

# Action for healthy urban environments

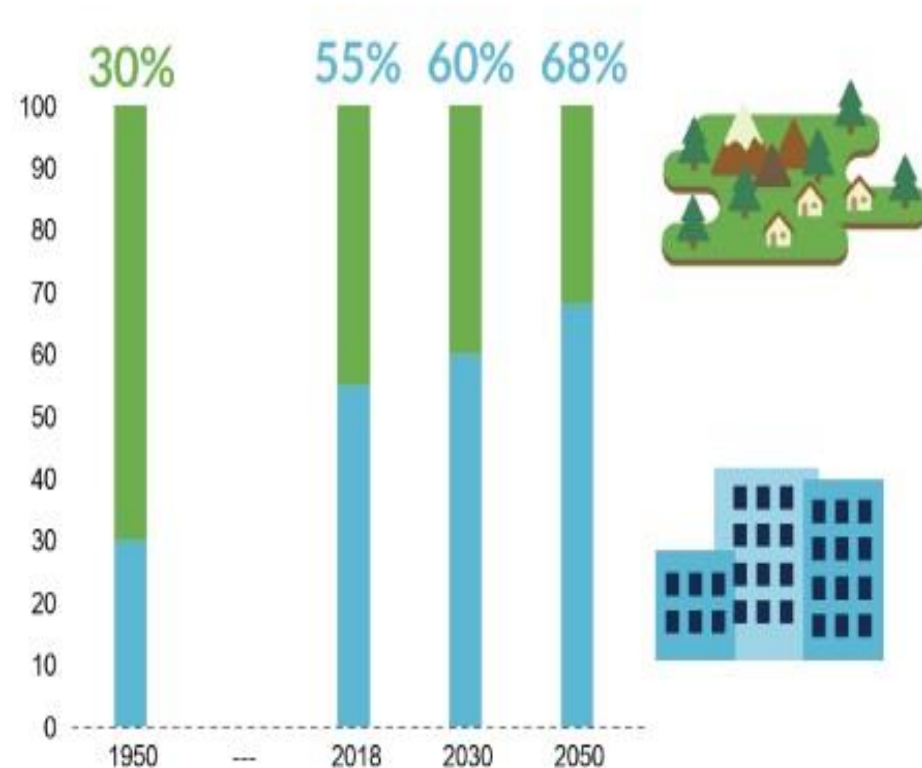
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World Health  
Organization

# Our future is urban!

From only **751 million** in 1950, the population of the world's cities has rocketed to **4.2 billion**.



World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision

Access the report: [bit.ly/wup2018](https://bit.ly/wup2018) • #UNPopulation

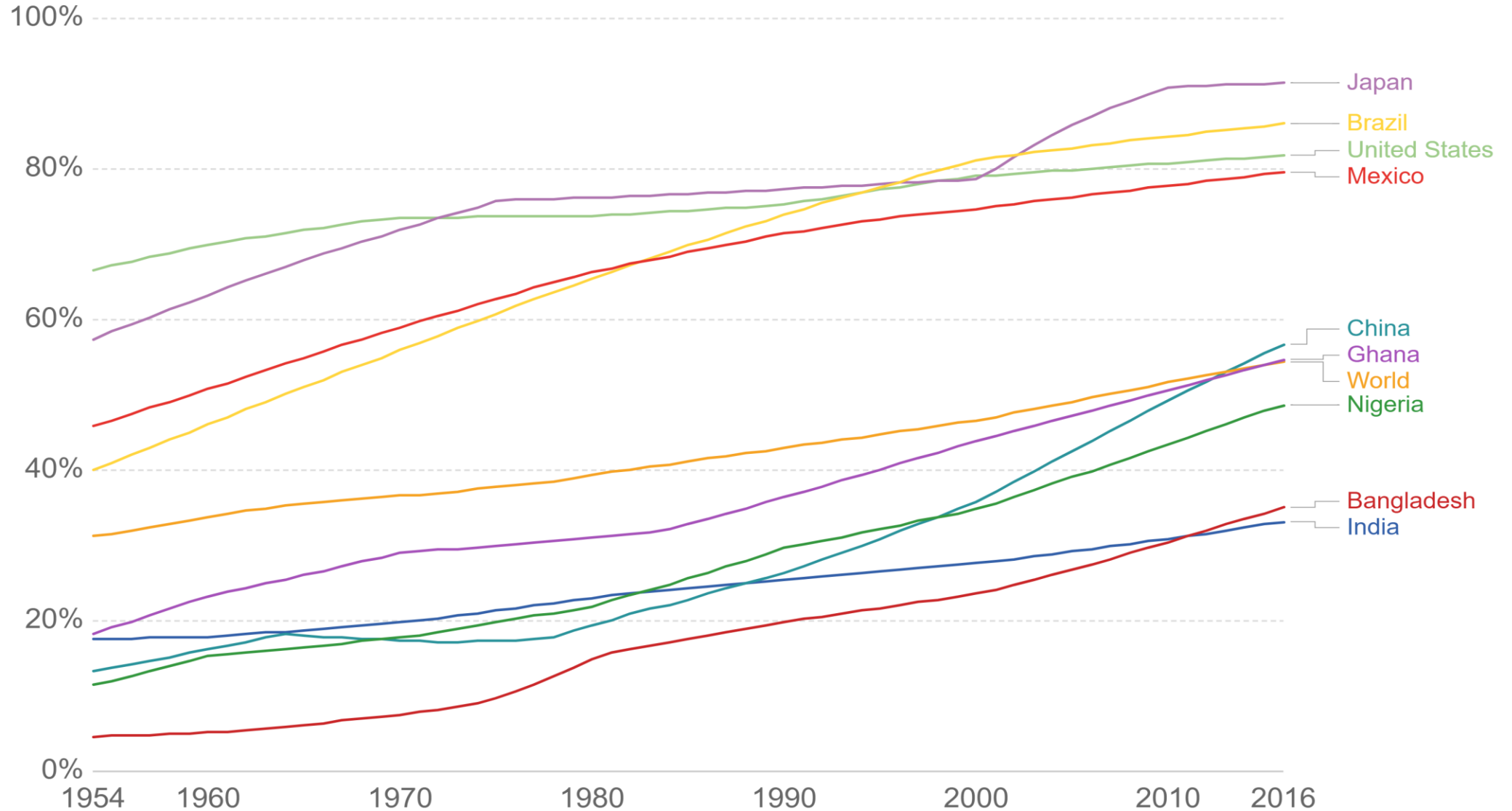


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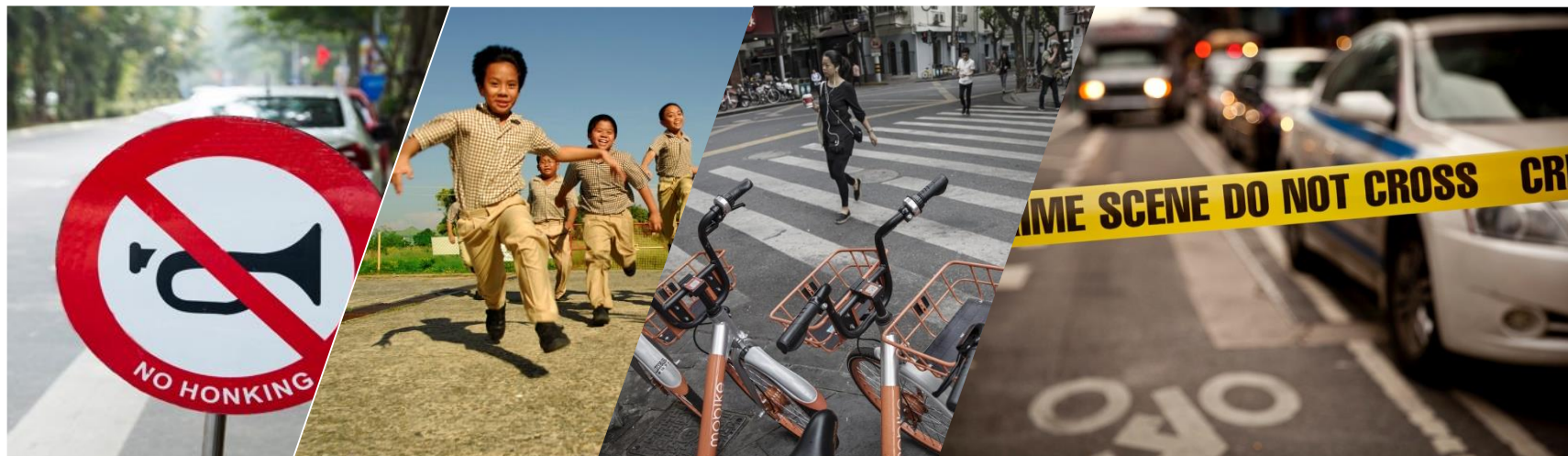
# Urbanization over the past 500 years

Share of the total population living in urban areas. Urban areas are based on national definitions and may vary by country.



Source: OWID based on UN World Urbanization Prospects 2018 and historical sources (see Sources)

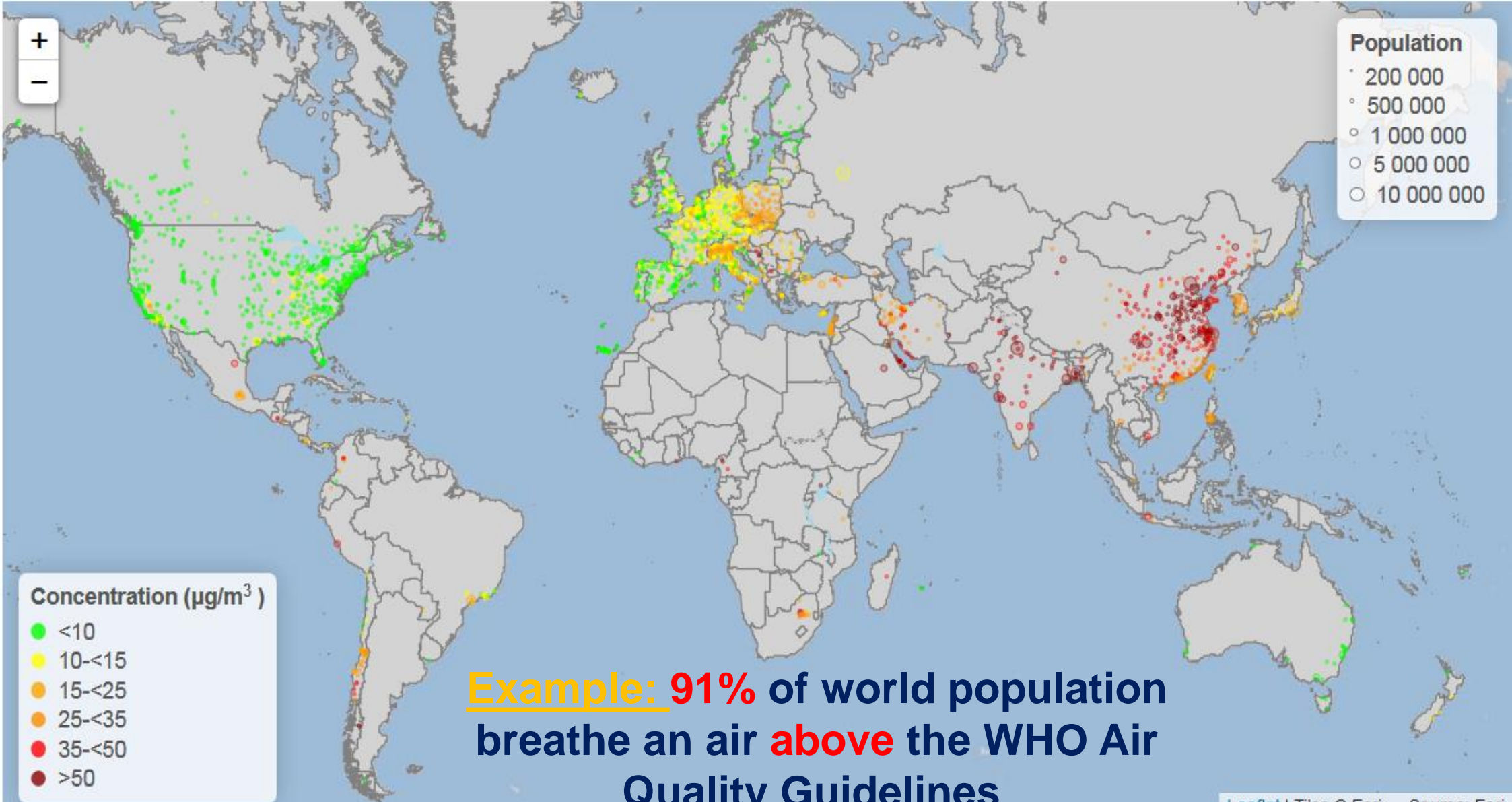
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## Several potential pathways to health

- Air pollution
- Physical Activity
- Noise
- Interpersonal violence
- Social interaction and exchange
- Food environment



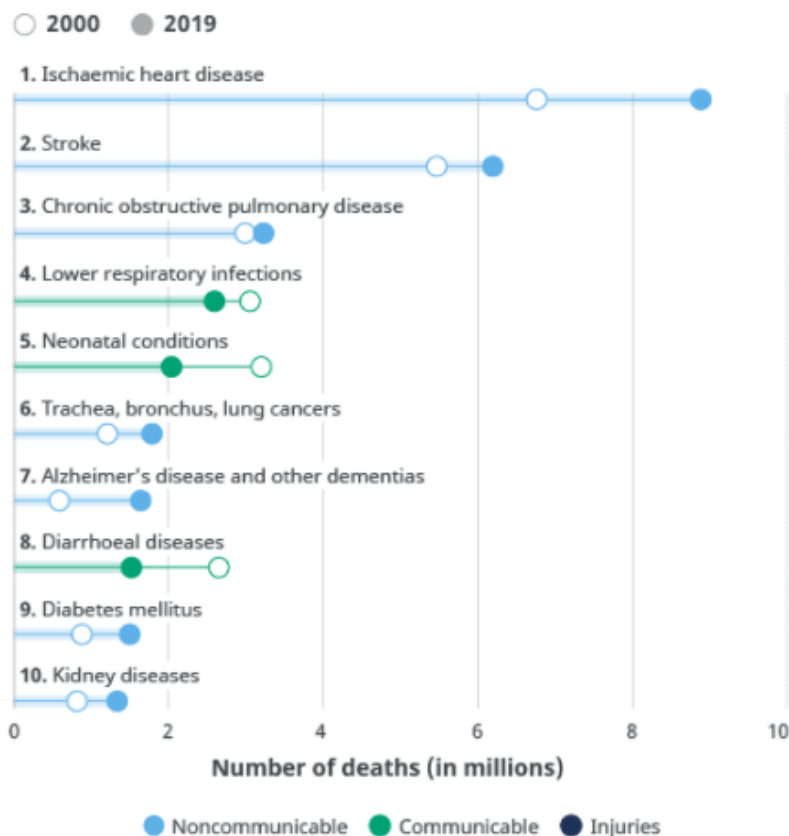


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# Epidemiological transition and the double burden of disease

## Leading causes of death globally



Source: WHO Global Health Estimates.

# Climate change - 250 000 additional deaths per year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress between 2030 and 2050 without mitigation and adaptation



1. Direct effects of floods, droughts, heatwaves
2. Indirect effects, e.g. via infectious disease
3. Impacts on social systems, migration and conflict

Which are the opportunities  
to integrate health into  
urban environments?





# Opportunity: Promoting healthy and liveable urban environments through sector policy change

Clean energy

Public spaces

Transport & Mobility

Housing

Food systems

Land-use planning

Waste management

Water and sanitation

# Opportunity: Harvesting on the sense of urgency

- Demonstrations and citizen pressure - Urban living conditions as a prominent part of the political agenda
- Climate action closely linked to urban environments and the role of local authorities
- Healthy Recovery from COVID-19



# Opportunity: mobilization of citizens, communities, urban leaders and health professionals



# Can architects, planners and the health community come together to catalyse action and influence the urban transformation?





## Health as the Pulse of the New Urban Agenda



United Nations Conference on Housing and  
Sustainable Urban Development  
Quito – October 2016

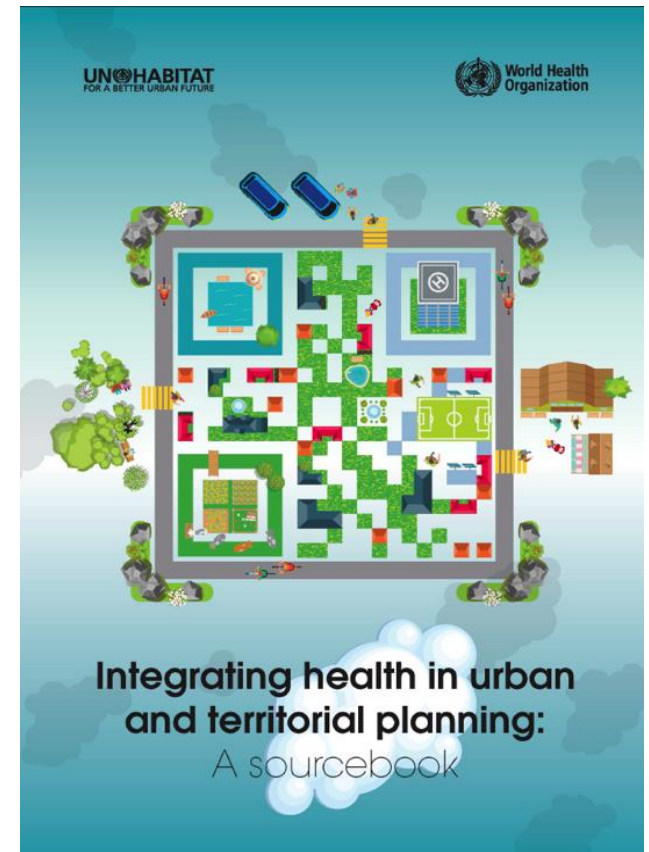


# Health informing the New Urban Agenda, Habitat-III





If the purpose of planning is not for human and planetary health, then what is it for?



<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240003170>

## Public spaces

Public spaces are places which are accessible and enjoyable by all, without a profit motive, and take on various spatial forms (INU, 2013). Issues of distribution, quality, location, access and management of public open space impacts on human health and health equity directly, and through the wider determinants of health. Public spaces are one of the key levers to fully implement the *New Urban Agenda* and the focus of a specific target under SDG 11. Safe, accessible and inclusive public spaces can contribute to promoting public health in rapidly urbanizing cities and towns. Public space assessments can also provide information regarding networks of public space, accessibility (who accesses the spaces), inclusiveness (who uses the spaces), noise levels, waste/rubbish issues, green coverage, etc.

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### Resource 17 (TOOLKIT)

**Global public space toolkit: from global principles to local policies and practice**

<https://www.localizingthesdgs.org/library/82/Global-Public-Space-Toolkit-From-Global-Principles-to-Local-Policies-and-Practice.pdf>

scan here



### Resource 18 (DESIGN GUIDE)

**Turning spaces into places – handbook**

[https://unhabitat-kosovo.org/un\\_habitat\\_documental/turning-spaces-into-places-handbook/](https://unhabitat-kosovo.org/un_habitat_documental/turning-spaces-into-places-handbook/)

scan here



### Resource 19 (WEB RESOURCE)

**Ciclovia Recreativa (Open Streets) implementation and advocacy manual**

<https://cicloviarecreativa.uniandes.edu.co/english/introduction.html>

# Highlight existing tools, guidance, examples and case studies

## Box 4

### Provision of local open public space is a key to supporting health and health equity

All citizens, regardless of their role, are users of public spaces. All have the right to access and enjoy public spaces in complete freedom, within the rules of civic coexistence. In cities, ever more complex and diverse, this requires democratic processes, dialogue and regard for diversity.

Public spaces are all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free and without a profit motive. Each public space has its own spatial, historic, environmental, social and economic features.

The management of public space is a prevalent responsibility of local authorities. In order to be discharged successfully, this role requires the active collaboration of citizens, civil society and the private sector.

Open public spaces consist of outdoor environments (e.g. streets, pavements, squares, gardens, parks).

In extension plans of newly urbanizing cities, whose population will double over the next 10–20 years (Africa and Asia), it is very important to guarantee sufficient amounts of well-connected and adequately proportioned public spaces.

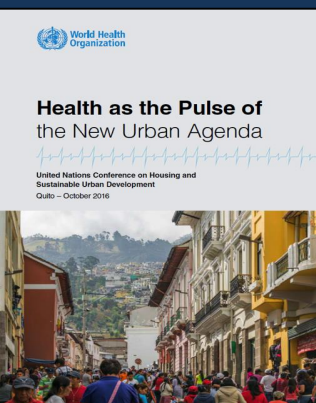
Source: Extracts from the Charter of Public Space (INU, 2013).



**World Health Organization**

# Articulating a new approach for the links between health and urbanization

“Health as an input  
+  
Health as an outcome”





# The role of the health sector: 3 pillars to catalyse policy change



# Healthy Urban Environments: from global guidance to local action

## Health in Urban and Territorial Planning

- Joint guidance with UN Habitat
- Multiple languages  
(Chinese, Russian, Arabic and Portuguese on the way)
- Resource Directory and Training ongoing



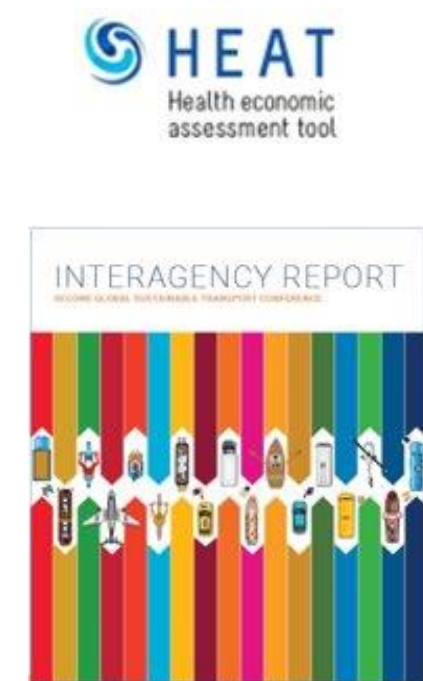
## Urban Health Initiative

- Sectorial results on best policy scenarios for health gains, air pollution reduction and climate action
- Tailored communication for policymakers, media and general public



## E.g. Transport

- Global adaptation and rollout of tools and resources for sustainable transport
- Contribution to major transport agendas, such as the UN Second Global Sustainable Transport Conference



# Concrete and evidence-based ways to create healthy urban environments



Available at [www.who.int/tools/compendium-on-health-and-environment](http://www.who.int/tools/compendium-on-health-and-environment)



World Health Organization

# Thank you

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