

Forum on AI and Citiverse: Building the foundations for interoperable and scalable urban innovation

Guiding Principles and Frameworks for People-Centred
Smart Cities in the AI Era

Presented by:

ITU and UN-Habitat

9 September 2026, 14:00 – 15:00 (UTC+3)





United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC)

22

UN entities

350+

Cities globally adopted
the U4SSC KPIs

10yrs

Shaping people-centred
cities

U4SSC is advancing global dialogue on the key priorities shaping smart, sustainable cities.



Digital transformation
for people-centred
cities



Artificial intelligence in
cities



City Platforms and
Data Spaces



Digital Public
Infrastructure (DPI) for
Cities



Future Foresight for
Cities



Social-cultural
sustainability in people-
centred city governance



Sustainable Digital
Transformation in Buildings
and Urban Energy

Working Group 8 on Guiding Principles and Frameworks for People-Centred Smart Cities in the AI era

The new Working Group is embedded within the **U4SSC Thematic Group on Digital transformation for people-centred cities**, which provides a collaborative platform to advance technical and related policy discussions on people-centred innovation for smart cities.



WG8 Scope

The group will provide guidance on innovative approaches and scalable tools to support cities in designing strategies and implementing digital, smart and AI-enabled solutions that place people at the centre of urban development. By bringing together diverse stakeholders from across sectors and disciplines, the Working Group will foster knowledge exchange, promote good practices and support the development of common approaches for inclusive, equitable and accessible urban transformation.



WG8 Deliverable

The Working Group will develop a **People-Centred Smart Cities Toolbox**, building on several years of applied research and project experience, to help cities harness emerging technologies, including AI, in ways that enhance quality of life, strengthen resilience and advance sustainable development for all.



Co-Leaders:

Aline Matta (UN-Habitat) and Cristina Bueti (ITU)

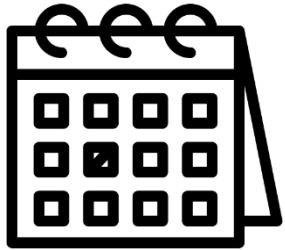
Smart City Expo World Congress (Barcelona, 3-5 November 2026)

UN Pavilion facilitated by ITU and UN-Habitat, together with UNDRR, UNDP, UN-Women, UNCDF, ESCAP, UNHCR/ACNUR Comité Español, ODET, UNESCO, WIPO and ITU/UNICEF (Giga)

- Unique platform for the UN system to come together with a shared vision, in the spirit of One UN.
- Supports delivery of the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level.
- The Guiding Principles and Frameworks for People-Centred Smart Cities in the AI Era will be launched at the Congress as part of the U4SSC 10th anniversary celebration.



Roadmap for the Working Group



- ✓ 3 August 2026: First group meeting
- ✓ 2 September 2026: Second group meeting (outline agreed)
- ✓ 8 September 2026: Third group meeting (annotated outline agreed)
- ✓ **9 September 2026: Global Consultation during the Forum on AI and Citiverse (Tampere)**
- ✓ 15 September 2026: Deadline for written input
- ✓ 23 September 2026: Fourth group meeting (present draft for review and approval)
- ✓ 19 October 2026: final draft submitted to U4SSC Secretariat for final editing and publication.

Join U4SSC Working Group 8

Join the conversation. Shape the future.



<https://u4ssc.itu.int/>

Draft "Guiding Principles and Frameworks for People-Centred Smart Cities in the AI Era"

Presented by:
Roberta Maio, UN-Habitat



The survey results – general data about participation

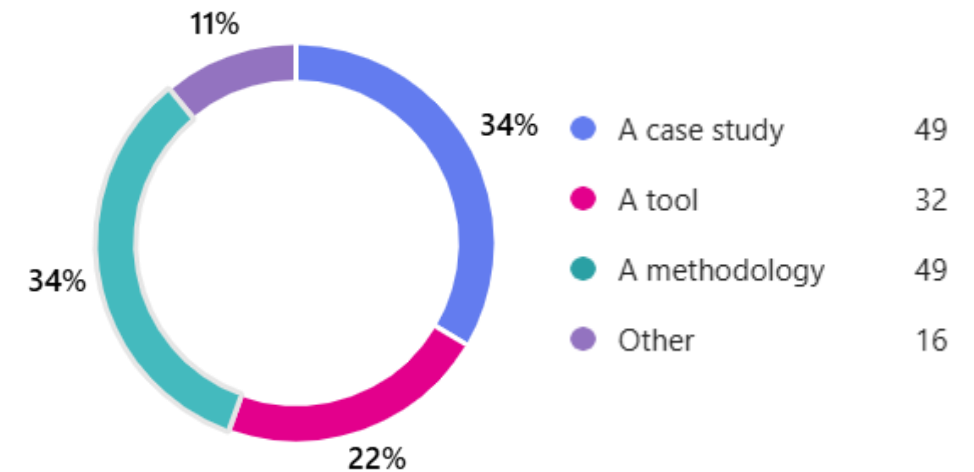
Feedback modality	Number of responses
Survey	181
Written comments	6
Total	187

SURVEY

Launch: 7 August 2026

Closing: 20 August 2026 at 11:59 CET

■ Breakdown of additional submissions*



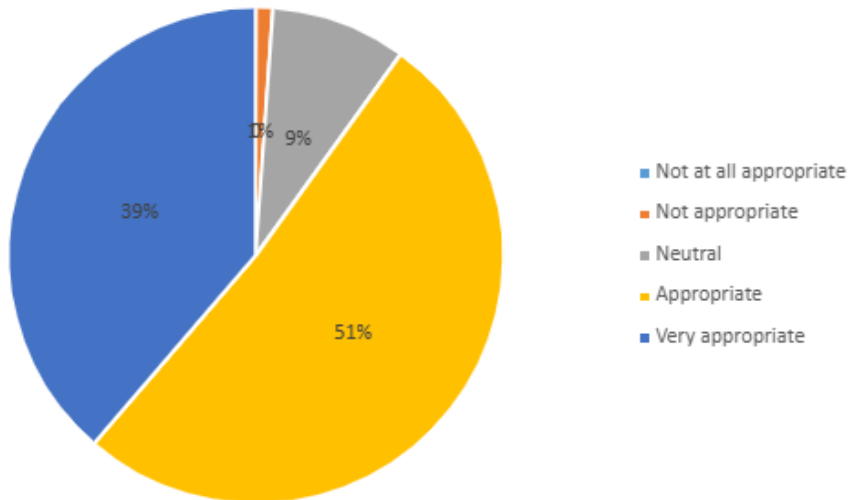
*Experts also submitted case studies, methodologies, tools and relevant resources for the development of the document

The survey results – feedback on the draft outline

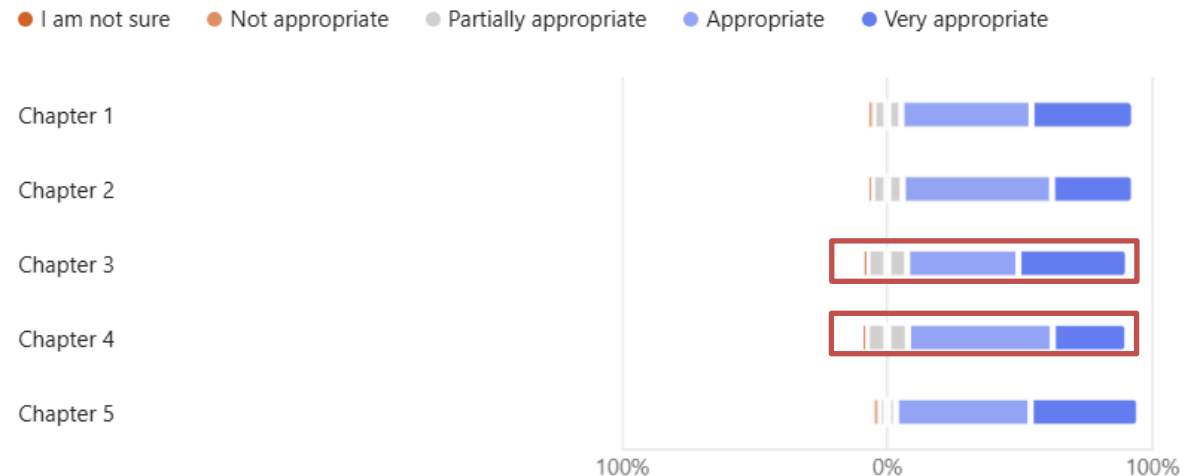
Responses demonstrate overall satisfaction with the proposed outline

Feedback and suggestions mainly concerned Chapters 3 and 4 (implementation framework and monitoring, evaluation)

Overall satisfaction with proposed structure



Satisfaction per chapter of the proposed structure



Agreed outline of the "Guiding Principles and Frameworks"

Foreword

Executive Summary

1. Before you begin

- 1.1 Who is this document for?
- 1.2 What do you want to achieve?
- 1.3 How to use this document?
- 1.4 Choose your pathway

2. The people-centred smart city compass

- 2.1 What is a people-centred smart city in the AI era?
- 2.2 Principles and foundations
- 2.3 Responsible AI considerations
- 2.4 Desired Outcomes

3. From principles to impact: The city implementation cycle

- 3.1 A framework to translate principles into a people-centred approach to smart cities in the AI era 6
 - 3.1.1 Step 1: Define the urban challenge and the objective
 - 3.1.2 Step 2: Understand the starting point and establish a baseline
 - 3.1.3 Step 3: Prioritize (decision tree)
 - 3.1.4 Step 4: Build the enabling environment at the city level
 - 3.1.5 Step 5: Design solutions for and with people
 - 3.1.6 Step 6: Implement
 - 3.1.7 Step 7: Track and measure progress and impact
 - 3.1.8 Step 8: Learn, adapt and scale

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- 4.1 The monitoring framework for a "people-centred smart city in the AI era"
- 4.2 Design your monitoring framework based on city-level outcomes
- 4.3 Measuring progress through KPIs
- 4.4 Adaptive Management and Scaling

5. City Toolkit

- 5.1 Templates and checklists
- 5.2 Tools

Annexes

- A. Mapping to international frameworks and commitments
- B. Mapping to U4SSC / ITU / UN-Habitat resources
- C. Extended case studies and supporting resources
- D. Glossary and acronyms
- E. References

- **Chapter 3:** steps follow the same structure: objective, relevance, activities/actions, principles alignment, tools and resources, practice/example boxes, and regional/case balanced case studies, people-centred check, where to go next.

- Case studies might be added also to **Chapter 4**

Publication's expected content

Chapter	Purpose	Expected content
1. Before you begin	Orient and guide the user	Who the publication is for; what cities can use it to achieve; how to navigate it; how to select a tailored pathway based on objectives and digital/institutional maturity .
2. The People-Centred Smart City Compass	Establish the vision and principles	Definition of a people-centred smart city in the AI era; principles and foundations; responsible AI considerations; desired outcomes and their links to the principles.
3. From principles to impact: The city implementation cycle	Translate principles into action	A practical 8 step-by-step implementation methodology , from defining the urban challenge and assessing the starting point, through prioritisation, enabling conditions, co-design, implementation, measurement, learning and scaling; tools, resources and city examples embedded throughout.
4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement	Measure progress and improve	City-level monitoring framework; people-centred and responsible AI indicators; guidance on selecting KPIs and measuring progress; adaptive management and scaling.
5. City Toolkit	Provide practical resources	Templates, checklists and tools mapped to the implementation cycle, such as problem-definition and stakeholder templates, responsible procurement checklists, readiness assessments, prioritisation and KPI tools, and practice cards.
Annexes	Include wider knowledge and resources	Mapping to international frameworks and commitments; U4SSC/ITU/UN-Habitat resources; extended case studies and supporting resources; glossary and references.

Moderated Q&A

In Conversation with the Audience...

**Contribute Your Resources: Help
Build a Practical Toolbox for Cities**



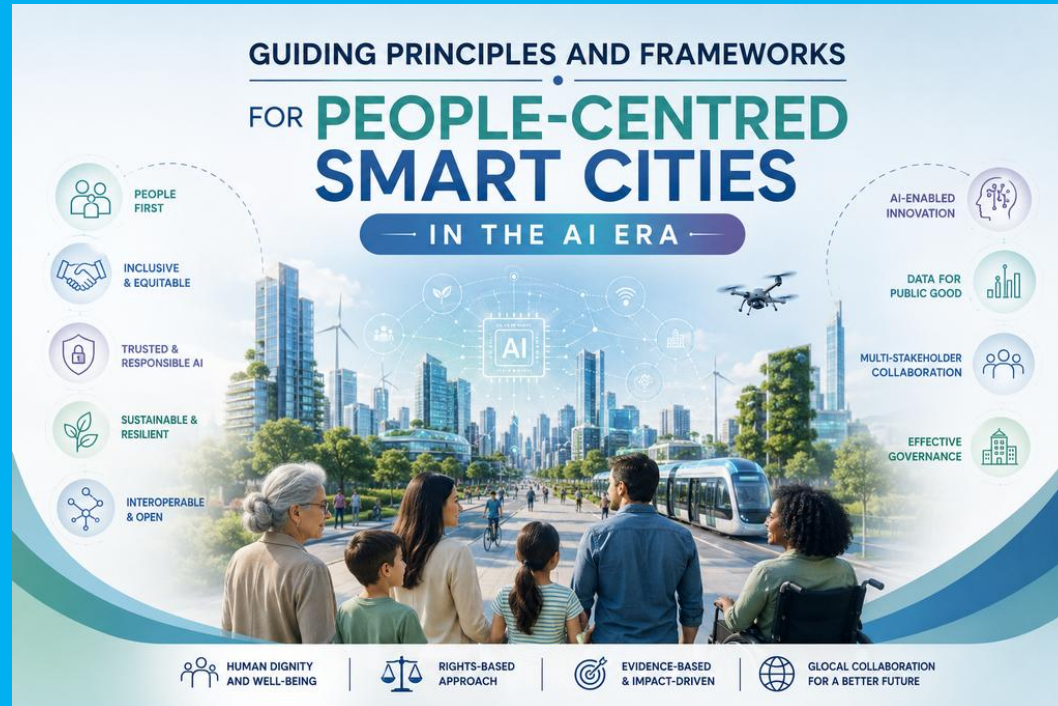
Thank You for Helping Shape the Way Forward

Today's session has been about listening, learning and co-creating:

1. **Listening to Cities** — understanding their priorities, challenges and needs
2. **Shaping the Work Together** — bringing diverse perspectives and feedback to strengthen the document
3. **A Global Call to Cities** — engage, contribute and help shape the Guiding Principles and Frameworks

Thank you for your insights, your engagement and your commitment to building more people-centred cities together.

For more information, please contact:
u4ssc@itu.int



U4SSC website:

<https://www.itu.int/go/u4ssc>

Thank you!

