovereignty and powers within a new governance structure.[163] **Manchester** (UK) became the first fully-established combined authority in 2015-2016 (with a new, directly elected mayor in 2017), and there are now 19 such city-region arrangements established across the country.[164] These combined authorities bring together

decision-making and governance in wider, economically meaningful, city-regions that can coherently link core cities to their smaller satellite towns and rural hinterlands. Accountability is typically achieved via a directly elected city-region mayor. **The model has important potential to help advance territorial equality in decision-making: all parts of the city-region are part of a collective voice, and previously marginalized, smaller urban and rural areas that surround large cities can now enjoy being integrated into decision-making processes.** Each local authority has equal voting powers, with unanimous voting required to approve many key policy agendas. At the same time, the mayor often needs to build cooperative relations across political and jurisdictional divides. Unlike the UK's first-past-the-post adversarial political system (which strongly discourages cooperative working practices), this is an innovative approach to enhance democratization and collaborative governance. Since these authorities are quite new, it is currently too early to assess their impact on inequalities or service delivery. However, they may offer important lessons for other countries seeking to foster meaningful rural-urban linkages, bolster regional economic development, and bridge territorial divides, and they can offer several benefits for democratization.

162 Post, "Cities and Politics in the Developing World."

163 Higher-level governing institutions are created via a "deal-making" process with the Treasury, in which the devolved powers and autonomy exercised by the Combined Authority are agreed between local and central state authorities.

164 Philip McCann, "Governance and Democratisation of Urban-Rural Linkages," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

7 Innovations to leave no one behind: Guaranteeing cultural rights and recognizing marginalized groups

Source: Jeanne Menjoulet, Flickr.
Refugees welcome. Berlin, Germany.

LRGs and civil society groups are increasingly seeking to address inequalities of recognition and to promote social and cultural rights in urban areas. After discussing cultural initiatives, this section considers how cities have supported the rights of refugees, migrants, older people, young people and LGBTQIA+ residents. Although certainly not comprehensive, this section illustrates an array of strategies that can advance social and cultural rights (complementing Section 3's discussions on Human Rights Cities).

7.1 Cultural initiatives and pathways to help deepen urban democracy

Source: Serena Tang, Flickr.
District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa.

Cultural rights are integral to human rights and local democracy. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Articles 22 and 27), cultural rights, alongside economic and social rights, are indispensable to human dignity and "everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts, to share in scientific advancement and its benefits".[165] Cultural rights are also inherent to the principles of democratic governance. **Democracy becomes real and substantive when cultural rights are fully and freely exercised, and when people's cultural capabilities (and particularly self-expression) are recognized and enabled.** As recognized by the UCLG 2020 *Rome Charter*, the right to "participate fully and freely in cultural life is vital to our cities and communities".[166] The *Rome Charter* notes that a city must help its inhabitants to discover cultural roots, create cultural expressions, and share cultures "so that social and democratic life is deepened by the exchange", while also protecting common cultural resources and spaces, both now and in the future.

Inequalities in the right to participate in cultural life are closely connected to the notions of citizenship, development and sustainability, and are key to understanding democratic deficits and threats to democracy.[167] The right to participate in urban cultural life (see Figure 9.3) encompasses the following dimensions:

(a) access to, or attendance at, activities produced by a wide-range of cultural organizations;

(b) civic practices facilitating creative expression;

(c) community participation in cultural groups or collectives; and

(d) participation in public decision-making and governance regarding cultural policies.

Although data on cultural rights are rarely available at the local and urban scales, recent surveys from **Barcelona** (Spain) and **Bogota** (Colombia)[168] have found different degrees of cultural participation that are often associated with income, neighbourhood of residence, and other social characteristics. In response, LRGs can develop innovative strategies to foster more equitable cultural participation, which can also help to combat exclusion and segregation in cities. An equitable cultural policy should promote opportunities for sharing and negotiating differences both between and within urban communities; it should consider formal, as well as informal, community- and individual-level practices which are relevant to the right to participate in cultural life.

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165 General Assembly of the United Nations, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (1948).

166 See: City of Roma and UCLG, "The 2020 Rome Charter," 2020, https://bit.ly/3waiUdl.

167 Nicolás Barbieri, "The Right to Participate in Urban Cultural Life: From Inequalities to Equity," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2021).

168 Barcelona City Council and Barcelona Institute of Culture, "Survey of Cultural Participation and Cultural Needs in Barcelona" (Barcelona, 2020), https://bit.ly/3l4dydX; Council of Bogotá, "Encuesta Bienal de Culturas," 2022, https://bit.ly/3w80dYj.

Figure 9.3

Inequalities in the right to participate in cultural life
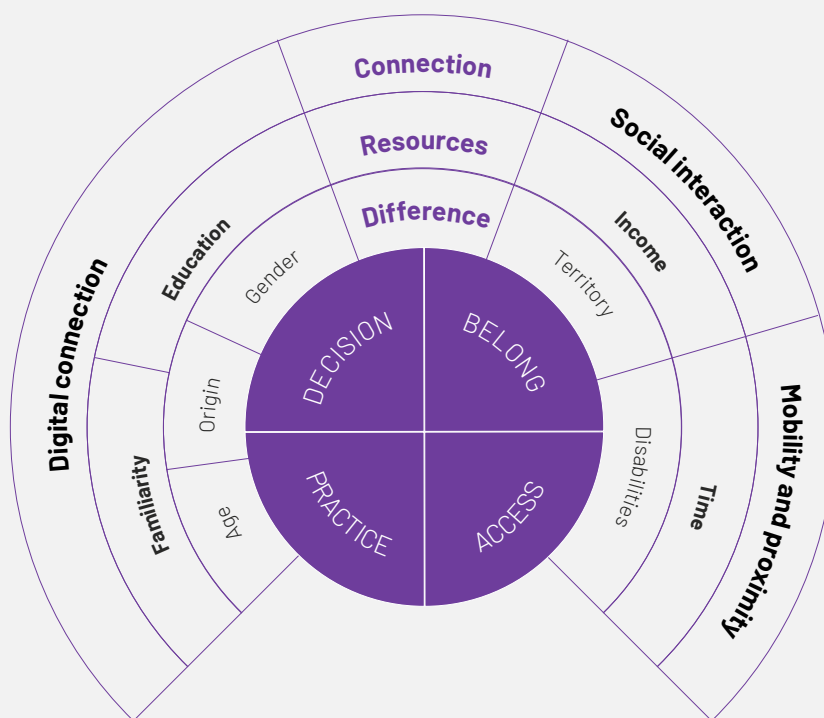
Source: Barbieri, "The Right to Participate in Urban Cultural Life: From Inequalities to Equity."

The District Six Museum in **Cape Town** (South Africa) was constituted in 1994 as the first post-Apartheid museum, in what was part of a highly inclusive cultural initiative. Its commitment to novel, participatory methods and ongoing forms of cocreation, involving former residents, helped to restore agency and dignity to marginalized citizens. According to its mission statement, it seeks to work "with the memories of communities affected by forced removals" while also supporting a "commitment to democracy, critical debate, [and] the right to speak truthfully and courageously".[169] Dating back to the 1840s, the District Six area had always been vibrant and highly diverse, but it later became the site of multiple state-sanctioned forced removals, particularly in the 1960s-70s when it was bulldozed.[170] The District Six Museum has subsequently sought to safeguard the memory of this neighbourhood, which was destroyed, as well as to reconstruct its day-to-day

life and amplify diverse voices.[171] For instance, the museum has cogenerated a floor map featuring key streets, shops, and other key institutions (inscribed by former residents) and a 100-metre-long *Memory Cloth* with hand-written memories. Continuous "memory work" has collected oral histories, produced art and poetry, exhibited traditional handicrafts, and developed other innovative methods such as the creation of tapestries and banners. These wide-ranging approaches help to unearth silenced voices in all their diversity and to restore residents' agency, making substantial contributions to strengthening urban citizenship and awareness of painful chapters of history in accessible, respectful and moving ways.

Iztapalapa (Mexico) often faces high levels of violence and deprivation, but has developed an array of cultural and other rights-based activities.[172] Within the framework of its *Planning and Transforming Iztapalapa*

169 See: Bonita Bennett, "District Six Museum: Activists for Change," *Museum International* 68, no. 3-4 (2016): 5-10.

170 Amie Soudien, "Memory, Multiplicity, and Participatory Curation at the District Six Museum, Cape Town," *Critical Arts* 33, no. 6 (2019): 67-82.

171 Bennett, "District Six Museum: Activists for Change."

172 Roth, "Democracy in Cities and Territories"; "Planning and Transforming Iztapalapa," 2021 Award "Best Practice in Citizen Participation," 2021, https://bit.ly/38uRvdv.

programme, a range of local and national government officials, academics, CSOs and independent agencies, including the Human Rights Commission of Mexico City, have created several participatory initiatives that high-light local traditions, arts, and culture. This initiative has also given rise to a range of economic cooperatives and planning collectives. These interventions have included efforts to improve the environment, support women's empowerment, and revitalize public spaces. A total of 367 community projects have been implemented related to 12 different themes, including enhancing security (9% of the projects), promoting cultural activities (14%, e.g. community museums and archives), and promoting participation (34%). Many of these initiatives aim to develop more active, critical and participatory citizen-ship, with diversity and cultural citizenship serving as a criterion for democratic inclusion in Iztapalapa's plan for transforming the city.

7.2 Innovative strategies to promote the rights and participation of displaced urban residents

Responding to the cross-border refugee crisis, the Habitat International Coalition has worked with Cities Alliance and several local partner organizations on an initiative in **Beirut** (Lebanon) to assess Syrian refugees' needs and to improve their social inclusion, while also amplifying the voices of other marginalized popula-tions.[173] Although initially focused on Syrian refugees,

the project has since been significantly expanded to engage with other displaced and vulnerable groups such as internally displaced Lebanese people (from previous wars), women, PWD, prisoners, migrant workers, Pales-tinian and Iraqi refugees, and tenants at risk of eviction. Building on the priorities and concerns of these groups, the project has generated a draft for the *Greater Beirut Right to the City Charter*. This includes a related context assessment, with recommendations from government officials, private sector actors, CSOs, hosts, migrants and refugees. As well as **underscoring the importance of right-based approaches that attend to multiple forms of displacement and marginalization**, the initia-tive has generated debate and informed subsequent mobilizations in Beirut, including the *Madinati* (*My City*) movement.

Chilean cities have developed several progressive examples of how to **support refugees and migrants via the development of new organizational arrange-ments within the LRG, as well as by creating cultural activities, improving service delivery and generating collaborative mechanisms**. LRGs in Chile have devel-oped an Inter-Municipal Panel with its own coordination mechanisms, organized training on relevant standards of protection, and provided horizontal learning opportu-nities related to migration. Over 20 cities in Chile have so far established offices, units, and/or programmes on migration; for instance, Santiago's municipality of **Quilicura** (Chile) has created the Office for Migrants and Refugees, which also seeks to reshape local discourses on migration.[174] At the same time, several cities in Chile have created healthcare ID cards and rights-based immigrant health policies. LRGs have also conducted censuses of migrants and developed cultural activities to promote greater cross-cultural understanding. The Ministerial Secretariat for Justice and Human Rights of the Metropolitan Region of Santiago has adopted a combined approach by establishing a Regional Panel on Migrants that convenes dialogues on key themes, gathers data, and contributes to migration policies.

Elsewhere, there have been several pathbreaking examples of cities incorporating migrants into demo-cratic processes through councils for migrants and strategies to foster more inclusive service delivery. In **Sao Paulo** (Brazil), the Municipal Council for Immigration

173 Habitat International Coalition, "Localizing Participatory Democracy and Human Rights in the Middle East," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022); see also: Housing and Land Rights Network and Habitat International Coalition, "Right to the City in Greater Beirut: Context Assessment in Light of the Refugee and Displacement Crisis" (Cairo, 2018), https://bit.ly/3NhdEeh.

174 IOM, "Systematization: Inter-Municipal Panel on Migrants and Cities 2014-2016 Chile" (Santiago de Chile, 2017), https://bit.ly/3l63wJh; Harald Bauder, "Urban Sanctuary in Context," in *Sanctuary Cities and Urban Struggles*, ed. Jonathan Darling and Harald Bauder (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 25–49.

was launched in 2018. This includes elected refugees and migrants, who currently represent six different nationalities and serve for two-year terms.[175] Building upon the council's inputs, Sao Paulo has launched its first *Municipal Plan of Public Policies for Refugees and Migrants*, which is being implemented from 2021-2024. Similarly, **Berlin** (Germany) and **Athens** (Greece) have created councils, including representatives from migrant communities and CSOs, which regularly assess migrants' needs and access to services. In **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), the city recently established an automatic registration process for migrants who have lived in the city for at least two years, which allows them to register and access services.[176] Beginning in 2021, those with two years of residency in Buenos Aires can also participate in local elections.

Sanctuary cities have proliferated across the globe, including in North America and the UK. These have helped to develop new forms of claim-making and strategies to foster migrant inclusion, although significant limits still remain in practice. **Sanctuary cities have experimented with novel forms of citizenship and claim-making by countering exclusionary discourses and offering cultural activities or other opportunities for refugees and migrants to become active participants in urban communities.**[177] Sanctuary cities have challenged the authority of national policymakers to define the terms of membership, while generating more equitable visions of urban citizenship. In the UK, sanctuary cities usually focus on awareness-raising and seek to change local attitudes towards displaced groups. Sanctuary cities in the USA and Canada have typically passed municipal ordinances and helped migrants to cope more effectively with challenging circumstances.[178] **San Francisco** and **New York** (USA) have issued municipal identification cards so that all residents can be identified (regardless of documentation status) and this helps them to access services.[179] However, sanctuary cities vary in their policing powers at the local level, and even in US cities, which tend to have greater local-

level powers, municipalities are still subject to federal immigration law-enforcement activities.

Some European cities have developed inclusive strategies to support migrant integration and access to services. These initiatives reflect a range of complex motivations and provide important lessons on how to foster understanding between hosts and migrants in cities. Based on research conducted in 14 European cities, some municipal policies and practices are more positive towards diversity than national ones.[180] Cities with community infrastructure and accessible public spaces, housing and employment – as well as ongoing, repeated encounters between diverse groups – have often been able to reduce tension and xenophobic sentiments. **Istanbul** (Turkey) is home to large international refugee populations (especially from Syria) which include Kurds, Roma and other non-Turkish ethnic groups. The city has offered these groups a range of social assistance programmes using a faith-based and charity approach.[181] The local government has branded Istanbul as a "city of tolerance". Meanwhile, a recent study of over 120 German municipalities (including rural areas, towns and cities) has explored the creation of local integration plans. This voluntary strategy seeks to address migrants' needs, and offers a useful indicator for policy interest in migration.[182] Key factors that have influenced the creation of such plans include: (a) local discourses; (b) key actors, such as local mayors; and (c) histories of migration or historical debts to the displaced populations. Surprisingly, the creation of such plans was not related to the numbers of refugees arriving, local political parties, or levels of economic prosperity of the receiving areas in Germany. Furthermore, receiving areas that were previously facing depopulation have often been the ones most interested in creating active migration policies. These German cases suggest a complex mixture of factors that shape local migration interventions, ranging from solidarity and concern for refugees to economic and political considerations and calculations, all of which

175 Duarte, Fléty, and Puigpinós, "Local Institutions for Civic Participation, Participatory Budgeting and Planning"; UNHCR, "How the City of Sao Paulo Is Placing Refugee Perspectives at the Heart of Its Policy," Global Compact on Refugees, 2020, https://bit.ly/3LgDcXl.

176 "Automatic Residence Registration of Migrants (Buenos Aires)," 2021 Award "Best Practice in Citizen Participation," 2021, https://bit.ly/3wxgULw.

177 Jonathan Darling and Harald Bauder, "Introduction – Sanctuary Cities and Urban Struggles," in *Sanctuary Cities and Urban Struggles*, ed. Jonathan Darling and Harald Bauder (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 1–22.

178 Bauder, "Urban Sanctuary in Context."

179 Bauder, 30.

180 Mike Raco and Tuna Tasan-Kok, "Governing Urban Diversity: Multi-Scalar Representations, Local Contexts, Dissonant Narratives," *European Urban and Regional StudiesRegional Studies* 26, no. 3 (2019): 230–38.

181 Ozge Yenigun and Ayda Eraydin, "Governing Urban Diversity in Istanbul: Pragmatic and Non-Discriminatory Solutions of Governance Initiatives in Response to Politicisation of Diversity," *European Urban and Regional Studies* 26, no. 3 (2019): 268–82.

182 Hannes Schammann et al., "Defining and Transforming Local Migration Policies: A Conceptual Approach Backed by Evidence from Germany," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 47, no. 13 (2021): 2897–2915.

can stimulate more inclusive strategies and attitudes towards displaced groups.[183]

7.3 Municipal strategies to support the rights, equity, and inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people

Although there is widespread discrimination against LGBTQIA+ citizens in many cities, LRGs have created mechanisms to foster their inclusion and access to services. In collaboration with the European Rainbow Cities Network, the Latin American Network of Rainbow Cities was created to promote awareness and exchange equitable solutions.[184] Participating cities include **Rosario** (Argentina), **Medellin** and **Bogota** (Colombia), **Montevideo** (Uruguay), and **Sao Paulo** (Brazil), which have focused on enhancing the quality of life and livelihoods of their LGBTQIA+ residents, protecting their freedom of identity, and fostering their empowerment while combating stigma. These cities have either passed new local legislation or found new ways to implement regulatory frameworks that can protect their human rights. Several Latin American cities have also established LGBTQIA+ citizenship centres that offer legal, social and psychological services, in addition to combating homophobia and transphobia and promoting LGBTQIA+ citizenship.[185] There is also a need to adopt an intersectional approach to support LGBTQIA+ refugees: in **Kampala** (Uganda) and in many other urban areas in the country, LGBTQIA+ displaced residents

often face discrimination from both fellow migrants and host populations.[186] In response, LRGs can work closely with refugee-led organizations to foster more equitable strategies, paying attention to the multiple exclusions facing LGBTQIA+ refugees. Finally, **a deeper understanding of the global histories and multiple trajectories of those involved in LGBTQIA+ urban activism can help LRGs and other key stakeholders to support more progressive politics in urban areas.**[187]

7.4 Age- and youth-friendly initiatives: Fostering recognition, cultural rights and equitable planning

In many of the world's regions, LRGs have promoted specific consultative spaces for women, young people, older people and migrants. This has also been done by traditional authorities in some countries such as Australia, Canada, Mexico and South Africa. For example, the *Human Rights City Project* in Turkey has promoted the rights of structurally discriminated groups and fostered more participatory and accessible service delivery.[188] It has also developed participatory platforms in which professional organizations, academics, CSOs and international organizations can cocreate policy

183 Other findings again suggest that municipal efforts to integrate migrants in European cities have been simultaneously motivated by objectives such as the will to foster social cohesion and economic competitiveness: Raco and Tasan-Kok, "Governing Urban Diversity: Multi-Scalar Representations, Local Contexts, Dissonant Narratives."

184 Catalina Ortiz, "Democratising Pathways for Equality in Latin America," GOLD VI Working Paper Series (Barcelona, 2022).

185 See: Sarah Gamrani, Marina Reidel, and Clementine Tribouillard, "Cities with Pride: Inclusive Urban Planning with LGBTQ + People," *IDB Urban Development*, 2021, https://bit.ly/3I8CO2v.

186 David Sinclair and Giulia Sinatti, "Re-Thinking Protection for LGBTI Refugees in Kampala, Uganda: A Relational, Trust-Based Approach," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (2022): 26–51.

187 Alison L. Bain and Julie A. Podmore, "Placing LGBTQ+ Urban Activisms," *Urban Studies* 58, no. 7 (2021): 1305–26.

188 The project was led by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute. Helena Olsson, Bahar Özden Cosgun, and Windi Arini, "Transparency and Human Rights – Cooperation, Partnerships and Human Rights," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

Source: Martijn, Flickr.
Catharinaplein in Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

proposals to localize human rights. The municipality of **Muratpasa** (Turkey) established an assembly of older people in 2019, working in partnership with the University of Akdeniz and the Ageing Studies Association, in order to encourage these residents' participation in local government. The assembly helped raise awareness of age discrimination and of multiple forms of violence, neglect and abuse. The gender-balanced assembly includes representatives from NGOs, nursing homes and older people at the neighbourhood level. Their inputs have been particularly valuable during COVID-19: in response to the loneliness felt by many older residents during lockdown, the municipality initiated psychological counselling (via regular phone-calls), and also improved access to medicines from local pharmacies.

Meanwhile, there have been some innovative examples of how to promote greater participation by young people and children in the arts, culture, urban design and local governance. These include the *Youth and cultural citizenship* programme in **Abidjan**'s Yopougon commune (Ivory Coast).[189] After a crisis in which young people were manipulated for political gain, the city council decided to promote their participation in local governance with a focus on addressing inequalities in cultural participation. This has led to the creation of a Communal Youth Council, several cultural Youth Districts, and cultural and sports activities organized by the municipal radio station. In another promising initiative, **Buenos Aires** (Argentina) has launched a programme that seeks to promote children's rights, make their voices heard and encourage them to actively participate in urban transformations.[190]

189 Barbieri, "The Right to Participate in Urban Cultural Life: From Inequalities to Equity"; see also: Municipality of Mexico City and UCLG, "Yopougon," UCLG Committe on Culture, 2021, https://bit.ly/3wqU1JY.

190 Duarte, Fléty, and Puigpinós, "Local Institutions for Civic Participation, Participatory Budgeting and Planning"; and: IOPD, "Playing and Participating. When Children Are the Protagonists of Urban Planning," 2020, https://bit.ly/3NbNGJ0.

8 Innovations to leave no place behind: Engaging in more democratic spatial policy and planning processes

From small-scale housing interventions to city-wide interventions, local strategies can strongly promote socio-spatial inclusion while also strengthening LRG responsiveness to, and recognition of, formerly marginalized citizens. Indeed, holistic area-based strategies can foster inclusion and resilience to multiple risks if they include the development of democratic approaches in the process.

As thoroughly analyzed in Chapters 2 and 4, informal settlements are home to over 1 billion people throughout the world.[191] The regeneration of these areas has usually focused on enhancing tenure security, providing improved access to services and infrastructure, and developing safe and secure homes. **Given the enormous range of housing deprivations, environmental health hazards and other challenges present in informal settlements, locally tailored and participatory interventions are needed to effectively respond to their diverse needs.[192]**

Upgrading *in situ* helps ensure that household assets are retained and strengthened; similarly, vibrant social networks and local organizations can continue taking

191 United Nations, "Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable," 2019, https://bit.ly/3iE1G0k.

192 Richard J. Lilford et al., "Improving the Health and Welfare of People Who Live in Slums," *The Lancet* 389, no. 10068 (2017): 559–70; Koen Olthuis et al., "Slum Upgrading: Assessing the Importance of Location and a Plea for a Spatial Approach," *Habitat International* 50 (2015): 270–88.

root. CSOs can maintain relations with nearby political officials, while a participatory upgrading process can, itself, help strengthen grassroots organizations. This process can, at the same time, promote more responsive local governance, as LRGs, utility agencies and other official stakeholders cocreate solutions, working hand-in-hand with low-income citizens.[193]
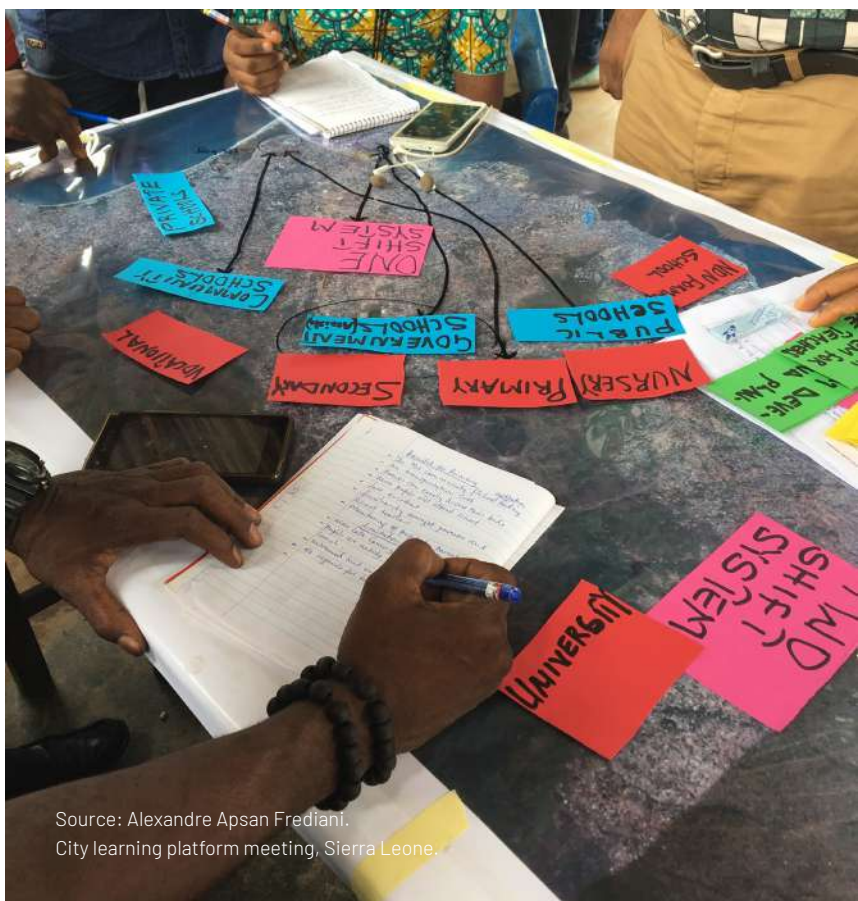
This section will consider recent housing and neighbourhood revitalization initiatives, the development of community action area planning, and multisectoral planning consortia to scale-up holistic solutions in sections 8.1 and 8.2. Section 8.3 will briefly discuss place-based strategies to promote climate resilience through multi-stakeholder partnerships (building on the approach outlined in Chapter 7).

8.1 Supporting access to affordable housing and inclusive neighbourhood revitalization

Source: Alexandre Apsan Frediani.
City learning platform meeting, Sierra Leone.

Many contemporary cities contain dilapidated neighbourhoods that cannot readily attract investment or maintain community cohesion, and any revitalization strategies applied to them may struggle to achieve equitable benefits. As well as limited public investment in central cities and territorial infrastructure and services, these areas often contain poorly run public housing and/or high levels of private-sector rental accommodation.[194] When investment is secured, this is typically accompanied by spiralling accommodation costs and therefore any regeneration frequently results in displacement,

which only exacerbates existing spatial and socio-economic inequalities and accelerates the financialization of housing.[195] Although neighbourhood regeneration can be a contentious process, certain approaches suggest that even marginalized residents may be able to benefit from equitable coproduced solutions (as discussed in Chapter 4, Section 2.3). **Ensuring such gains for low-income residents will typically require access to public subsidies, as well as government or NGO efforts to ensure that improvements in shelter are coproduced working in conjunction with residents themselves.**

Recent experiences suggest that a diverse constellation of stakeholders – including CSOs, health professionals and city planning officials – can effectively partner with residents to develop renewal strategies that are able to tackle multiple inequalities. In the Paris suburb of **La Coudraie** (France), which mainly houses immigrant workers from the Maghreb and from sub-Saharan Africa, residents have worked with local academics and municipal officials to cocreate a renewal project that has provided temporary rehousing and fostered

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193 Eduardo Rojas, "Building Cities: Neighbourhood Upgrading and Urban Quality of Life" (Washington, DC, 2010), https://bit.ly/38sVRSy.

194 Anne Power, *Phoenix Cities: The Fall and Rise of Great Industrial Cities* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010).

195 Rolnik, "Ten Years of the City Statute in Brazil: From the Struggle for Urban Reform to the World Cup Cities."

democratic participation. This has, however, proven difficult to replicate in other French cities.[196] In Brazil, an estimated 500 housing units were at risk of demolition in downtown **Sao Paulo**, in 2017.[197] This area, which is known as Cracolândia, had several social problems, including: widespread drug use; the stigmatization of its black, mixed-race and homeless residents; daily police violence; and only limited access to social and/or health services. Many of these had become entrenched due to the presence of overlapping disadvantages. To prevent evictions, local CSOs, urban planners and health professionals developed an alternative strategy (*Campos Elíseos Vivo Plan*) that enhanced access to affordable housing, healthcare, public spaces, community kitchens and cultural activities. This Plan helped the affected families to negotiate more effectively with local authorities, thereby generating new pathways towards a more democratic city that was able to provide support for health, local businesses and social inclusion while tackling intersectional inequalities.

In the city of **Eindhoven** (The Netherlands), close collaboration with marginalized residents has led to codesigned, locally appropriate housing plans that have fostered social cohesion for 600 residents.[198] The municipal government offered a 30,000 m² plot to a non-profit social landlord called Woonbedrijf, who contracted a local architectural firm and engaged local organizations to collaborate with tenants in equitable design processes. These organizations worked with traditionally excluded groups (including PWD and people with learning difficulties) to develop a range of appropriate housing typologies and proposed a series of collectively managed spaces (e.g. green spaces and rooftop gardens). Eindhoven's municipal government has supported the process and facilitated access to land. Meanwhile, the social landlord has catalyzed the inclusive design and management process by ensuring the strong, and ongoing, participation of marginalized residents. The next section examines how place-based strategies can be scaled-up, with the help of strong community participation, and can provide multiple benefits for equitable urbanization.

8.2 Community-led processes to foster equitable spatial planning and land access

Following a similar path as the experiences reported in Chapter 4 (Section 2.2), Community Action Area Planning (CAAP) has worked in **Freetown** (Sierra Leone) to promote the capabilities of the urban poor and to enhance their relations with city authorities. Together they have cocreated plans that have enhanced the social, spatial and political integration of marginalized neighbourhoods.[199] The CAAP methodology has been developed through a collaborative project involving the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), the Federation of the Rural and Urban Poor of Sierra Leone (FEDURP), and the UK-based non-profit organization Architecture Sans Frontières-UK. The first CAAP process entailed workshops within two communities: Cockle Bay and Dworzark, which were focused on participatory design and planning and sought to develop upgrading plans and advocated more inclusive city-making with local authorities. Unlike traditional top-down plans, these equitable neighbourhood planning processes employed a localized, participatory approach with a strong potential to democratize local governance. Building on this precedent, in 2019, SLURC led the establishment of a City Learning Platform and a series of Community Learning Platforms. These two interconnected governance structures have helped to bring together different urban stakeholders to meet periodically and discuss challenges and strategies facing informal settlements. The platforms have since become a key space for sharing knowledge associated with mechanisms to improve living conditions in Freetown's informal settlements. For instance, the platforms have supported the development, implementation and

196 CoHabitat Network, "From User Knowledges to Citizen Expertise: Democratizing Urban Renewal and New Construction of Social Housing Projects," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

197 Fórum Aberto Mundaréu da Luz, "Campos Elíseos Vivo: um projeto urbanístico e social elaborado com a comunidade Fórum Aberto Mundaréu da Luz," Instituto Pólis, 2018, https://bit.ly/3PnLf8c.

198 CoHabitat Network, "From User Knowledges to Citizen Expertise: Democratizing Urban Renewal and New Construction of Social Housing Projects."

199 Braima Koroma and Joseph Mustapha Macarthy, "Participatory Planning: The Role of Community and City Learning Platforms in Freetown," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022).

Figure 9.4

Mukuru Special Planning Area thematic consortia (Kenya)

Source: Muungano wa Wanavijiji, "Mukuru Special Planning Area (Kenya)," 2018, https://bit.ly/3lbrx1y.

institutionalization of the CAAPs. These experiences in Freetown demonstrate that **supporting communi-ty-led planning processes can enhance the agency of marginalized groups, enabling them to affect change and expand their capabilities to participate meaningfully in processes of spatial planning.**[200]

In the informal settlement of Mukuru, in **Nairobi** (Kenya), grassroots movements and CSOs have successfully built upon years of data-collection and advocacy to develop a scaled-up, holistic, participatory upgrading process which has received strong support from official agencies, academics and other partners. Mukuru's upgrading initiative, which is known as a "Special Planning Area", will benefit over 100,000 households in Nairobi's industrial area.[201] Following the County Government's 2017 declaration of a Special Planning Area in Mukuru, the Kenyan slum-dweller federation Muungano wa Wanavijiji and its partners have collab-

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200 During the development of the CAAPs, a steering committee helped to organize community residents and also supported their skills in mapping, photography, and related advocacy tactics. Participants subsequently noted improvements in self-esteem and felt themselves to be agents of change, while also benefiting from strengthened relations with local authorities. There is still a need to ensure that participatory processes are truly inclusive for disadvantaged residents such as young people, PWD, and those with low levels of literacy. Joseph Mustapha Macarthy, Alexandre Apsan Frediani, and Sulaiman F. Kamara, "Report on the Role of Community Action Area Planning in Expanding the Participatory Capabilities of the Urban Poor" (Freetown, 2019), https://bit.ly/3Ld4hLg.

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201 Slum Dwellers International, "Mukuru Special Planning Area," GOLD VI Pathways to Equality Cases Repository: Democratizing (Barcelona, 2022); Philipp Horn, "Enabling Participatory Planning to Be Scaled in Exclusionary Urban Political Environments: Lessons from the Mukuru Special Planning Area in Nairobi," *Environment and Urbanization* 33, no. 2 (2021): 519–38.

Source: Tom Barrett, Unsplash.
Mural in Milwaukee, WI, USA.

orated to develop a series of multisectoral upgrading strategies. Multidisciplinary consortia were created, which used participatory approaches involving Mukuru residents over two years to cocreate detailed plans and develop recommendations covering seven thematic areas (see Figure 9.4). All the consortia were led jointly by County Government officials and members of staff from a civil society organization. In 2020, the Nairobi Metropolitan Services, a military-dominated agency established under the President's executive authority, extended the previously declared two-year Special Planning Area period by another two years. The Nairobi Metropolitan Services then swiftly implemented upgrading strategies in Mukuru, including improved roads, drainage and sewerage, and there was also a commitment to build 15,000 housing units. The model has already set precedents locally and will be repli-

cated, as local officials and the National Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Urban Development are already intending to replicate the Special Planning Area in Nairobi's other large informal settlements of Kibera and Mathare.

Amongst the Mukuru SPA's many pioneering aspects, multidisciplinary consortia have helped to bring about a rethink of Kenya's often exclusionary planning strategies. By adjusting conventional standards for physical and social infrastructure, and asking residents to specify what essential elements these facilities should have, the consortia helped to keep nearly all Mukuru households in place.[202] More broadly, the

202 Alice Sverdlik et al., "Achieving Scale, Social Inclusion, and Multifaceted Shelter Solutions" (London, 2020), https://bit.ly/3Ljn2fL.

Special Planning Area's multidisciplinary consortia has emerged as a valuable vehicle for upgrading informal settlements, particularly if professionals and officials can work closely in partnership with communities and if consortia members are given sufficient institutional support and resources.

8.3 Equitable strategies to promote disaster risk reduction and climate resilience

Source: José Navia, Pixabay.
Manizales, Colombia.

The city of **Manizales** (Colombia), with approximately 400,000 residents, has a lengthy track record of holistic environmental planning seeking to integrate disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, and land-use and territorial planning, while also supporting the inclusion of marginalized groups.[203] Having experienced several major disasters (including floods, landslides and volcanic eruptions), the municipality has adopted anticipatory strategies that include inter-institutional collaboration and strong community participation. In its *Guardians of the Slope Programme*, a local NGO has worked with over 100 local women to help stabilize slopes while also building their capacities in leadership and community engagement.[204] Manizales initiated this programme after a series of major landslides in 2003, when the local government realized that the existing hard infrastructure needed to be complemented by a community-based approach including maintenance and strengthening grassroots capacities.

Municipal climate action in **eThekwini** (South Africa) has benefited from sustained leadership by local champions, who have pioneered farsighted local planning and partnerships which offer benefits for livelihoods and equitable urban development. Driven by the Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department of eThekwini municipality, the city developed a pathbreaking *Municipal Climate Protection Programme* in 2004 which was focused on adaptation. This was later complemented by a mitigation workstream launched in 2011.[205] A key strategy has been to link climate action with job creation and improvements to living conditions. This has included ecosystem restoration and maintenance and provided a range of "ecopreneur" opportunities that have enabled marginalized residents to earn incomes. Significant initiatives have included tree planting, riverbank restoration and collecting recyclable materials, and related training opportunities.[206] This ecosystem-based model appealed to both the city's private sponsors and its political leadership. It offers benefits for both mitigation and adaptation and has subsequently been replicated by neighbouring municipalities (thanks to a partnership with a local NGO). Although the city's climate work has been undertaken without any legal or policy mandate, the use of existing resources by local champions has provided a key starting point while also generating international attention and further action.

As highlighted throughout Section 8, **there is an overarching need for place-based, multilevel democratic planning interventions that can generate equitable solutions and foster climate-related measures and social justice in urban areas**.

203 Jorgelina Hardoy and Luz Stella Velásquez Barrero, "Re-Thinking 'Biomanizales': Addressing Climate Change Adaptation in Manizales, Colombia," *Environment and Urbanization* 26, no. 1 (2014): 53–68.

204 Julia Wesely, "Towards Understanding Enabling Environments for Good Practices in Disaster Risk Management: An Analysis of Critical Junctures in Manizales, Colombia," *Environment and Urbanization* 33, no. 2 (2021): 599–615.

205 Debra Roberts and Sean O'Donoghue, "Urban Environmental Challenges and Climate Change Action in Durban, South Africa," *Environment and Urbanization* 25, no. 2 (2013): 299–319; Debra Roberts, "Prioritizing Climate Change Adaptation and Local Level Resilience in Durban, South Africa," *Environment and Urbanization* 22, no. 2 (2010): 397–413.

206 Roberts and O'Donoghue, "Urban Environmental Challenges and Climate Change Action in Durban, South Africa."

9 Conclusions

Recognizing that innovations can use different mechanisms and strategies, this chapter has discussed a series of elements that can be combined in novel ways to help deepen democracy and create pathways towards greater urban and territorial equality. **Three key pillars of local democracy** have been comprehensively examined in this chapter:

(a) citizenship, equal rights and justice;

(b) representative, accountable institutions and processes; and

(c) citizens' initiatives and participation.[207]

The text has explored how LRGs can strengthen these pillars to advance democratization using opportunities generated by "democratic innovation families", Human Rights Cities, and officials committed to open government, transparency and accountability. However, rather than advocating a single pathway towards democratization, the text argues for tailor-made solutions and a flexible array of strategies to enhance local democratization. One starting point for enhanced democratization is for LRGs to recognize the rights and entitlements of everyone, including those who are disadvantaged in multiple, intersecting ways.

Indeed, **LRGs need to respect, protect and fulfil the right for everyone to participate in public life. This requires a comprehensive approach to democratic mechanisms, in which the right to vote and participate in regular and free local elections is coupled with participatory innovations**. Such recognition will help all citizens to engage more fully in democratic life and will provide a first step towards directly reducing political inequalities. Recognition of these rights can also help to address other forms of inequality and associated discrimination.

As explained above, democratic innovations have created a range of **deliberative spaces** (e.g. mini-publics including citizens' assemblies, referenda, citizens' initiatives and specialized councils), **participatory spaces** (e.g. participatory budgeting) and **collaborative governance** (e.g. coproduced services and shelter delivery; community development funds; and place-based approaches like the upgrading of informal settlements and neighbourhood renewal strategies). All of these can play a significant role in tackling spatial, socio-economic and other interrelated forms of exclusion. However, to achieve this, it is of paramount importance for LRGs to develop inclusive, equitable strategies that **leave no one and no place behind**. This can be achieved, firstly, by acknowledging and valuing the diverse needs and aspirations of the population and of the different groups within it, and by promoting processes that can amplify otherwise unheard voices with benefits for marginalized groups and which **address their contextually specific concerns through intersectional approaches**. Secondly, it can be achieved by determining the **appropriate spatial scale** on which to operate (reflecting citizens' priorities and the particular moment in time), and cocreating

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207 Kemp and Jiménez, "State of Local Democracy Assessment Framework," 21–22.

through **area- or place-based approaches that target highly disadvantaged neighbourhoods**.

Furthermore, LRGs committed to **open government and rights-based approaches** have not only promoted rights, but they have also enhanced accountability and governmental legitimacy. **Open government** is increasingly recognized as a transversal priority for local decision makers who seek to promote transparency, collaboration and participation in order to provide citizens with the benefits of trust and accountability. Many LRGs have therefore used **digital tools** to promote open government and strengthen participation. However, cities still need to take further steps to foster digital inclusion and create supplementary forms of engagement so that disadvantaged citizens do not experience further exclusion. This chapter also discusses how LRGs have sought to **combat corruption and foster transparency and accountability**. A key pathway towards greater urban equality and democratization is the use of **rights-based strategies**. This has been epitomized by Human Rights Cities, which seek to promote the inclusion and dignity of structurally discriminated groups and to make their voices heard. Some LRGs have sought to mainstream rights-based approaches using multifaceted legal strategies, partnerships and other innovative approaches.[208] There are also vital opportunities for LRGs to **foster economic, social and cultural rights**, as demonstrated by inclusive municipal partnerships with informal workers, and by wide-ranging cultural initiatives that can promote urban equality and enhance local democracy.[209] Also, by **deepening decentralization processes**, national governments and LRGs can promote local democratic power while also creating equitable opportunities for citizen participation and decision-making.

Taken together, the above set of strategies can be used to tackle multiple inequalities and to provide far-reaching benefits in the form of more empowered citizens, urban social justice, and strengthened local democracy. The wide-ranging examples presented in Chapter 9 help demonstrate that LRGs are willing to both lead and respond to grassroots efforts that promote equitable distribution, solidarity and mutual care. LRGs can also foster greater recognition and parity

Source: Peg Hunter, Flickr.
Border Wall from the US Side. Nogales, Arizona, USA.

political participation.[210] There is a related need for LRGs to develop diverse **mechanisms of participation and provide multiple opportunities for citizen feedback** which can help to provide meaningful responses to the needs of marginalized groups. In sum, these innovations can play a significant role in promoting a new governance culture grounded in democratic values, human rights and equitable practices.

For LRGs, developing a portfolio of participatory, deliberative, representative and other innovative strategies may offer valuable opportunities to enrich pathways towards democratization. **It is key for LRGs not only to institutionalize participation, but also to develop strategies that can "couple participatory innovations with other parts of the democratic system".[211]** LRGs can meld the previously mentioned innovation families with different mechanisms and entry points. Ways of doing this could include: using a thematic focus (e.g. housing, environment); intervening in spatially-targeted areas (e.g. poor neighbourhoods); or adopting actor-based strategies (e.g. focusing on women, young people or migrants). Additional democratizing mechanisms may include guaranteeing non-discrimination, freedom for dissent and protest, and equal access to justice, as well as implementing **political quotas** to promote diverse representation (e.g. of women). A comprehensive **rights-based approach** (with attention to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for everyone) will

208 UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, "Role of Local Government in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights : Final Report of the Human Rights Advisory Committee."

209 Barbieri, "The Right to Participate in Urban Cultural Life: From Inequalities to Equity"; Soudien, "Memory, Multiplicity, and Participatory Curation at the District Six Museum, Cape Town"; Bennett, "District Six Museum: Activists for Change."

210 Yap, Cociña, and Levy, "The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality."

211 Smith, "Reflections on the Theory and Practice of Democratic Innovations," 577.

be required to fulfil the 2030 Agenda, the *Gwangju Principles* and other related commitments. LRGs should also **recognize the knowledge, and support the contributions, of informal workers, residents of informal settlements, displaced populations, PWD, and other marginalized groups who, by collecting data and through many other means**, can offer key insights and provide information that can form the foundation of equitable collaborations with official actors.

There are evident **benefits to such innovations** in terms of strengthening democracy and LRGs may gain in multiple ways, thereby creating **virtuous circles** with an ever more engaged citizenry. Firstly, innovative local officials can become more relevant to the populations that they serve, addressing the needs of particularly disadvantaged groups and thereby reducing inequalities. Secondly, political recognition and LRG-civil society partnerships can encourage a range of subsequent democratic engagements. Several of the examples cited above were initiated, or supported, by LRGs, but they can only thrive in a context of civic activism and ongoing engagement. Democracy is a powerful system that can only be achieved through action. **Local democracy is nurtured when people are enabled to act, whether by voting, committing to participatory processes, or engaging in collective action in their neighbourhoods.** Thirdly, local engagement can catalyze **positive feedback loops** and spark new forms of equitable engagement at multiple scales; these can include establishing inclusive financial mechanisms such as community development funds.

It is important to underline that there is no single, or linear, democratic process. This chapter does not advocate a preferred route towards democratization, but rather offers an array of experiences for **fostering democratization that can be adapted to local contexts and deepened over time**. Encouraging innovations to strengthen participation, establishing Human Rights Cities and promoting open governance, as illustrated by different case studies, show how LRGs have developed myriad strategies that can foster democratization and support more equitable development. The chapter does not, however, endorse any particular approach or sequence of interventions because **local priorities, histories and patterns of inequalities** will need to determine the selection of interventions. **Civil society action and grassroots precedents** may also play a pivotal role in generating, cocreating and implementing equitable democratizing strategies, working in tandem with LRGs. Different kinds of collective decision-making processes may best align with alternative forms of

democratic engagement. Although precise interventions cannot be prescribed in advance, the process of democratization is **highly iterative** and often emerges only after extended periods of time. **As citizens engage in local democratic practices (including by working closely with LRGs), democracy should become increasingly protected and strengthened, following some of the many pathways outlined in this chapter.**

It is democracy that both challenges and enables LRGs to be relevant to diverse groups, as well as fair and equitable in the support provided to citizens. Creating alliances and other inclusive strategies may help to address the many practical challenges that face cities and communities. Over-ambitious goals and pledges to democratize local governance frequently remain merely aspirational, particularly in the context of highly unequal cities. The asymmetric distribution of power often benefits the local elite groups at the expense of the most disadvantaged households and/or neighbourhoods. Such difficulties have been reviewed in detail in this chapter, as have the challenges implicit to scaling-up equitable interventions. Public commitment to participation and inclusion may, nevertheless, provide a platform from which disadvantaged communities can contest longstanding efforts to exclude them. Strategies to **build alliances and coalitions** – including across different scales, spaces and forms of power – may also be of crucial importance for foster transformative change in the face of highly inequitable political dynamics.[212] Creating **mutual learning opportunities** between LRGs, civil society and other key stakeholders (including municipal networks and other platforms) can help to disseminate and adapt key innovations and thereby enhance local democratization.

While this chapter has analyzed wide-ranging innovations, more action will be urgently required, including moves to reinvigorate democratization and equitable interventions in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic has only increased the challenges that LRGs are facing and has illustrated the ways in which inequalities can be exacerbated or, alternatively, better addressed with the help of forward-looking initiatives. Local government support has been essential throughout the COVID-19 crisis, but it has often proved insufficient, especially in lower-income countries where urban inequalities were already deep-seated.[213] Many LRGs have helped to foster mutual care

212 Gaventa, "Linking the Prepositions: Using Power Analysis to Inform Strategies for Social Action."

213 Alice Sverdlik and Anna Walnycki, "Better Cities after COVID-19" (London, 2021), https://bit.ly/3sYSppZ.

Source: JoLynne Martinez, Flickr.
Volunteers Painting Black Lives Matter Mural in Kansas City, USA.

between citizens and enhance service delivery during the pandemic, with particular concern for marginalized residents. The pandemic has revealed the importance of the very local scale, as neighbours and families have supported each other and, through other voluntary activities, reached beyond the neighbourhood.[214] At the same time, COVID-19 has illustrated the importance of having a supportive national framework, particularly if local authorities are to serve their citizens adequately in times of acute need. Many of the municipal innovations highlighted above would benefit from more appropriate policies, resources and support from national and/or regional policymakers. Increased awareness of urban poverty and deprivation may offer substantial possibilities for reform in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis.[215]

Indeed, the pandemic may stimulate efforts to advance towards more inclusive development, together with bringing greater recognition of the significance of local democratization and its importance for social justice and urban equality. The examples presented in Chapter 9 show what is possible and the diverse sources of democratic inspiration already available, but such innovative activities need to be supported and upscaled to reach all those who need to benefit from them. With COVID-19 having exacerbated inequalities and underscored the need for transformative change, there is an increasing need for partnerships between LRGs and citizens to create pathways towards urban equality that can build upon and extend the pioneering strategies discussed above.

214 Duque Franco et al., "Mapping Repertoires of Collective Action Facing the COVID-19 Pandemic in Informal Settlements in Latin American Cities."

215 Jaideep Gupte and Diana Mitlin, "COVID-19: What Is Not Being Addressed," *Environment and Urbanization* 33, no. 1 (2021): 211–28.

10↓ Conclusions and final recommendations

Achieving urban and territorial equality

Abstract

GOLD VI has discussed the arenas in which local and regional governments (LRGs) are taking action to address urban and territorial inequalities, with multiple chapters presenting different pathways for LRGs to join in trajectories for change and implement future-oriented courses of action. This concluding chapter begins by revisiting the main findings that each pathway to equality has offered in this Report: **Commoning**, **Caring**, **Connecting**, **Renaturing**, **Prospering** and **Democratizing**. It then offers some reflections on the challenges of scaling up these pathways in transformative ways. Understanding that the most significant changes to promote equality take place at the intersection of these pathways and as a result of their cumulative effects, this conclusion presents five key principles that LRGs should consider when building pathways towards equality.

These five principles emerge from the pathways. First, a rights-based approach is the basis of any LRG efforts to build pathways to equality. Second, the spatial dimension of inequalities is central to LRGs' efforts to promote equality. Policies and planning should challenge socio-spatial fragmentation; promote proximity, accessibility and urban-rural reciprocity; and foster more equal and sustainable territorial development which is compatible with just ecological transitions. Third, a new subnational governance culture is crucial in the face of growing inequalities. It is necessary to promote broad local partnerships, encourage greater participation and adequately empower LRGs, thus making multilevel governance truly effective. Fourth, an adequate fiscal and investment architecture is essential to strengthen and localize finance and propel alternative financing models that recognize and optimize the value of the many and varied resources that exist. And finally, LRGs can advance pathways to equality by engaging practically with time frames that look beyond electoral cycles: recognizing different and unequal historical legacies and structural constraints, addressing the issue of time poverty, supporting radical incremental practices and working together to establish bold visions for a sustainable and equitable future.

These five principles are explored further by offering a series of political recommendations to help advance urban and territorial equality. These recommendations are the result of the intersection between the different pathways and the principles discussed.

This chapter concludes by returning to different dimensions of urban and territorial equality: (a) the equitable distribution of material conditions for a dignified quality of life; (b) reciprocal recognition of identities and claims; (c) parity political participation in decision-making; and (d) solidarity and mutual care among people and between people and nature. It then offers some reflections on the critical role played by LRGs, which are committed to making the political choices needed to pursue a more equal, peaceful and sustainable future.

1 Fighting inequalities with LRGs at the forefront

For the local and regional government (LRG) movement, it is no longer an option to allow inequalities to grow. Inequalities have multifaceted impacts in cities and territories: intensifying and creating new forms of social segregation, urban segmentation and regional marginalization; amplifying disaffection and unrest; and limiting opportunities for structurally marginalized people to live dignified and fulfilling lives. LRGs have a duty to take action and use all their capacities to lead and support transformative local forces that can address inequalities through local strategies and thereby ensure local populations a just and sustainable future, and the respect, fulfilment and protection of their human rights. Current approaches to framing global inequalities tend to minimize the fundamental role that local action, strategies and knowledge can play in tackling the territorial manifestations of inequalities. These approaches also underestimate the importance of local attempts to deal with some of the underlying causes behind social and economic disparities. **This Report is a collective effort to position the role of LRGs at the forefront of the construction of more equal futures.** It recognizes their function as key players in the articulation of diverse partnerships, in supporting citizen-led initiatives, in promoting long-term sustainable visions and radical democratization, and in providing the basic conditions for collective life to flourish.

This is a challenging task and, as important as local action is, responses to inequalities led by LRGs need to be firmly embedded within wider strategies, working at different scales, that can tackle the structural conditions that drive inequalities. Although many of these structural trends go beyond the competences of local authorities, local communities are the first to be hit by inequalities. This means that LRGs require adequate support and recognition from national structures at different levels in order to respond to them, including appropriate enabling environments and capabilities. This implies having the necessary financial, political and administrative mechanisms to advance equality-enhancing, transformative actions at the local level.

This task is, however, backed up by a global architecture of important dialogue, commitments and agreements. This has permitted the recognition of both the centrality of the equality agenda, and the importance of grounded and territorial action, which are important ways of helping to achieve the objective of sustainable development. As discussed in the previous chapters of this Report, the centrality of localization processes for the 2030 Agenda has led many international voices to recognize that whether or not the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda are achieved will largely be decided in cities and territories. This has led a

Source: Alexandre Apsan Frediani.
City learning platform meeting, Sierra Leone.

growing number of LRGs to commit to the localization of the global agendas. What is more, many have developed voluntary local and subnational reviews to monitor and reflect upon the state of SDG localization and action being taken against climate change in their respective cities and territories.[1] Similarly, Human Rights City movements have focused the role of local authorities on respecting, fulfilling and protecting human rights. LRGs have a central role to play in the recognition of everyday and collective practices relating to the production and advancing of rights, and occupy a privileged position to help to expand a new generation of rights (see Chapter 3). All in all, UCLG has a commitment to acting for *people*, the *planet* and *government* as reflected in its Pact for the Future.[2] This is reinforced by other initiatives within the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments.[3] This speaks of an international pledge to recognize the importance of acting, thinking and implementing locally when dealing with pressing global challenges. Addressing inequalities forms a fundamental part of these UCLG commitments.

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1 See UCLG, "Localizing the SDGs: A Boost to Monitoring & Reporting," Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralization, 2022, https://bit.ly/3M8IxRO; and Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy, "Who We Are," 2021, https://bit.ly/3pVDdXB.

2 See UCLG, "Facilitating a 'Pact for the Future': The Role of the International Municipal and Regional Movement Powered by UCLG," Media, 2020, https://bit.ly/3zbikP6.

3 See GTF, "Global Taskforce," 2020, https://bit.ly/3zBpsBP.

Through its different chapters, GOLD VI has discussed the space in which LRGs have taken action within this immense task. It has done this through the notion of pathways to urban and territorial equality, which are seen as trajectories for change that offer LRGs ways to act beyond sectorial silos. They also offer the possibility to define criteria for decision-making relating to future-oriented courses of action. This concluding chapter begins by revisiting the main findings that each of the pathways to equality has offered in this Report. However, **it is precisely in the intersections and cumulative effects of these pathways that the most significant changes to promote equality take place**. The following sections begin by offering some reflections on the challenges of upscaling these pathways in transformative ways. They then provide a composite vision that looks across the different pathways, and proposes five key principles that LRGs should consider when building pathways towards equality. These five principles are then explored further by offering a series of political recommendations to help advance urban and territorial equality. These emerge from the intersection between the different pathways and the principles discussed. This chapter concludes by offering some final reflections on the different dimensions of urban and territorial equality, and on the critical role played by LRGs which are committed to making the political choices needed to address inequalities.

2 Pathways as a response to inequalities

As noted in this Report, the challenge of tackling urban and territorial inequalities is mainly a question of governance (see Chapter 3) and cannot be exclusively addressed through sectorial or siloed approaches. GOLD VI recognizes that addressing structural inequalities and current unsustainable development trends requires planning and building alternative trajectories of action that can turn sustainable and rights-based visions into practical realities. These courses of action are the pathways proposed by GOLD VI. The complex and interconnected nature of current trends in inequality (see Chapter 2) invites LRGs to find spaces for action through multiple, interconnected pathways: **Commoning**, **Caring**, **Connecting**, **Renaturing**, **Prospering** and **Democratizing**.

Providing access to adequate housing and basic services, in response to the global social crisis, and recognizing the needs and aspirations of diverse individuals and collectives, lie at the heart of promoting greater urban and territorial equality. It is therefore the duty of LRGs to deal with the current housing crisis, and its different manifestations in cities and territories, and also the consequences of the financialization of housing, land and services. Understanding the multiple aspects of inequality manifested in these challenges, **Commoning** practices (see Chapter 4) offer LRGs a significant opportunity to redefine the social contract and to advance towards greater urban equality. They can do this by fostering collective efforts that guarantee access to decent housing and basic services for everyone, which must include not only access to water and sanitation, but also to culture and collective goods, in general. LRGs can engage with commoning practices in several ways to productively implement this pathway by: advocating and recognizing, protecting and regulating, investing in, remunicipalizing, and scaling these collective practices.

Among the many ongoing difficulties that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated, the care crisis has probably been one of the most visible, particularly within the generalized crisis of social protection. One central dimension of urban equality lies in acknowledging the usually invisibilized, gendered and racialized labour of care. Alongside recognizing existing caring activities, LRGs can acknowledge that many functions within their mandate can promote cities and territories that care for their residents. These functions include questions such as the provision of education, health care and

security, and working with segments of the population with particular needs, such as children, older people, migrants, people with disabilities and LGBTQIA+ people, from an intersectional perspective. Importantly, this also implies highlighting the needs of those who have historically carried the burden of caring tasks: mainly women, racialized persons and migrants. **Caring** (see Chapter 5) is therefore a pathway via which LRGs can help to promote equality. This can be done in different ways, such as through interventions that prioritize proximity in their responses and that focus on: recognizing and democratizing care provision; redistributing and decom-modifying the provision of care services; and reducing the burden of care activities and defeminizing care.

The fragmentation and socio-spatial segregation of cities and territories is one of the most visible mani-festations of inequalities and presents challenges for territorial and urban planning, urban design, infrastruc-ture and transport. These are usually old challenges that have had different trajectories in different coun-tries, and which have often been shaped by particular colonial, economic and/or socio-political backgrounds. Today, more than ever before, cities and territories are confronting dramatic gaps in terms of mobility and access to infrastructure, as well as a pressing digital divide. Within this context, **Connecting** (see Chapter 6) has become a pathway to ensure adequate, sustainable, physical and digital connectivity for everyone and to guarantee access to livelihoods, services, public spaces and the different components that make it possible to lead a dignified life. By enabling physical and digital encounters and connectivity in a way that recognizes diverse needs and aspirations, as well as formal and informal practices, LRGs can make a huge contribution to the ability of human beings to communicate with each other. This can also foster values such as caring, creativity, innovation, trust and tolerance.

Addressing the climate emergency and environmental degradation that humanity is currently confronting is certainly a central pillar for building more sustainable and equal urban and territorial futures. This implies that LRGs should make every effort to mainstream the challenges of pursuing just ecological transitions and decarbonization, and transcending the existing economic dependence on natural resource extraction and carbon-intensive development. The **Renaturing** pathway (see Chapter 7) has emerged as an approach to address both socio-economic inequalities and socio-environmental injustices. It can do this by creating a renewed and sustainable relationship between humankind and the ecosystem and natural

resources. LRGs can promote this pathway by breaking with path-dependency and lock-in trajectories of urban growth, carbonization, environmental degradation and exploitation by: promoting the protection of natural resources, resilient communities, and rehabilitation in-situ; protecting the use of land for common purposes and safeguarding it from speculation; adopting sustain-able procurement mechanisms; regulating land and real estate to prevent green gentrification; and securing the right to housing and land in order to prevent urban displacement.

Sustainable economic growth is one of the key ways to build more equal cities and territories. At present, economic development is not only hindered by extractivist development models and increasing inequalities between territories, but also by the increased segmentation of labour markets and the precarization of working conditions and livelihoods. Understanding the multidimensional character of a prosperity-based agenda, LRGs have a key role to play by advancing a **Prospering** pathway (see Chapter 8). It invites LRGs to support and guarantee the creation of decent and sustainable jobs, livelihoods and local economic development that are more inclusive and adapt to the diverse conditions of different social identities. These efforts can also help to promote social, green and circular economies, as well as inter-territorial cooperation, to foster more sustainable and equitable endogenous economic growth.

Democracy and equality are deeply interconnected. It is well acknowledged that the growth of inequalities has been closely linked to global and local threats to democracy. It is not, therefore, surprising that as inequalities increase, we witness growing calls to improve and strengthen the existing mechanisms of representation and decision-making. In this context, the **Democratizing** pathway (see Chapter 9) offers a lever with which to press for more inclusive principles of governance that recognize everyone's voice, and especially those of the historically and structurally marginalized. LRGs can promote greater equality by encouraging citizen engagement through a range of innovative means of local participation, which may include: instituting political quotas, creating partner-ships, creating cross-sectoral coordination mecha-nisms, recognizing diverse forms of knowledge and data-collection, and incorporating democratic values and rights-based approaches into all LRGs activities.

3 Upscaling transformations for urban and territorial equality

These different pathways are grounded in local experiences and have great transformative potential. However, in order to materialize and expand their potential, there is an urgent need to implement appropriate policies and planning, and also to upscale equality-building processes so that they are capable of responding to the diverse needs of different territories and national contexts.

The multidimensional expressions of inequalities analyzed in GOLD VI are deep-rooted in different spatial contexts and geographies and at different scales. They manifest themselves in the growing inequalities between urban systems and territories, and between globalized metropolises and regions. They can be seen in less integrated, or stagnant, intermediary cities and places, shrinking cities, and marginalized rural regions and towns. Spatialized inequalities manifest themselves at the intra-, inter-urban and regional scales.

Mitigating multidimensional inequalities and upscaling local initiatives that create alternative development pathways requires an enabling framework. This enabling framework needs to be buttressed by an effective decentralization that facilitates innovation at the local level, accompanied by solidarity-based policies and planning that can reconfigure unequal territorial
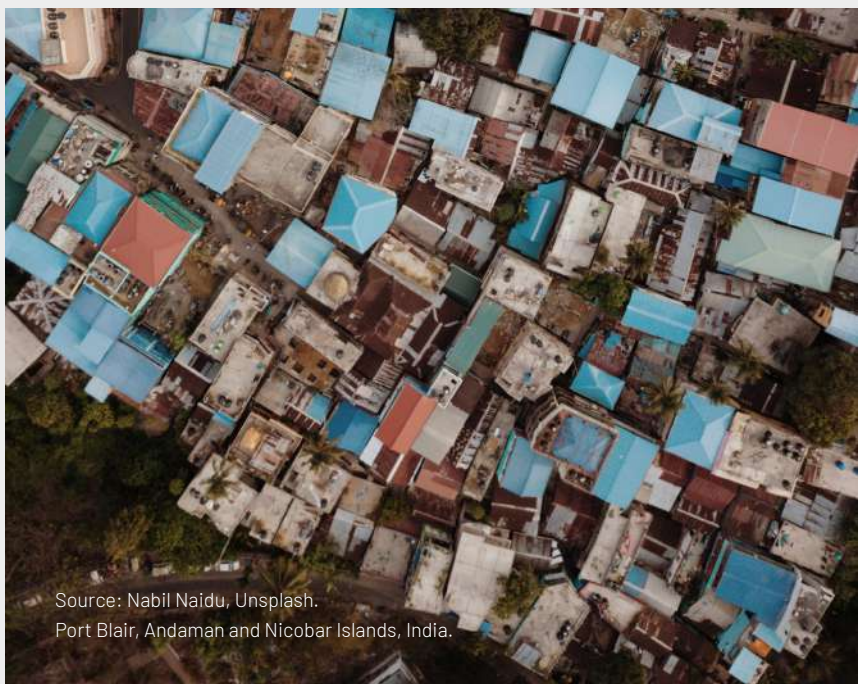
Source: Nabil Naidu, Unsplash.
Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India.

systems. **No single level of government can address inequalities within cities and across territorial systems alone.** As underlined in the different global sustainability agendas, including the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda, adopting whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches

requires collaborative governance, policy cohesion, participative planning and balanced urban and territorial development. Harmonizing sectoral policies and strategies across territories through effective multilevel governance is a necessary condition if we are to leave no one and no place behind.

Key actions to strengthen sustainable development at different scales already exist in some countries and regions. These include: territorial and urban policies (e.g. European Union cohesion policies, national urban policies in different countries), efforts to achieve SDG localization, and post COVID-19 recovery plans. However, in order to catalyze these transformative local actions, development policies and planning strategies need to highlight the realities of regional and urban inequalities in a more conscious and proactive way.

The principles of subsidiarity, shared responsibilities, collaborative implementation and solidarity between territories are central to this endeavour. These principles call for mechanisms such as cofinancing and monitoring, as well as closer and fairer collaboration between local, regional and national governments, and with civil society. They are necessary for effectively addressing inequalities in ways that strengthen local democracy and accountability. Within the framework of decentralization processes currently taking place in most countries across the world, devolution must be accompanied by an effective redistribution and sharing of powers, functions and resources between different social, environmental and economic domains.

LRGs need the fiscal capacity to increase their investment in urban infrastructure and services, to improve access to essential services and adequate housing, to promote caring and connectivity, to mitigate and adapt to climate changes, and to strengthen local resilience and prosperity, in ways that are cocreated with their communities. To achieve this, the rules of the game need to be renewed: it is necessary to promote financial ecosystems and partnerships that mutually support each other and to work to secure collaboration in urban and territorial investment projects. To boost local initiatives, national institutions should develop new financial models, as part of better balanced national urban and territorial strategies, and reinforce their technical capacity to localize finance.

As part of these efforts, poor neighbourhoods, cities and regions need to be given special consideration in order to foster endogenous development and strengthen local capabilities. This requires the delivery of adequate and

reliable intergovernmental fiscal transfers from national governments to LRGs, coupled with transparent equalization mechanisms. To respond to local and regional needs, subnational investment can be strengthened through mechanisms such as subnational development banks, local government funding agencies, local green banks, or the issuing of bonds. Where possible, this should be done working in tandem with appropriate community-led financing initiatives. Likewise, LRGs need to gain greater autonomy over their own-source revenue, to strengthen local capacities, and to rebuild their fiscal space, via an adequate system of local taxes. They should be able to collect and capture the added value generated by urban and local development. Giving LRGs adequate fiscal autonomy is a precondition to them becoming empowered and able to innovate and use a wide array of financing mechanisms, including equity and debt financing, to support local investment.

The need for accelerated mitigation and adaptation to climate change and to social and natural disasters implies that local, regional and national financing will need to be further supplemented, and especially in the Global South.[4] A large part of these adaptation efforts will require local, regional and national partnerships for their implementation, as well as support from development assistance and multilateral development banks, supplemented by contributions from NGOs and private climate funds. Investment projects developed by financial partners can have a significant social impact by supporting solidarity and circular economies. This can be done through cooperative and development banks, solidarity savings schemes, and financial and economic short circuits.

For the pathways to equality identified in this Report to effectively unleash their transformational potential, they will need to be embedded in strong local alliances and accompanied by structural reforms that improve local and multilevel collaborative governance across different sectors and territories. These are necessary conditions for upscaling the transformative actions that these pathways propose, triggering an incremental and cumulative effect. In doing so, these pathways can lead to a radical transformation of urban and territorial systems and help to make them more just and capable of meeting the sustainability commitments adopted by the international community.

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4 IPCC, "Strengthening and Implementing the Global Response. Global Warming of 1.5°C," 2018, https://bit.ly/3t3bKWQ.

4 Composite vision: Five principles for pathways to equality

These pathways invite LRGs to acknowledge that effectively addressing inequalities requires engaging with urban and territorial equality at different scales and in four different dimensions (see Chapter 1):

° **the equitable distribution** of material conditions for a dignified quality of life;

° **reciprocal recognition** of identities and claims;

° **parity political participation** in decision making; and

° **solidarity and mutual care** between people, and between people and nature.

Embracing this multifaceted understanding of equality and its links to environmental challenges invites us to look at the intersections and overlaps between the main messages identified by each of the pathways. Adopting this transversal overview has led us to the conclusion that LRGs should consider five key principles for building pathways towards equality. These principles constitute what GOLD VI proposes as a *composite vision* of the pathways to equality. This contains five key elements for LRGs to consider when addressing local priorities and localizing the SDGs in ways that advance equality, as well as mobilizing their vision of cities and territories that care. These five principles are the following (see Figure 10.1 for a visual conceptualization):

1. A rights-based approach is the basis of any LRG efforts to build pathways to equality.

By adopting this approach from a local perspective, LRGs can rethink the social contract that they have with local inhabitants and promote their Right to the City. This implies recognizing local aspirations, practices and needs from an intersectional and ecological perspective. LRGs can play a crucial role in advancing equality pathways by respecting, protecting and fulfilling their obligations regarding human rights and the commitments acknowledged by the United Nations. These include the universal rights to water and sanitation, adequate housing, education, health, decent work, and participation in public life, amongst others. LRGs should also lead the process of integrating a new generation of essential rights and entitlements, which should include access to caring systems, inclusive culture, public and green spaces, a fair valuing of time, connectivity, and the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity, among others. These should be seen as fundamental rights for both the present and future generations. LRGs can also play an active role in recognizing and supporting day-to-day and collective practices that effectively expand citizens' rights on the ground. Adopting a rights-based approach requires cocreating pathways that recognize the different ways in which inequalities and

Figure 10.1

Composite vision diagram

PATHWAYS TO URBAN AND TERRITORIAL EQUALITY, AS TRAJECTORIES OF CHANGE

COMPOSITE VISION THAT EMERGES FROM THE INTERSECTION OF THE PATHWAYS AND THAT IS MADE UP OF THE PRINCIPLES THAT NEED TO BE EMBEDDED IN THE PATHWAYS FOR THESE TO ACTUALLY ADVANCE EQUALITY

POLITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADVANCE EACH PATHWAY IN WAYS THAT BUTTRESS THE KEY PRINCIPLES

Commoning

Caring

Connecting

Renaturing

Prospering

Democratizing

Key principles

01 — Adopting a rights-based approach

02 — Addressing the spatial dimension of inequalities

03 — A new culture of subnational governance

04 — Adequate financing and investment architecture

05 — Engaging with time: past, present and future

Towards urban and territorial equality

needs are experienced differently by different people. It should also help to tackle some of the structural drivers behind interrelated processes of discrimination, violence and exclusion towards certain groups based on gender, class, age, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, migration status and sexuality, amongst others.

2. The spatial dimension of inequalities is central to promoting the advance of equality by LRGs. Policies and planning should challenge socio-spatial fragmentation; promote proximity, accessibility and urban-rural reciprocity; and foster more equal and sustainable territorial development which is compatible with just ecological transitions.

To support the realization of rights at the local scale, LRGs need to challenge spatial inequalities. To do so, they need to promote more sustainable and fairer planning and ensure that it reduces distances between people and provides the necessary support of life. This includes tackling problems of pollution and CO_2 emissions. These initiatives may also include the promotion of a mixture of social and functional activities, pluricentric cities, active mobility and connectivity, accessible local care infrastructure, and inclusive public and green space. The climate emergency also needs urgent action to decouple urban development from environmental degradation. This should involve fostering more symbiotic relations with the environment, promoting renewable energies, and renaturing urbanization through less extractive relationships between urban and rural territories. Addressing inequalities and sustainability requires taking action at different scales and applying policies and planning that address the spatial dimensions of economic, social and environmental injustices, as well as promoting cooperation and solidarity between territories and their LRGs.

3. A new subnational governance culture is crucial in the face of growing inequalities. It is necessary to promote broad local partner ships, encourage greater participation, and

adequately empower LRGs, thus making multilevel governance truly effective.

LRGs need adequate powers and capacities to be able to play an active role in building pathways to equality and reducing the impact of urbanization on the environment. This requires multilevel and collaborative governance, based on the principle of subsidiarity. This new governance culture should allow LRGs to not merely act as providers, enablers, and implementers of national policies, but also as guarantors of just, inclusive, democratic and sustainable local development processes that seek to leave no one and no place behind. This implies reinforcing forms of cross-sectoral governance that break away from institutional silos and strengthen participation and democratic mechanisms at different levels. It must therefore involve creating the institutional conditions for effective engagement with different social movements and community initiatives, and promoting alliances based on mutual recognition, respect and support. Strong local initiatives and partnerships are essential if we are to prevent the commodification of public assets and goods, protect the ecosystems that provide the basic foundations for life, and support non-speculative and sustainable forms of development.

4. An adequate fiscal and investment architecture is essential to strengthen and localize finance and propel alternative financing models that recognize and optimize the value of the many and varied existing resources.

LRGs can channel local, national and international investment to finance local sustainable and resilient development, through infrastructure, basic services, and other investments that generate large returns in equality while promoting just ecological transitions. This requires fiscal decentralization and investment mechanisms that boost endogenous territorial development, and decouple development from the extraction of natural resources. It entails acknowledging and better valuing the diversity of local resources, such as land, and natural and social resources. Intergovernmental fiscal transfers and localized financial flows must be used to support more balanced territorial development. It is also key to reframe the relationship between LRGs and the value generated by local stakeholders (which

includes organized communities and both the formal and informal private sectors) and to foster greener, circular, and social and collaborative economies. This implies valuing the role of existing networks and their social capital, cultural diversity and social ties. These are key resources for cities and territories, which might need financial support.

5. LRGs can advance pathways to equality by engaging practically with time frames that look beyond electoral cycles: recognizing different and unequal historical legacies and structural constraints, addressing the issue of time poverty, supporting radical incremental practices, and working together to establish bold visions for a sustainable and equitable future.

This means developing mid- and long-term strategies that consider time in its different dimensions: past, present and future. The first involves recognizing the

historical trajectories that have shaped and which explain current inequalities and environmental degradation, which include histories of oppression, exclusion and colonialism and which need active processes of reparation. The second dimension consists of recognizing inequalities in the availability and use of time, taking into account inequalities related, amongst others, to social class and gender. For instance, this highlights the double day of women who combine paid work and care work within their homes. The third involves pursuing bold and ambitious imaginaries of a more sustainable and fairer future. This entails acting in strategic ways that consolidate local alliances and are supported by a long-term vision. Structural transformations must be coupled with radical incremental interventions, by LRGs and other groups, that recognize the needs and aspirations of current and future generations. In combination with large-scale urban investment, radical incrementalism can build up momentum over time, until reaching tipping points at which it is possible to generate pathways that lead to, and can deliver, structural change. This engagement with time enables LRGs to imagine ambitious, alternative visions of urban and territorial futures which can open up possibilities for the cocreation of more equitable and sustainable development pathways.

Source: Pedro Lastra, Unsplash.
Maras, Peru.

5 Political recommendations: Pathways towards achieving urban and territorial equality

Source: Huda Shaat Alagha.
"Castelldefels, a sustainable city", Barcelona, Spain. From the intiative "Metropolis through Children's Eyes" by Metropolis. See more: https://imaginemetropolis.org

5.1
Principle 1: A rights-based approach

The pathways to equality discussed in GOLD VI require a grounded rights-based approach if they are to flourish in ways that recognize local people's needs and aspirations. The pledge made by LRGs to respect, protect and fulfil human rights obligations and commitments has been converted into several ambitious initiatives, networks and mechanisms (see Chapter 3). However, the different pathways discussed in this Report invite LRGs to embrace an expansive approach to rights that goes beyond these obligations. **They encourage LRGs not only to push for a new generation of essential rights, but also to recognize the multiple forms in which collectives are demanding and advancing entitlements on the ground.** LRGs can make a substantial contribution to the rights and capabilities of human beings in order to advance equality and sustainability. They can do so: (a) by fostering solidarity and care, creativity and innovation, trust and tolerance, and democracy and civic life; (b) by facilitating the rights of communities to access basic services and protect the commons; (c) by guaranteeing connectivity and livelihoods that ensure the inclusion of different communities within the urban fabric; and (d) by ensuring just ecological transitions that support dignified life and sustainable futures.

Adopting a rights-based approach to urban and territorial equality invites LRGs to actively engage with the rights of present and future generations, in relation to a range of entitlements, which include both rights recognized by international conventions, and also new essential rights: (a) the rights to water and sanitation, adequate housing, education and health; (b) the right to care, whose importance has been evidenced by the current pandemic; (c) rights related to accessibility and sustainable mobility for all; (d) digital rights, and the right to time for personal and leisure activities; (e) the right to enjoy a healthy environment; (f) the right to decent work; (g) the right to participate in public life and decision-making processes; and, overall, (h) the right to the protection of human rights for structurally discriminated people and groups with specific needs, such as women, children, the victims of violence, LGBTQIA+ people, older people, persons with disabilities, migrants, and people in charge of care activities, among others. LRGs must regard this expanded understanding of rights as representing the core values for a renewed social contract that will advance the Right to the City.

Furthermore, LRGs have the opportunity to address inequalities by **recognizing and supporting civil society-led efforts which advocate, and seek to expand, the rights of groups that have historically been systematically marginalized**. As discussed earlier in this Report, everyday practices have a crucial role in expanding rights from the ground. This includes cultural occupations, saving groups, self-enumerations and mapping in informal settlements, commoning land, and other processes of social production of habitat. When adequately recognized and supported by LRGs, these practices can create synergies and extend the fulfilment of other rights, such as access to decent work and/or adequate housing. This implies understanding the ways in which rights are experienced in different territories, and recognizing diversity across gender, class, age, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, migration status and sexuality, amongst others.

How to advance a **rights-based approach** to urban and territorial development that builds pathways to equality?

Commoning

Advance strategies and policies that **support everyday and collective processes of advancing rights**, by creating the conditions, and supporting environments, that allow the recognition and promotion of civic action and the expansion of rights.

Protect people against forced evictions in order to contribute to fulfilling their human rights, by ensuring their right to housing and secure access to land, and proactively guaranteeing dialogue and joint conflict resolution when relocation is absolutely essential due to threats to residents' lives.

Uphold human rights by guaranteeing **universal access to adequate health, education, water and sanitation, housing, and social protection**. This is particularly critical for structurally discriminated groups and people with specific needs.

Caring

Promote the **right to care** as a high priority on public agendas to protect people with specific needs, and/or those affected by discrimination, as well as those who take care of others.

Recognize, redistribute and reduce the burden of care work in order to protect and guarantee women's rights. This requires policies and programmes that acknowledge the (often invisible) gendered, racialized and poorly paid nature of care work, and help to advance processes of defeminizing, democratizing and decommodifing the provision of care.

Renaturing

Fulfil the **right to a healthy environment** through policies that uphold socio-environmental justice as a core value, while localizing global commitments to protect the planet.

Support community-led efforts and practices that advance renaturing, which can help to expand rights on the ground by tackling the historically uneven distribution of environmental benefits and burdens.

Disrupt the economic dependence on the extraction of natural resources and carbon intensive development to promote the human rights of present and future generations.

Democratizing

Respect, protect and fulfil the human **right to participate in public life**, coupling the right to vote with participatory innovations for decision-making and accountability that guarantee non-discrimination, freedom of dissent and to protest, and equal access to justice.

Respect and recognize diverse forms of **citizen-led democratic practices** that help to advance the rights and entitlements of historically excluded groups.

Support the **capacities to participate in decision-making processes** of structurally excluded groups, and guarantee their right to participate in public life in meaningful ways.

Promote the **right to culture, within a framework of mutual respect**, as a way to make democratic innovations more responsive to diverse and intersecting needs and aspirations.

Prospering

Respect, protect and fulfil the **right to decent work**; integrate informal sector economic practices into urban systems, ensuring that all men and women and, in particular, the poor and marginalized, have rights to economic resources and livelihoods that will enable them to live a dignified life.

Support, better regulate, and integrate **informal sectors** to urban systems to improve access to mobility and guarantee digital rights for low-income groups, while supporting inclusive livelihoods and activities.

Connecting

Recognize rights related to adequate sustainable mobility which, alongside digital rights, ensure **accessibility, quality and affordability for all**, and particularly for groups that are socially excluded and segregated, or which live in disconnected territories. This requires providing adequate infrastructure to guarantee access to livelihoods opportunities and a fairer use of resources, including that of time.

Guarantee the rights of access to and movement in **public spaces** for everyone, without fear of violence, and ensure freedom of expression and privacy.

Upscaling

Adopt and support the **SDGs and international human rights agendas as the fundamental frameworks** through which to mainstream a rights-based approach. Synchronizing these commitments is key to facilitating the recognition of newly emerging rights, across all levels of government, including all civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. These rights should also be anchored in the daily practices of institutions at multiple levels.

5.2
Principle 2: Addressing the spatial dimension of inequalities

The way that space is organized is not only a mirror of existing inequalities, but also a driver of their reproduction. It is therefore in the planning and management of space that LRGs must help to defend and promote rights. **Dealing with the spatial manifestations and causes of disparities should therefore be central to local strategies that seek to advance the interconnected pathways discussed in GOLD VI.**

More sustainable, responsive and fairer planning mechanisms are consequently some of the most powerful tools that can be used for addressing socio-spatial inequality and fragmentation. These include instruments to promote greater social and functional mixing, pluricentric cities, more inclusive public and green spaces that recognize the social function of land, and universal access to affordable and quality public services. **Prioritizing proximity lies at the core of this approach. Guaranteeing neighbourhood access to services, livelihoods, infrastructure and care facilities, at the appropriate scale, is crucial for ensuring more equal conditions for everyone.** Importantly, LRGs can promote proximity as a powerful means of supporting those who receive and provide care. This strategy can be used for reducing the use of motorized vehicles and travel; reducing CO_2 emissions; supporting opportunities for local livelihoods that are compatible with different identities and ways of living; and strengthening local civic life in ways that promote democracy and participation.

Urban and territorial planning can also offer a way to implement spatial strategies and to decouple urban development from environmental degradation. **This requires several mechanisms that can foster more equal and sustainable territorial development which is compatible with just ecological transitions.** These include, amongst others: (a) renewing existing approaches to urban-rural reciprocity and accessibility; (b) providing key services and sustainable infrastructure; (c) promoting active and clean mobility and connectivity; (d) seeking and promoting complementarity and solidarity between territories; (e) advancing local strategies for food security, sustainable energy and waste management; and (f) rebuilding the interaction between urbanization and the environment from a renaturing perspective.

All in all, when looking to advance pathways to equality, the centrality of the spatial dimension invites LRGs to understand the interconnected nature of interventions at different scales. This involves engaging with interventions that operate at the intra-, inter-urban and regional scales and should include advancing, for example, equalization mechanisms and national urban policies. Generally, this calls for identifying what is the most adequate scale of intervention, based on the principle of subsidiarity, and supporting democratic and community-led mechanisms, such as area-based plans.

How to make the **spatial dimension** of inequalities central to policies and planning to advance equality?

Prospering

Promote **local livelihoods** that are compatible with diverse needs and aspirations. These should allow a better integration of productive and reproductive spaces, overcoming the fragmentation between spaces for work, residence and leisure. Recognize and support local informal economic activities to facilitate their integration into the urban fabric.

Promote **local economic development that supports endogenous development and facilitates multilevel cooperation and solidarity**. This includes promoting cooperation between regions and municipalities (e.g. intermunicipal cooperation), and urban-rural partnerships.

Democratizing

Engage with democratic practices at the local level such as **area-based participatory strategies**.

Embrace equitable and inclusive forms of **participation in the design and implementation of local solutions** (at the neighbourhood and city-wide levels) in order to tackle cases of spatially concentrated disadvantage within cities.

Caring

Promote **a city model that favours proximity, social mixing, and access to social services over short distances**. Having inclusive and well-served neighbourhoods is a necessity in order to respond to the diverse needs and aspirations of people who receive and provide care. This includes promoting better integrated productive and reproductive spaces.

Promote **inclusive and secure public spaces and streets**, thereby facilitating pedestrian and active/soft mobility. Promote diversity, accessibility and safety for all, and especially for women, children and structurally marginalized groups.

Renaturing

Use **multisectorial local planning and participatory mechanisms to promote environmental justice**. Ensure more inclusive outcomes for renaturing processes by preventing land and property speculation, green gentrification, displacement and socio-spatial segregation.

Favour connecting infrastructure and facilities that **promote short-distance travel**, reduce dependency on motorized transport, increase local connectivity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution.

Connecting

Ensure that interventions and investment in transport, digital infrastructure, public spaces and street design are **people-centred and democratic**. This should actively seek to produce equality-based outcomes and to counter socio-spatial segregation and urban fragmentation.

Strengthen **mobility networks both within and between neighbourhoods and the urban periphery**. This may include approaches like transit oriented development, integrated mobility plans and polycentric urban development.

Commoning

Recognize and support local collective practices that promote access to well-located land and infrastructure, such as auto-construction, collective land arrangements, slum upgrading, neighbourhood improvement, inclusive models of service provision, and promoting remunicipalization processes, when appropriate.

Promote urban planning, land regulation, housing programmes and the provision of services, in ways that **address such problems as splintering urbanism, urban fragmentation and socio-spatial segregation**.

Upscaling

Mitigate multilevel inequalities through **national urban policies and territorial strategies** that acknowledge intra-, inter-urban and regional scales. Such an integrated view is crucial for promoting territorial cohesion and solidarity.

Support closer **collaboration between urban-rural areas** at different scales. Urban-rural partnerships are central to preserving key resources (water, land, agriculture, forestland, etc.) and ensuring sustainability.

Place the **social function of land** and its planning and management (regulation, ownership, taxation), as well as the provision of key services and infrastructures, at the heart of territorial policies in order to reduce inequalities more effectively.

5.3
Principle 3: A new culture of subnational governance

The pathways to equality discussed in GOLD VI require a new culture of subnational governance that is able to deal with the interconnected and complex nature of inequalities. This new governance culture needs to start by rethinking the role that LRGs play in addressing disparities and socio-spatial asymmetries, as well as in guaranteeing rights. This role, as the different chapters of this Report have revealed, implies **understanding LRGs as active guarantors and not just as service providers**. Their mission is to put into place legal and institutional mechanisms that ensure their developmental role, while also guaranteeing everyone's rights, challenging asymmetries of power, and redressing inequalities. To perform these multiple functions, LRGs need certain capabilities – namely, power, resources and capacities – that must be facilitated by an appropriate enabling institutional environment.

As discussed in Chapter 3, to assume these roles, LRGs require effective political, administrative and fiscal decentralization. Among other considerations, this implies building an adequate architecture of collaborative governance that is based on the principles of subsidiarity, transparency and accountability. It also requires effective mechanisms that can facilitate multilevel governance. Importantly, appropriate institutional capabilities need to be in place to allow the promotion of integrated approaches. They also need to prevent the fragmentation of different governance structures across different territories and cities, and also different services and agendas. This is particularly evident in the fragmentation of caring services. Another example is the cost paid by the most disadvantaged sectors of the population as a result of the mismatch between connectivity, service provision, environmental policies and decent work programmes. Approaches such as "collibration" and other strategies for the "governance of governance" are crucial for facilitating these efforts, and especially when they are related to complex challenges such as those posed by the climate emergency.

The new culture of governance needed to fulfil the role of LRGs as guarantors requires certain preconditions, such as the existence of appropriate accountability and transparency. It is only then that it will be possible to mobilize participatory processes that can deepen democracy. Achieving this first entails incorporating participatory mechanisms into decision making, such as participatory planning or local assemblies. **It also implies the consolidation of a culture of governance that is able to recognize existing practices and demands that are present outside formal governance structures.** It is necessary to: (a) engage with, and coproduce, empowering civil society initiatives; (b) support grassroots practices of commoning and renaturing, and diverse forms of city-making; (c) recognize and support what are usually invisibilized and gendered care activities; (d) integrate formal and informal practices related to connectivity, livelihoods, culture, energy and/ or waste management; and (e) meaningfully engage with processes of local democracy, and facilitate the right conditions and capacities for them to deal with asymmetries of power, amongst others.

Doing all of this also implies ensuring that all the required organizational conditions are in place for the effective delivery of adequate local public services to everyone and in ways that address existing disparities. **Importantly, it also entails creating meaningful partnerships amongst civil society, the private sector and the public sector, through both formal and informal initiatives. These partnerships need a governance culture which is capable of establishing collaborative mechanisms that can ensure fair and effective alliances.** LRGs need to recognize the existence of unequal conditions and then engage across different sectors. They also need to create supporting systems for historically marginalized voices – including those of women, structurally marginalized groups, traditional authorities, older people and young people. These mechanisms should allow these groups to engage more meaningfully in participatory processes and thereby combat entrenched power asymmetries.

Commoning

Establish effective mechanisms for **recognizing and advocating; supporting; coproducing; protecting and mediating; and investing in and scaling-up** commoning practices. This requires strengthening institutional capabilities that nurture the development of coalitions and partnerships, and support collaborative forms of city-making.

Ensure public responsibility for the **delivery of local public services** to everyone, through accountable management models that address the intersectional nature of inequalities.

Establish **collaborative and solidarity-based approaches** to enhance cooperation between local governments (e.g. inter-municipal cooperation), local stakeholders (public-private-people partnerships) and public institutions (public-public partnerships), especially for the delivery of public and social services.

Democratizing

Strengthen **institutional capabilities that deepen democratic values and practices**, such as: transparency and accountability, open government, participatory planning, resource allocation, and deliberative and collaborative democracy.

Include structurally discriminated groups in democratic **decision-making processes in order to foster just ecological transitions**, and recognize and provide centrality to the ecological practices of everyday city-makers, including informal practices.

Renaturing

Establish institutional mechanisms to **address mitigation and adaptation goals** in ways that foster health and improve the well-being of all residents.

Design, build, operate and maintain urban infrastructure that can conduct resource flows through urban and territorial systems in ways that decouple improvements in well-being from the increased use of natural resources.

Establish effective governance mechanisms that make it possible to **deal with complex and multiscalar climate-related challenges**. This includes adopting forward-looking planning mechanisms that are sensitive to social and environmental diversity.

Create mechanisms to identify and address the **undesired social impact of certain interventions**. These unwanted impacts may include: the commodification of vital ecological systems and services; green gentrification; displacements; the over-consumption of resources; and the externalization of risks to particular social groups and geographies.

Caring

Set up governance structures and institutional capabilities to facilitate partnerships for the **coproduction of caring, anti-violence and anti-discriminatory policies,** as well as recognizing and supporting the usually gendered and insufficiently acknowledged labour of caring.

Contribute to **overcoming the fragmentation of care and of social services**, by promoting new forms of social organization through more comprehensive coverage and policy coherence. Encourage efforts of cooperation and harmonization, effective multilevel governance, and consistent work in collaboration with local stakeholders.

Advance **democratic practices that involve both care providers and care receivers** (e.g. women, older people, migrants, people with disabilities, chronically ill people, etc.), and which consider the structural inequalities that shape the division of care.

Prospering

Promote **enabling environments for local economic development** which should include, for example: efficient and transparent regulatory frameworks; local financial systems; land policies; and governance, representation, and social dialogue.

Establish institutional collaborative mechanisms to **recognize, regulate and decriminalize informal sector economic practices** in order to integrate them into the urban fabric and involve them in the delivery of public services. This is essential to fulfil the right to decent work, and facilitate their access to basic services.

Support community-led efforts to produce essential goods, secure livelihoods, and advance food security, by **strengthening the social, circular, green and collaborative economies.**

Promote **participatory processes through diversified mechanisms** and an effective regulatory framework. These measures should include a wide range of democratic innovations that go beyond providing local elections. They could include: (a) consultative processes (e.g. consultative councils, public hearings, local assemblies, referenda, internet consultative platforms); (b) local planning participatory mechanisms (e.g. participatory budgeting); (c) the recognition of autonomous civil society movements and organizations; and (d) the creation of partnerships for inclusive service delivery.

Provide **support for structurally marginalized groups** to allow them to meaningfully engage in democratic and participatory processes.

Engage organizational development to **fight corruption** and strengthen the integrity and accountability of existing systems, as well as providing open-government tools to facilitate transparency and involve civil society in tasks of monitoring and assessment.

How to create a **new culture of subnational governance** that promotes broad local partnerships, encourages participation, provides effective multilevel governance, and ensures that LRGs are adequately empowered?

Utilize **digital technologies and social media in responsible ways** to facilitate participation, data collection, communication and coordination. This should take into account civil society's knowledge and data collection mechanisms, acknowledge the digital divide, respect privacy, and ensure a democratic and rights-based approach.

Upscaling

Promote **effective decentralization**. This requires an enabling institutional environment to provide LRGs with adequate powers, capacities and resources to assume their responsibilities. Decentralization is also crucial to make LRGs accountable to their respective communities.

Ensure **multilevel and collaborative governance** based on the principle of subsidiarity, and enhance policy coherence between territorial and sectoral policies, at all levels. This should include collaboration between government and civil society actors and the private sector.

Promote **strategic and spatial planning and national urban policies**, as critical pillars for reinforcing multilevel governance and reducing territorial inequalities.

At the regional level, incentivize and facilitate **collaboration and complementarities between metropolitan areas, intermediary cities, small towns and their respective hinterlands**. These partnerships should be based on cooperation and solidarity within city systems, and support upscaling efforts.

Connecting

Approach responses to **connectivity from a multiscalar perspective** and through appropriate multilevel governance structures.

Establish the **institutional capabilities to work in partnership** with formal, informal and hybrid systems of service provision and to improve mobility. This is essential for fostering more integrated and multimodal responses to diverse connectivity needs and aspirations.

Enhance **participatory processes in mobility and connectivity interventions,** and recognize the diversity of local formal and informal actors.

5.4
Principle 4: Adequate financing and investment architecture

Without the appropriate public resources, any effort to tackle disparities will fall short of its goal. The localization of financing mechanisms is instrumental to LRGs being able to deliver their mandate of providing services and infrastructure to advance pathways to equality. In order to support *Commoning*, *Caring*, *Connecting*, *Renaturing*, *Prospering* and *Democratizing* pathways, it is necessary to develop new approaches which include actionable measures and which are able to unlock the necessary financing. LRGs need to go one step further in this regard: they require a governance culture and financial architecture that will increase their resources and enable them to build a new social contract with their citizens. Achieving this will involve recognizing, and mobilizing, the value generated by local stakeholders.

To this end, there is first a need (a) to consolidate the local fiscal space; (b) to strengthen LRG's own revenue sources; (c) to increase and stabilize formula-based fiscal transfers from national governments; and (d) to enable LRGs greater access to borrowing from banks, international development partners and the private sector. On the one hand, national institutions need to develop new financial models as part of their national urban and territorial policies and to reinforce technical capabilities that support the localization of financing. They need to ensure adequate and reliable intergovernmental fiscal transfers to LRGs, and that these arrive on time and are coupled with transparent equalization mechanisms that ensure more balanced territorial development. Special consideration should also be given to small and intermediate local government bodies and to lagging regions, in order not to prevent these territories from being behind. In response to their needs, national and local intermediations for subnational financing need to be strengthened (through, for example: subnational development banks, local government funding agencies, local green banks, and special purpose vehicles). Accelerated adaptation to climate change implies that the local, regional and national levels will need supplementary financing mechanisms. They will also need to establish new partnerships between different sectors and scales, especially in developing countries. On the other hand, LRGs in many regions need to strengthen their capacities and to become more creditworthy, gain greater authority, and achieve autonomy over their own-source revenues and the rebuilding of their own fiscal spaces (e.g. improving tax collection and land value capture). This is a precondition for empowering them to use a wide array of financing mechanisms, including equity and debt financing, conducted either directly or via intermediaries.

The rules of the game must be renewed to create local financial ecosystems and partnerships that are able to mutually support each other and which can work to secure financing for urban and territorial investments at the local, national and international levels. Local financial ecosystems are crucial for boosting endogenous territorial development. This can be achieved through: promoting livelihoods that recognize different identities; financing adequate connecting and basic service infrastructure; and promoting balanced territorial development and economic activities that guarantee just ecological transitions. Importantly, an adequate financial infrastructure also requires the effective monitoring of public resources, accountability and transparency. This can be delivered through the use of inclusive mechanisms such as participatory budgets and open government tools.

These approaches must be based on strengthening local alliances, building capacity and developing participation to mobilize a wider range of resources. This means, on the one hand, **valuing the diversity of the non-monetary, urban and territorial resources produced by everyday practices, and social networks, and the radical innovations taking place in territories**. On the other hand, it means supporting the financial needs of those spaces and groups, as a way to increase the social and equality returns associated with their activities. This includes, for example, recognizing and providing financial support to the, usually non-monetized, work performed by carers and the social fabric that underpins their activities.

This approach requires LRGs to advance in **strategic and collaborative partnerships and to deliver more inclusive financing systems. These partnerships should be vehicles for recognizing the existing value produced by local stakeholders**. This should include their reproductive value, how they help to deepen democracy, and promoting commoning, connecting, and/or renaturing. Importantly, this recognition calls for LRGs to innovate and to find more inclusive ways of distributing financial resources and integrating the formal, informal and hybrid sectors.

How to advance towards an adequate **fiscal and investment architecture** that can support more equitable and sustainable urban and territorial development?

Commoning

Advocate, promote, create and implement fiscal and financial instruments linked to land, housing and services that **use and distribute resources in a fairer and more progressive and equitable way**. These include mechanisms such as: land value capture, progressive tariff structures, cross-subsidies, the adoption of a sites and services approach, and the provision of free access to essential services for the most marginalized groups.

Promote **strategic partnerships to foster more inclusive ways of financing goods and services, and supporting bottom-up and coproduction initiatives**. These measures include commoning practices involving people-people, public-people partnerships, and public-public initiatives such as remunicipalization; and also better regulated and monitored public-private partnerships.

Take an active role in **monitoring and regulating the land and housing markets** to limit speculative investment and the commodification of urban assets, and to better regulate urban development.

Recognize and encourage the value of **pooling resources and using collective finance**, promoting cooperatives, popular savings, and credit groups that can contribute to community projects. These are crucial to help resist exclusionary trends engrained in market logics and commodification.

Caring

Use local revenues and proactively target national funds and transfers to facilitate the use of **cross-subsidies and promote cities and territories that care**. Provide support to people in need of care and to poorly, or unpaid, care workers, who are often women.

Recognize the **value added by existing social bonds and local safety nets that provide care**. Promote partnerships with CSOs, collectives and the private sector in order to expand access to, and improve the quality of, care services.

Renaturing

Revise local taxes to generate **"green" revenues and adopt financial incentives to support environmental improvements**, taking care not to negatively impact disadvantaged groups.

Redirect current and future **capital flows towards resilient urban infrastructure, either new or retrofitted** (e.g. energy, transport and buildings). These flows should prioritize locally-led processes, and target poor neighbourhoods and peripheral areas in order to reverse long-term trends of disinvestment and inequalities.

Promote local, regional and national **partnerships to fund climate mitigation and adaptation schemes**. These should also include pooling support from national funds, development assistance and multilateral development banks.

Strengthen partnerships with residents, civil society and local businesses **towards more just ecological transitions**. These measures would include protecting the social and ecological functions of land and housing.

Democratizing

Facilitate the **monitoring of public resources and inclusive programming**, in collaboration with CSOs to increase downward accountability.

Include **financing and budgeting mechanisms to support democratizing initiatives** that are responsive to local contexts. Create the conditions necessary for diverse groups to meaningfully participate in decision making processes, through mechanisms such as participatory budgets and public consultations.

Mobilize **resources to support local democratic practices**, recognizing the value that they generate. These include facilitating collective mobilization and encouraging community networks, recognizing the social assets that they produce, and supporting their financial needs.

Prospering

Pool **resources to promote decent work and livelihoods** that recognize local realities, needs and aspirations. This includes, for example, managing the burden of licensing fees and fostering tax incentives, social impact bonds, local social currencies, tax share donations, crowdfunding, impact investment, social venture capital, and social, solidarity, green and circular economy models.

Examine the feasibility of providing **social security coverage or insurance** to help extend social protection to more precarious forms of employment, and especially those whose working conditions are within the scope of LRG competences.

Establish financial **support mechanisms for local formal and informal economic activities**, recognizing the value they generate for local and regional development. These include initiatives such as cooperatives, saving groups, and popular credit initiatives.

Adopt innovative **financing tools to reduce the transit of polluting private vehicles**. Complement these measures with investment in more integrated, and greener, public transport and soft mobility.

Promote **finance mechanisms and partnerships to reduce the digital divide**, providing free internet access in public spaces and buildings, and also digital infrastructure in marginalized and hitherto unconnected areas. This could include local and/or national taxes on operators and major Internet service companies.

Connecting

Advocate and mobilize appropriate amounts of funding for the development and operation of robust and equitable mobility and connectivity infrastructure. This requires **financial partnerships at the local and national levels**, across the public and private sectors, supported by an adequate system of revenue sharing (users payment, tax, fees and subsidies).

Support the **integration of formal, informal and hybrid sector** provision of mobility, through inclusive and multimodal transport systems and, where possible, with integrated tariff and redistributive mechanisms. Promote the recognition, regulation and integration of the value generated by informal mobility operators.

Upscaling

Revise national **intergovernmental fiscal frameworks and fiscal decentralization policies** to ensure the localization of finances. These may include adequate assignment of expenditure and revenue, supported by local taxes, national transfers and equalization mechanisms, and subnational access to borrowing.

Strengthen **local financial ecosystems and partnerships to effectively transform resources into pathways toward equality**. Systems should guarantee LRGs a meaningful degree of decision-making power over finances. Adequate mechanisms for accountability are essential, involving local inhabitants in monitoring and follow-up processes.

Facilitate LRGs and local partners **to access national funds** (e.g. through development banks, local government funding agencies, and special purpose vehicles) **and emerging, innovative international funding modalities** to invest in local plans and projects that promote social justice and a greener transition.

5.5
Principle 5: Engaging with time: past, present and future

The notion of pathways inevitably invites LRGs to rethink their strategies and interventions in ways that engage with time frames that extend beyond electoral cycles. Addressing inequalities entails recognizing the different entanglements of urban and territorial disparities with long-term trajectories, and engaging with time accordingly. In order to fully flourish, the pathways to equality discussed in this Report must meaningfully engage with questions relating to the past, present and future.

Inequalities have been (re)produced over long periods and through different histories that underpin current asymmetries of power, structural constraints and patterns of exclusion. **Recognizing these unequal historical legacies is an essential first step in the process of dealing with the roots of inequalities.** It is therefore essential to engage in processes of active reparation related to dynamics of exclusion and oppression created and sustained by colonial, classist, racist, ableist and patriarchal trajectories. For LRGs this implies, amongst others: (a) considering the historically uneven, and gendered, distribution of the burden of care activities; (b) responding to the historical intersection between environmental degradation, natural resource extraction, colonialism and social inequalities; and (c) actively repairing the uneven distribution of climate-related threats that affect cities, and particularly the residents of informal settlements, migrants, and historically marginalized groups.

Contemporary inequalities are grounded in these historical trajectories, which also reflect the ways that different individuals and groups relate to their current use of time. **Giving attention to time in the present invites LRGs to address the problem of time poverty and the uneven distribution of the demand for, and scarcity of, time suffered by people of different genders, classes, races, abilities, and ages.** When advancing towards better urban and territorial connectivity, LRGs should pay special attention to the way that infrastructure and investment are related to uneven pressure on time in different areas, and between different social groups. Likewise, interventions to promote decent livelihood opportunities, adequate housing, more public space, and better services should also allow a fairer use of time, particularly for certain structurally marginalized groups.

Finally, **LRGs will only be able to address inequalities by being bold when planning for the future**. The pathways discussed above will only be possible if they rely on cocreated, radical visions of a sustainable and more equitable future. This implies that LRGs should take strategic action to deal with the previously discussed structural constraints, while also supporting radical incremental practices on the ground. **Organized civil society and collaborative initiatives are currently building alternatives through everyday practices of commoning, caring, connecting, prospering, renaturing and democratizing.** While in isolation these may seem insufficient, when properly recognized, supported and scaled up, they can reach tipping points and help bring about structural change. In other words, LRGs can support forms of radical incrementalism and expand upon them, over time, in ways that will transform bold local visions into more equitable futures.

How to engage practically with **time**, taking into account past, present and future considerations in the coconstruction of collective imaginaries?

Democratizing

Provide support for structurally marginalized groups to allow them to meaningfully engage in democratic and participatory processes, which need to be **compatible with existing pressures and demands on their time**.

Recognize and support different democratic innovations that are currently taking place in territories, and link them to legal, policy and planning frameworks that can **sustain and scale them over time**. This should make democratic systems more robust and resilient to changes associated with political cycles.

Engage and promote **anti-discriminatory policies that address long-term inequalities**, which are often spatially and culturally embedded in territories, institutions, and social and cultural practices.

Commoning

Envision processes of **active reparation for structurally marginalized groups**, recognizing their claims in relation to historical inequalities in access to land, housing and basic services.

Facilitate the **multiplication and scaling up of initiatives to provide collective and equitable housing, land and basic services**. Support the continuity and foster the expansion of initiatives that bring about systemic change over time and work towards providing universal access to housing and services.

Envision and activate **bold alternative interactions between the state, civil society, and the market**, with the commons as a central principle for advancing towards greater equality.

Prospering

Envision alternative economic models that allow a sustainable future, prioritizing approaches, such as the **social, solidarity, green and circular economy models**, that promote a renewed relationship with resources such as waste, energy, food and time.

Support and promote **decent work and livelihoods that are compatible with demands and pressures upon people's time**, thereby promoting fairer and more equitable uses of time and resources.

Caring

Advance policies that recognize and redistribute responsibilities for caring and seek to tackle the **historically uneven distribution of the burden** associated with the provision of care.

Develop programmes and policies that share **responsibilities for providing care and consider inequalities in the use of people's time**. These should provide concrete policies with implications for the use of time from a gender perspective, strengthening people's capabilities to break out of poverty traps.

Reimagine a new social contract in which the reproductive and productive spheres of life are better integrated. Advance in the **provision of urban services in ways that are compatible with diverse time schedules** and which consider the organization of the cycle of care tasks.

Improve physical and digital connectivity through the promotion of **functionally mixed neighbourhoods** and pluricentric and compact cities in order to reduce the need to commute and to respond to diverse needs for time relating to work and providing care.

Renaturing

Respond to the historical intersection between environmental degradation, natural resource extraction and social inequalities, by tackling the **uneven distribution of climate-related risks** in cities and territories.

Reinforce local initiatives in ways that **produce sustainable change over time in order to promote radical incrementalism**, by supporting community-led renaturing actions.

Promote **fast and transformative changes in the relations between cities and nature**, in order to disrupt existing path-dependencies and processes of carbonization, environmental degradation and exploitation.

Promote **clean, active and inclusive mobility plans and infrastructure** that recognize the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

Connecting

Promote affordable and inclusive access to public transport and digital infrastructure to overcome urban fragmentation and **tackle inequalities in the use of time**, especially for those living in marginalized or poorly served areas.

Upscaling

Implement mechanisms to foster **collaboration at different scales to envision alternative futures**. Future-oriented challenges require structural reforms at different scales. Structural crises call for responses and collective imaginations at different scales.

Introduce mechanisms at different scales to **support and increment local practices of radical transformation**. Local initiatives that help to advance equality need to be supported, upscaled and multiplied to reach tipping points of structural change on the path towards more just urban futures.

Contribute to **shifting unequal development trends in spatially locked-in territories**, which are usually the consequence of long-term trajectories of inequalities. These require the creation of a shared national vision for territorial cohesion and strategic regional programmes focusing on marginalized regions.

6 Conclusions

Inequalities are at the heart of our time's most pressing challenges. Despite the commitment adopted in 2015 by the international community, through the 2030 Agenda, to "eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions" and to "combat inequalities within and among countries", they continue to grow. Extreme inequalities are increasing, dividing and fragmenting communities, threatening social coexistence, and undermining democracy and trust in public institutions.

Addressing inequalities is imperative. It is a precondition to combat the social crises that exacerbate existing conflicts and violence; to ensure just and ecological transitions that confront the climate emergency; to respond to the increased complexity of migration processes; and to tackle the uneven impact that crises such as COVID-19 have upon our societies. In sum, despite increases in global wealth, inequalities remain one of the greatest obstacles to ensuring well-being and guaranteeing a dignified life for everyone. **Political choices lie at the heart of tackling them effectively, which is essential if we are to achieve the respect and fulfilment associated with an expanded notion of human rights.**

Inequalities are always embedded in the spaces in which people live. Even when they are shaped by structural macro-dynamics, inequalities manifest themselves through the urban and territorial fabric, across poor neighbourhoods, in stagnant cities, and in marginalized regions. **This means that shaping more equal, just and sustainable futures requires local policies and planning. LRGs should be at the forefront of those localized efforts.** Modifying the structural trends that shape inequalities (economic, social, cultural and governance structures) requires actions that usually

go beyond the powers and responsibilities of LRGs. However, LRGs have a duty to mobilize all their capacity to address the manifestations of inequalities, and to put all their efforts into reverting the very dynamics that have produced these inequalities in the first place.

Equality implies much more than simply achieving a fairer distribution of wealth. An expanded multifaceted notion of equality is central to the approach adopted by the SDGs and other international frameworks, and this Report has made it its own. **Fighting for equality requires confronting the intersectional and multidimensional nature of urban and territorial inequalities, which tend to compound and exacerbate one another.** As discussed throughout this Report, this task requires efforts that advance at least four dimensions of equality: a fairer distribution of material conditions for well-being; reciprocal recognition of multiple intersecting social identities; parity political participation in inclusive and democratic decision-making processes; and solidarity and mutual care in responsibilities involving citizens, and between citizens and the natural environment.

GOLD VI has been developed as a collective effort to identify and coproduce actionable pathways through which LRGs, working in partnership with civil society, other actors and different levels of government, can embrace this endeavour and generate alternative development trajectories. **No single level of government, nor any single actor, can tackle these challenges alone. Aware of the complex multisectoral nature of the responses needed, the six following pathways have been discussed in ways that seek to challenge siloed actions:** *Commoning, Caring, Connecting, Renaturing, Prospering* **and** *Democratizing.* These trajectories through which to advance towards more equal

futures and to foster synergies between institutions and communities. They propose actionable policy and planning initiatives which are based on concrete experiences that have already triggered transformational change in cities and regions around the world. These are cumulative and complementary efforts to revert the trend of growing inequalities. Together, they can help achieve tipping points, beyond which these actions are no longer punctual initiatives, but will constitute markers of structural change on the way to more equal societies and territories.

The five key principles discussed in this concluding chapter involve:

° a rights-based approach;

° alternative ways of conceiving and managing space;

° a new culture of subnational governance;

° seeking adequate financing and, in many countries, a revision of the current architecture of investment; and

° engaging practically with time.

These five principles provide a common normative framework and a composite vision that brings together the different pathways as a collective effort for working towards achieving more equal cities and territories. This is critical if humanity aims, amongst others: (a) to improve living conditions in informal settlements; (b) to provide access to adequate housing, water and sanitation to billions of people; (c) to ensure adequate care and social services for those in need, and to protect those who take care for others; (d) to facilitate decent work and connections for everyone, and also opportunities and livelihoods; (e) to halt environmental degradation and alleviate the climate emergency, without shifting the burden of achieving this onto the most vulnerable; and (f) to fight against all forms of discrimination by taking into account the intersectionality of the structural forms of oppression.

This is the basis for a dynamic participatory democracy that renews the social contract and lays the foundations for a "Pact for the future" that establishes as its core principle the notion of caring for people, the planet and the government.

The experiences of LRGs and civil society groups discussed throughout this Report have shown the power of collective action that seeks to advance the different pathways to equality.

They do this, firstly, by acknowledging the diversity of the actors involved; and, secondly, by building strong local alliances, and engaging with social movements and community initiatives. They also work towards their goals by making political choices that make the equality agenda the central pillar of sustainable urban and territorial development. Strong local alliances can transform multilevel governance, making it more collaborative and able to support the scaling up of local innovations, thus protecting the commons and ecosystems. These political commitments can be triggered by imagining alternative, more sustainable and fairer futures, by reframing governance and finance, by recognizing the needs and aspirations of citizens and of groups with different identities, by focusing on and extending rights, and by generally acting in strategic ways that promote local and structural transformations.

Only through collaboration, a collective vision, and action that mobilizes the strengths of our communities will it be possible to pursue a more equal, peaceful and sustainable future.

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Chapter 2
Infographic notes

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Chapter 7
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Chapter 8
Infographic notes

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Chapter 9
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Chapter 10
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Cities and regions are experiencing challenging times. Despite the international community's 2030 Agenda commitments to "eradicate poverty in all its forms" and to "combat inequalities within and among countries", inequalities continue to grow. They are perpetuated by structures created throughout a longstanding history of injustice and intersecting discrimination and are exacerbated by phenomena such as wars, the concentration of wealth, the climate emergency, forced migration and COVID-19.

Inequalities are always embedded and experienced in the spaces where people live. No single level of government or actor can tackle these challenges alone. Nevertheless, local and regional governments (LRGs) are at the forefront of meeting these challenges in their territories. They are crucial to leading localized and collaborative endeavours aiming to address acute inequalities that undermine the human rights of large parts of the population, especially the rights of structurally marginalized groups. **This Report is a collective effort to put inequalities at the centre of urban and territorial debates, actions and policies, and to actively look for pathways to address these inequalities through strategies for local transformation.**

GOLD VI begins by defining urban and territorial equality as a multidimensional challenge – as recognized by the SDGs – which involves distribution, recognition, participation, and solidarity and care. It then presents the different trends that shape the current state of inequalities, followed by a discussion on governance from a rights-based perspective and an introduction to the notion of pathways. **Pathways are multisectoral trajectories for change that allow urban and territorial governance to imagine flexible, systemic and future-oriented actions towards equality while also acknowledging issues of power and scale.**

The Report offers a series of pathways that LRGs, civil society groups and other actors are taking to advance towards equality: **Commoning**, **Caring**, **Connecting**, **Renaturing**, **Prospering** and **Democratizing**. Through the lens of each pathway, diverse topics are addressed, such as housing, land, basic services, informality, education, urban health, migration, gender and racial inequalities, violence and discrimination, food security, sustainable transport, digital connectivity, decent livelihoods, resilience, the energy transition, culture, finance, governance and capabilities, all within a framework of participation and accountability.

Drawing upon and grounded in local experiences, GOLD VI concludes by offering a series of political recommendations. **Understanding that significant change takes place at the intersection of these pathways and as a result of their cumulative effect, the Report suggests five cross-cutting principles that LRGs should consider for building pathways towards equality.** These are a rights-based approach; alternative ways to conceive of and manage space; a new culture of governance; adequate financing and investment architecture; and the use of time to build more equality-oriented collective imaginaries.

The experiences, key messages, political recommendations and reflections in this Report result from a long and inclusive process of cocreation and exchange. Such a process has aimed to produce a rigorous and relevant report and also to facilitate a coproduction process, supporting and strengthening multistakeholder dialogues and ensuring the participation and involvement of UCLG members, civil society networks, researchers and other partners. **For this broad LRG movement, allowing inequalities to grow is no longer an option.**