

CITIES ALLIANCE

The global partnership for poverty reduction and the promotion of cities in sustainable development.



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ABOUT CITIES ALLIANCE

Cities Alliance is the global partnership for poverty reduction and promoting the role of cities in sustainable development. Partnerships are critical to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We bring together organisations with different perspectives and expertise on city issues around common goals: well run, productive cities that provide opportunities for all residents.

Our members include multilateral development organisations, national governments, local government associations, international NGOs, private sector and foundations, and academia.

The Cities Alliance Secretariat is based in Brussels, and is hosted by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

Cities Alliance was launched in 1999 to focus the attention of national governments and development partners on the growth and depth of urban poverty. In 2000, Cities Alliance contributed the first global target to focus on urban poverty in the Millennium Development Goals.

With a recently strengthened and expanded membership, Cities Alliance has played a leading role in recent and growing recognition of the importance of cities in achieving Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Following the adoption of the New Urban Agenda in Quito, Cities Alliance and its members will also make a decisive contribution to its implementation.

Cities Alliance believes that enabling national policies, strong institutions, well-resourced and accountable local governments, and informed and engaged citizens are essential for local and national prosperity. To achieve this, Cities Alliance support is long-term, programmatic and focused on strengthening local skills and capacity. All Cities Alliance activities are judged by long-term results and outcomes.

Cities Alliance

Cities Without Slums

Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums



MISSION

Cities Alliance is a responsive and dynamic global partnership committed to innovation, improved collaboration and coherence of effort. Members promote longer-term and integrated work programmes, while actively promoting gender equality throughout all activities.

Cities Alliance operates through four business lines:

- **Country Programmes** work at the community, local and national levels, typically in the context of rapid population growth, and growing levels of urban and rural poverty;
- The **Catalytic Fund** is a competitive open grant facility to promote innovation and city transformation;
- **Joint Work Programmes** are member-led analytical and strategic activities focused on major policy issues; and
- **Communications and Advocacy** activities are used to promote new narratives contributing to sustainable, inclusive cities.

MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Cities Alliance currently has a representative global membership of over 30 full and Associate members. They comprise six constituencies, which are represented at the annual Cities Alliance Assembly meeting:

- National Governments
- Multilateral Institutions
- Associations of Local Governments

- International Non-Governmental Organisations
- Private Sector and Foundations
- Universities and Knowledge Networks

Cities Alliance activities are overseen by a 12-member Management Board representing the six constituencies. The Assembly approves activities through a Medium-Term Strategy, guided by a Results Framework and a robust Monitoring System.

The Secretariat is based in Brussels and operates on a United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) platform. Through UNOPS, the Cities Alliance is an efficient and flexible grant-making mechanism with global reach.

The Director of the Secretariat is **William Cobbett**, previously Director General of Housing in the 1994 Government of National Unity of South Africa.

RECENT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- **Secondary Cities**
Cities Alliance initiated a major study on the important role of secondary cities, where the bulk of urban growth is taking place. A Secondary Cities toolkit is being finalised.

Khalifa Sall, Mayor of Dakar and President of United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, was elected President of the Cities Alliance Assembly in 2016. **Clare Short**, former UK Secretary for International Development, serves as the Assembly's first-ever independent Chairperson.

- **Land, Services and Citizenship Programme**
Undertaken in one Asian and four African countries, this programme supported \$600m of World Bank investment, invested in 172 community-driven infrastructure projects, and mobilised 386 community savings groups amongst urban poor communities.
- **Future Cities Africa**
Implemented in 21 cities in four countries, this project is providing detailed insights and a range of new tools for the urban transition in Africa.
- **Policy Programmes**
Cities Alliance members are currently engaged in detailed policy programmes focused on promoting equitable economic growth, Resilient Cities, Gender Equality, and the Habitat III process.
- **New Focus Areas**
Cities Alliance is supporting projects in over 30 countries on the themes Migration and the Inclusive City, Know Your City, and Youth and the City.

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA WILL DEPEND ON COLLECTIVE ACTION.

"First ideas for new partnership initiatives are already being discussed. Existing ones – such as Cities Alliance, as a successful example of a multi-stakeholder partnership on action and dialogues – could be expanded."

- Dr. Christoph Beier, vice-chair of the Management Board of GIZ, September 2016.