

# 2016 SDGs Round Table Series



50  
YEARS

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## 2 Sustainable Urban Development



Mongolian Family Uses Solar Energy to Power Home. A family in Tarialan, Uvs Province, Mongolia, uses a solar panel to generate power for their ger, a traditional Mongolian tent. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe.



Floating Windmills Generate Electricity on Jeju Island. A floating windmill complex generates electricity on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea. 1.6 billion people the world over, or a quarter of humanity, live without electricity. UN Photo/Kibae Park.

UNDP works in some 170 countries and territories, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty, and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion. We help countries to develop policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities and build resilience in order to sustain development results. UNDP focuses on helping countries build and share solutions in three main areas:

- Sustainable development
- Democratic governance and peacebuilding
- Climate and disaster resilience

### SDGs and Sustainable Urban Development

*“The world is going through an unprecedented transition. The global balance of power is shifting, extreme poverty has dropped to historic lows, more people than ever before now live in cities, and new technologies are revolutionizing social behaviours and entire industries.”*

*UNDP Strategic Plan, 2014-17*

With the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015, there is now a specific Goal (Goal 11) on *sustainable cities and communities that involves improving urban planning and management to ensure that the rapid growth of cities is developing in a more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable manner*. As such, the world’s governments have now committed themselves to balanced development that integrates economic, social and environmental objectives – and have pledged that “no one will be left behind”. It is clear that inclusive urbanization is needed to move the world towards progressive realization of sustainable development for all.

The UNDP Sustainable Urbanization Strategy Note, currently under finalization, outlines UNDP’s approach and the policy and programme support UNDP will provide to countries toward achieving sustainable, inclusive and resilient urbanization. It outlines UNDP’s approach and the policy and programme support UNDP will provide countries toward achieving sustainable, inclusive and resilient urbanization. This strategy aims to ensure that UNDP plays a constructive role in

supporting countries to achieve SDG 11 on cities; and all SDG targets relevant to urban matters. Toward this end, UNDP will develop and offer integrated solutions combining its expertise across core thematic areas, build and work through a broad coalition of partners and deepen cross-country and regional networks of learning and exchange.

Goal 11 is closely related to SDGs 7 and 12—reflecting the integrated nature of these goals as they relate to meeting government needs to implement Agenda 2030. SDG 7 (*to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all*) aims for universal access to affordable electricity by 2030. This means investing in clean energy sources such as solar, wind and thermal. On the demand side, adopting energy-efficiency standards for a wider range of technologies could also reduce global electricity consumption by buildings and industry by 14%. Expanding infrastructure and upgrading technology to provide clean energy sources in all developing countries is a crucial goal that can both encourage growth and help the environment. Indeed, energy is central to social and economic well-being. Yet, 1.1 billion people have no access to electricity, while 2.9 billion have to cook with polluting, inefficient fuels such as firewood. Without rapid progress on SDG 7, success in delivering on other SDGs will be unlikely by 2030. This SDG is closely related to SDG 11 as illustrated by some simple yet stark figures: by 2030, almost 60% of the world's population will live in urban areas; 95% of urban expansion in the next decades will take place in the developing world. Also, while the world's cities occupy just 3% of the Earth's land, they account for 60-80% of energy consumption and 75% of carbon emissions. Consequently, the ecological footprint of urban areas dwarf the ecosystem capacity of the areas they occupy—hence they owe a substantial “ecological debt” to rural areas. The proposed Seoul Debates can help facilitate the need to address some aspects SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy by exploring Korea's waste-to-energy and ‘Eco-Friendly Energy Towns’.



Energy Sources of Power: Biogas Plants in India. Cow dung cakes being prepared to be used in biogas plants in the village of Ugala. With the help from UNDP, the government is aiming to establish about 100,000 biogas plants in its Fifty Five-Year Plan. UN Photo/Ray Witlin.

SDG 12 on *responsible consumption and production* involves creating more efficient production and supply chains for more sustainable patterns of consumption. Efficient management of shared natural resources, disposal of toxic waste and pollutants, encouraging industries, businesses and consumers to recycle and reduce waste, as well as reducing global food waste are important components of this goal. SDG 12 includes some specific targets, with implications for global food waste management as integral to overall responsible consumption and production. Therefore, identifying the role of sustainable consumption within implementation of smart cities work is important as countries are involved in the process of localizing SDGs.

The UNDP Seoul Policy Centre focus' on sharing lessons from Republic of Korea and other countries—and to facilitate UNDP's efforts in translating UNDP's sustainable urbanization strategy into tangible and implementable projects promising substantial results.

## **UNDP Seoul Policy Centre**

For more than 40 years (1963-2009), UNDP has supported the people and Government of Korea, delivering 270 projects in 20 areas mirroring Korea's development path. UNDP closed its Country Office in 2009, as Korea joined the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), affirming its status as a significant contributor of development aid. In this context, the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre (USPC) was established in 2011, with the objective of brokering new partnerships between Korea and the developing world through UNDP networks. As one of the six UNDP Global Policy Centres, USPC is tasked with:

- representing UNDP in Korea
- working with Korea on international issues
- sharing Korea's development experiences with other countries

UNDP Seoul Policy Centre

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