

## WUF11 SESSION CONCEPT NOTE

### LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS ROUNDTABLE

*Reimagining Cities for a Better Future for All*

#### Summary:

UN-Habitat and the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF) are jointly organizing the Roundtable of Local and Regional Governments on the topic *Reimagining cities for a better future for all*.

With six out of every ten people in the world expected to reside in urban areas by 2030, and rising to nearly 70% by 2050, cities are the key stage where the future of sustainability will be defined.

Local leaders and local and regional governments administrations are facing critical challenges linked to the provision of local public services, including housing, health, digitalization, and financing. Challenges that have been severely exacerbated by conflicts, health emergencies and the impact of climate change – global crises with a direct local impact.

When planned and managed properly, urbanization has the potential to create opportunities for a better life for all, to provide a pathway out of poverty and act as an engine of integration and economic growth. At the same time, cities are the at the center of processes contributing to rising inequalities and exclusion as well as of environmental degradation. In this critical time, it is necessary to rethink the conditions needed to make cities spaces of transformation, inclusion and shared prosperity, offering communities equal opportunities to thrive.

To achieve this, cities and local and regional governments need to be empowered, by ensuring financial resilience and strengthening multi-level governance ecosystems, placing communities' needs and priorities at the center of national development. At the same time, it is necessary to look at cities beyond their productive possibilities. As demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, cities are places of care, solidarity and inclusion.

This session aims to reflect on these topics, facilitating discussions on how to lift cities potential and improve its citizens lives, while re-imagining, all together, the future of our cities.