

Towards people-centered smart cities

Bringing sustainability and inclusion into smart cities



Smart city blueprints – a sustainable and inclusive vision?



Greenfield smart city development – a failing trend?

rest of world

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FEATURE

The failed promise of Kenya's smart city

African governments keep burning money planning smart cities by following a McKinsey blueprint. But will any actually be completed?

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SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

**Make cities and human settlements
inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.**



We know what makes cities sustainable



NUA – Smart, inclusive, sustainable cities

Paragraph 13:

We envisage cities...that... are **participatory**, promote civic engagement, engender a sense of belonging and ownership among all their inhabitants, **prioritize safe, inclusive, accessible, green and quality public spaces** that are friendly for families, enhance social and intergenerational interactions, cultural expressions and political participation, as appropriate, and foster **social cohesion, inclusion and safety** in peaceful and pluralistic societies, where the needs of all inhabitants are met, recognizing the specific needs of those in vulnerable situations;



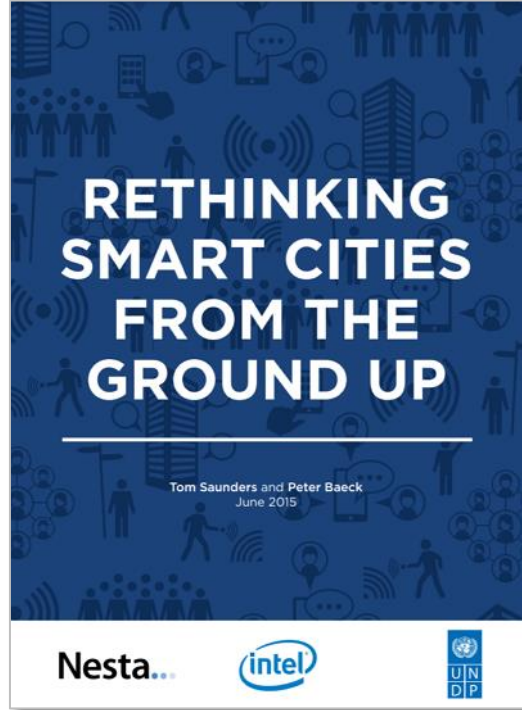
Paragraph 66:

“66. We commit ourselves to **adopting a smart-city approach** that makes use of opportunities from digitalization, clean energy and technologies, as well as innovative transport technologies...”

Paragraph 156:

“156. We will promote the development of national information and communications technology policies and e-government strategies, as well as **citizen-centric digital governance** tools, tapping into technological innovations, including capacity-development programmes, in order to **make information and communications technologies accessible** to the public, including women and girls, children and youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and persons in vulnerable situations, to enable them to develop and **exercise civic responsibility**, broadening participation and fostering responsible governance, as well as increasing efficiency...”

2015: the beginnings of a new paradigm?



Four flaws with the smart city vision:

1. Starting with technology instead of urban challenges.
2. Insufficient use or generation of evidence.
3. Lack of awareness of how others are working to improve cities.
4. Little role for citizen and stakeholder engagement.

The image shows a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the World Urban Forum. In the background, a large screen displays vibrant fireworks. Two women are in the center, one in a black blazer and one in a yellow floral dress with a white hijab, both holding scissors and a red ribbon. To the left, another woman in a light pink jacket is clapping. In the foreground, the backs of several audience members' heads are visible. A yellow banner is in the top right, and a black text box is in the bottom left.

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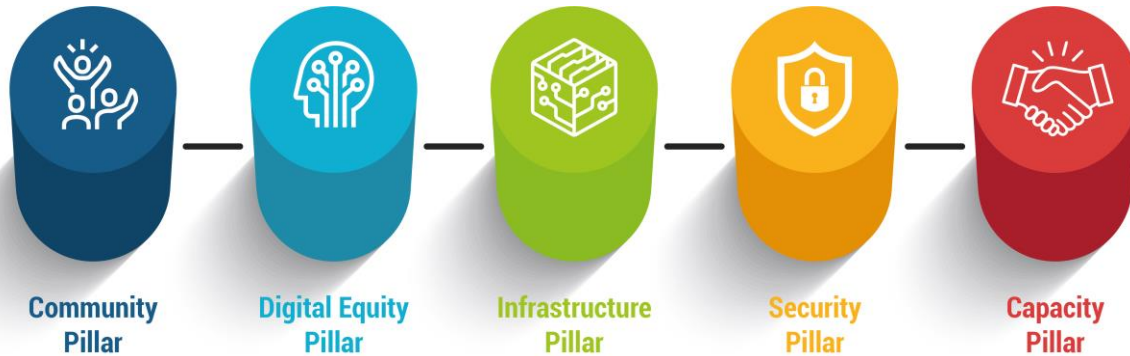
UN-Habitat's Flagship Programme: People-centered Smart Cities launched at World Urban Forum

"Digital technologies have the potential to serve people, improve public services and working conditions. But persistent digital divides remain, and the digital revolution must be directed and governed in a democratic and inclusive way."

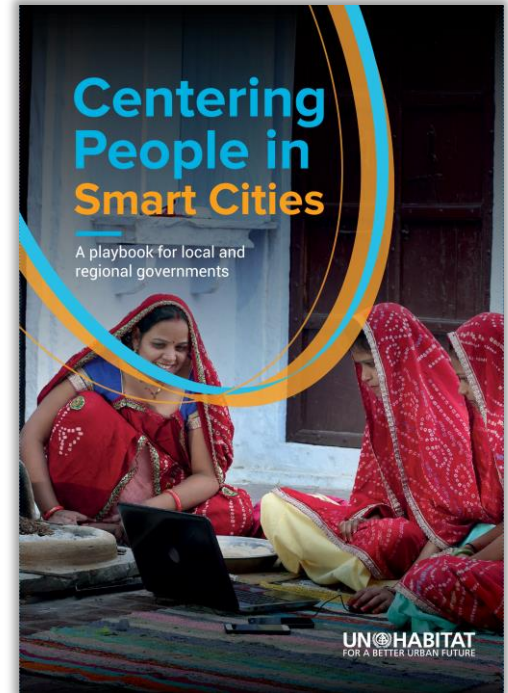
Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director

Five pillars of a People-Centered Smart City

UN Habitat has compiled best practices from government, the private sector and civil society into five pillars of People-Centered Smart Cities.



<https://unhabitat.org/programme/people-centered-smart-cities>



Thank you

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