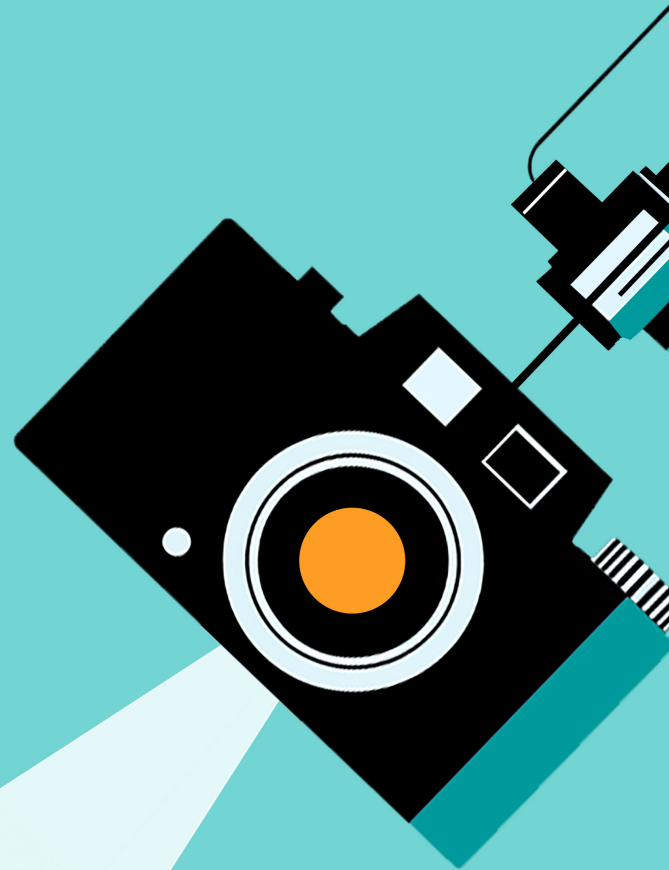


Urban Content in NDC 3.0

A snapshot of 128 NDCs

Including 128 NDCs submitted
by 31 December 2025



81 per cent of NDCs have well-developed urban content

Global Findings pp.12-13

NDCs 3.0 include record climate responses in urban sectors, with half including housing and informal settlements

Global Findings pp.16-17

NDCs are shifting from plans to implementation in cities, with three-quarters of NDCs emphasizing multilevel governance

Thematic Deepdives pp.32-33

Urban content in NDC 3.0 – A snapshot of 128 NDCs

HS Number: HS/010/25E

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United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
P.O. Box 30030 00100
Nairobi GPO KENYA
Tel: 254-020-7623120 (Central Office)
www.unhabitat.org

Project Acknowledgements:

Coordinators: Lea Ranalder (UN-Habitat)

Authors: Patrick Geoghegan (UN-Habitat), Lea Ranalder (UN-Habitat), Roya Meshki-Kataria (UN-Habitat), Nicola Tollin (University of Southern Denmark)

Analysts: Matthew Garner (UN-Habitat)

Members of the expert group and contributors: Hamza Abdullah (Climate Policy Initiative), Charlotte Albin (UN-Habitat), Raghav Anand (UN-Habitat), Cecilia Andersson (UN-Habitat), Bernhard Barth (UN-Habitat), Hector Becerril (CONACYT), Steven Bland (WRI), Rosana Denaldi (ABC), Maria Mercedes Di Virgilio (CONICET), Emrah Engindeniz (UN-Habitat), Lennart Fleck (UN-Habitat), Sharon Gil (UNEP), Margarita Greene (CEDEUS), Marie Iris Hartmann (UNEP), Naomi Hoogervost (UN-Habitat), Max Jamieson (WRI), Ursula Kasperek (C40), Clarissa Kees (GIZ), Cerin Kizhakkethottam (UN-Habitat), Alina Koschmieder (UN-Habitat), Liam Kristoffy (UN-Habitat), Christelle Lahoud (UN-Habitat), Elsa Lefèvre (UNEP), Hector Miranda (UCL), Pourya Salehi (ICLEI), Simone Sandholz (UN University), Asif Nawaz Shah (Global Covenant of Mayors), Somesh Sharma (HIS), Christina Teokari (EBRD), Philip Turner (UITP), Maryke Van Staden (ICLEI), James Vener (UNDP), Eleanor West (OECD).

Design and layout: Habin Park (UN-Habitat)

This snapshot report updates the version initially presented at COP30, titled “Urban Content in NDC 3.0 – A global snapshot for COP30,” which analyzed 67 NDCs 3.0 submitted by October 15, 2025. The current update includes 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by December 31, 2025. Both versions build on the NDC research co-published by UN-Habitat, SDU, and UNDP, including “Seizing the urban opportunity: A 3-step guide for strengthening Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) 3.0” (2025), “Urban Content of NDCs: Local climate action explored through in-depth country analyses: 2024 Report” (2024), and the UN-Habitat report “Enhancing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) through urban climate action” (2020). We thank the UNESCO Chair of Urban Resilience at the University of Southern Denmark for providing access to the urban content database of NDCs. Our thanks also extend to the Knowledge and Innovation Branch at UN-Habitat for developing the AI tool.

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Executive summary

Record recognition of cities in national climate plans

NDCs 3.0 place cities at the heart of climate strategy.

The majority of new NDCs now feature well-developed urban content, with concrete measures across both mitigation and adaptation. Amid pressure from converging global crises affecting cities – such as housing and climate instability – this represents a decisive shift toward stronger, action-oriented urban policy.

The latest analysis of NDCs 3.0 reveals three major trends:

1 Record recognition of cities in NDCs 3.0, with a rise in ambition and quality.

Of the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025, 102 (81 per cent) include well-developed urban measures (A and B grade NDCs) – a significant leap from just 49 per cent in the second generation NDCs. While low to no-scoring NDCs were most common in NDCs 2.0, the opposite is true for NDCs 3.0. Nearly two-thirds of NDCs (77 of 128) have strengthened their urban content, with NDCs from Brazil, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, and the Russian Federation advancing by three full grade levels (from no urban content to A). NDCs 3.0 better reflect how cities experience climate risks, clearly articulate the sectoral responses required to address them, and more effectively map out the means to implement them (see global picture, pp. 12-13).

2 Sectoral priorities are anchored in cities, with a sharp rise in housing and informal settlements.

NDCs are moving from generic mentions of urban issues toward specific, actionable responses. The majority of NDCs (81 per cent) now explicitly integrate cities into their mitigation and adaptation strategies, with the overall volume of concrete measures increasing by 60 per cent compared to the previous cycle.

- **Adaptation:** Priorities include ecosystems and biodiversity (88 of 128 NDCs), infrastructure (74 NDCs), and water management (59 NDCs).
- **Mitigation:** Focus areas include transport and mobility (90 of 128 NDCs), emphasising electric vehicles and mass transit, followed by energy (68 NDCs), with a focus on renewable energy and energy-efficient urban infrastructure, and the built environment (65 NDCs).

Recognition of critical and emerging priority areas, such as housing and informal settlements, and urban loss and damage, is growing.

Half of the submitted NDCs 3.0 now reference housing in an urban context (up from 34 per cent). These sectors are increasingly framed as vulnerable systems that heighten climate risk, requiring targeted adaptation to protect the most exposed populations. Simultaneously, urban loss and damage is gaining traction as a distinct policy area. While most NDCs address loss and damage mechanisms at the national level, 33 per cent now specifically apply them to the urban context. These entries focus on responding to systemic urban failures, including mass displacement and the destruction of critical infrastructure (see thematic deep dives on pp. 18-19 and pp. 28-29).

3 Concrete means of implementation are being defined.

As the scope of climate response expands, so do the mechanisms for delivery. Approximately 77 per cent (98 NDCs) now reference multilevel governance, marking a transition from top-down planning to integrated systems that connect national, regional, and municipal actors. Financial strategies are also maturing: 37 per cent (47 NDCs) cite specific urban finance mechanisms, outlining frameworks for blended finance, public-private partnerships, and results-based grants to leverage private capital alongside public budgets.

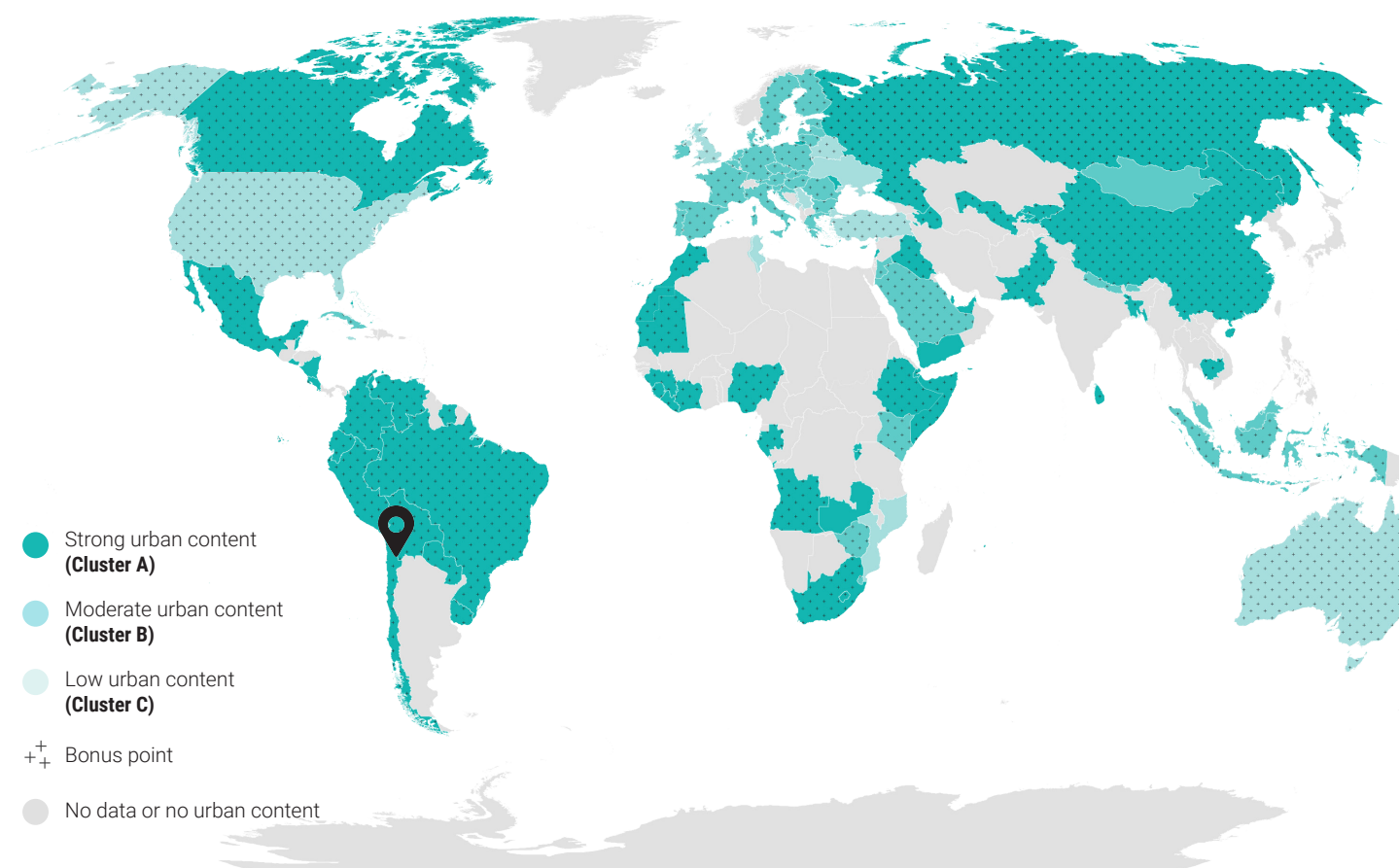
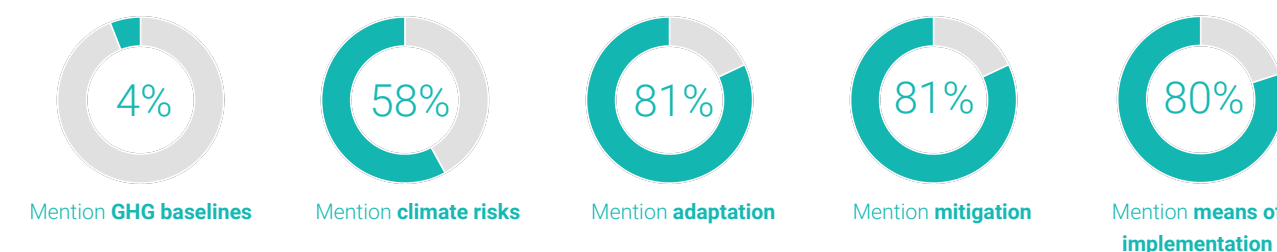
The analysis of 128 NDCs 3.0 confirms a positive trend and highlights that cities are now a significant feature of national climate planning.

This report analyses the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted on the UNFCCC website by 31 December 2025. It provides an update to the report “Urban Content in the NDCs 3.0: a global snapshot for COP30”, which examined 67 NDCs submitted by October 15, 2025. A final, detailed analysis will be presented at WUF13 in May 2026, covering all submissions received by March 2026. This will enhance understanding of the evolution of urban ambition and help identify pathways for effective implementation (see pp. 34-35).

Background: How urban content was measured?

Urban content was measured using a framework developed by UN-Habitat, SDU Resilience, and UNDP (2025). Each NDC is analyzed against three main components: urban baselines (urban greenhouse gas emissions and/or climate risks), mitigation and adaptation challenges, and mitigation and adaptation responses. NDCs scored from A-C depending on how many of these elements (baseline, challenge, response) were present. If NDCs included urban means of implementation, they scored a bonus point (marked by a +).

Out of 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



SHOWCASING URBAN CONTENT: Brazil's mitigation responses...



“Existing public policy instruments focus on modal shift towards public transportation and active mobility, as well as on promoting integrated and sustainable urban planning, such as the Green and Resilient Cities Plan.”

Total urban content included out of Baseline, Challenges, Responses	Rating of NDC		Bonus if implementation is included	Urban content in NDCs 3.0	Change
3/3 actions	A	STRONG	A+	61 or 48% of NDCs	+ 69%
2/3 actions	B	MODERATE	B+	43 or 34% of NDCs	+ 59%
1/3 actions	C	LOW	C+	12 or 9% of NDCs	- 33%
0/3 actions	-	No urban content	-	12 or 9% of NDCs	- 74%

A turning point for climate action

Why urban content in NDC 3.0 matters

Cities and climate change. In just over a century, cities have moved from the margins of human settlement to its centre. Today, more than half of the global population lives in urban areas, and by 2050 that figure will rise to nearly six billion people, or about 70 per cent of humanity. This marks the Urban Age: a period in which economies, infrastructure, and societies are organized primarily through cities, making urbanization one of the most powerful forces shaping global development (DESA, 2008; Urban Age Programme, n.d.).

Cities generate prosperity and innovation, but also environmental stress. They consume up to 75 per cent of global energy and produce approximately 70 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions (IEA, n.d.). These emissions stem from entrenched systems such as fossil fuelled

“
How cities are planned, financed, and governed in the years ahead will shape the pace and effectiveness of both mitigation and adaptation”

transport (IEA, 2020), carbon-intensive construction (IEA, 2019), linear production and consumption models (World Bank, 2018), and expanding urban footprints that displace natural ecosystems (UN-Habitat, 2020). Together, these factors create an urban metabolism that sustains economic growth while increasing planetary pressure (Wolman, 1995).

Climate change is exacerbating the housing crisis. At the same time, cities are among the most exposed environments to climate impacts. Around 70 per cent of urban residents already experience risks such as flooding, extreme heat, and water scarcity (CPI, 2021). For the one billion people living in informal settlements, these threats are particularly acute (UN-Habitat, 2024). Climate change compounds existing pressures, including infrastructure deficits and inequality. It tests the resilience of entire urban systems, creating critical pressure points – such as the housing crisis – that demand the mobilization of resources and

coordinated action across levels of government. How cities are planned, financed and governed in the years ahead will shape the pace and effectiveness of both mitigation and adaptation, and recognizing the central role of cities in both the drivers of climate change and its solutions is essential to meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement and enabling a just transition to a more sustainable future.

Turning cities into solutions. Cities are both a major source of emissions and a critical part of the solution. They concentrate the people, resources, and institutions that can translate global ambition into practical action. They are also the settings where climate and development goals intersect most directly, enabling efforts to reduce emissions, build resilience, and improve equity to advance together (UN-Habitat, 2020). Urban solutions to the climate crisis exist. Renewable energy systems, efficient buildings, sustainable mobility, and circular construction could reduce urban greenhouse gas emissions by up to 90 per cent by 2050, while also improving public health and creating new jobs (IPCC, 2023). Nature-based solutions, early-warning systems, and resilient housing and infrastructure can protect lives and strengthen communities (UN-Habitat, 2024).

“
Cities require around 4.5 trillion US dollars per year in investment through 2030, yet current flows are far below that level”

yet current flows are far below that level (CDP, 2024). Local governments lack the authority, data, or institutional tools to plan and deliver climate action, and most cities need technical assistance to prepare projects and build bankable investment pipelines (UN-Habitat, UNDP, SDU, 2024). Addressing these challenges requires coordinated national systems that connect ambition with delivery. Nationally Determined Contributions provide the main framework through which this can be achieved.

Urban content in Nationally Determined Contributions. Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are the central mechanism of the Paris Agreement. They define how each country will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to climate impacts, and mobilize finance, capacity, and technology to achieve these goals. Updated every five years, they serve as both international commitments and as national policy frameworks that determine how ambition is translated into action. Urban content within NDCs reflects how well these frameworks foreground the role of cities and support local delivery. Around 70 per cent of climate solutions depend on decisions made by local and regional governments, yet

“
Around 70 per cent of climate solutions depend on decisions made by local and regional governments, yet without explicit reference to cities, national strategies often remain disconnected from the realities of implementation”

without explicit reference to cities, national strategies often remain disconnected from the realities of implementation (Local 2030, n.d.). Tracking urban content enables measurement of this alignment and helps ensure that NDCs are designed effectively, with local delivery in mind. To be considered an NDC with strong urban content, it is critical to identify urban baselines (urban GHG emissions and climate risks), to clearly define the mitigation and adaptation challenges that cities face, outline specific responses to those challenges, and include the means of implementation to deliver them (UN-Habitat, 2025). In second-generation NDCs, urban content remained uneven: A 2024 study by UN-Habitat, UNDP, and SDU Resilience (2024) found that 73 per cent of second-generation NDCs contained no, low, or only moderate urban content. Few included measurable urban targets, clarified roles for subnational authorities, or established pathways to channel finance to city-level projects. Strengthening urban content, therefore, remains essential to closing the gap between national ambition and local delivery.

NDC 3.0 is a turning point. Momentum has been steadily building to embed cities within national climate planning. Past COP decisions

“
The roll out of NDC 3.0 stands at a decisive moment for global climate action”

have underscored the importance of multilevel collaboration, while COP initiatives, such as the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) for Climate Action, the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the next Generation (SURGe) initiative and the Baku Continuity Coalition have strengthened political commitment to localising climate action. Across these efforts, one message has become clear: achieving global climate goals can be fast-tracked through multilevel collaboration and partnerships, and the inclusion of cities and urban actors.

Against this backdrop, the rollout of NDC 3.0 stands at a decisive moment for global climate action. Countries are shifting from setting targets to implementing them, translating ambition into the policies, investments, and governance systems that will determine outcomes on the ground. Integrating cities into these frameworks is central to achieving that transition.

This report provides the second glimpse into how this shift is taking shape. By analysing the urban content of second- and third-generation NDCs from 128 Member States that had submitted revisions by 31 December 2025, it tracks how references to urban baselines, challenges, responses, and means of implementation have evolved between NDC 2.0 and NDC 3.0. In doing so, it captures the early signals of progress and the remaining gaps as countries work to align national ambition with local delivery.



Bringing cities into focus in NDCs 3.0

How the 128 NDCs 3.0 were analyzed

Methodology: Building on the 3-step guide

This report, “Urban Content in NDC 3.0 – A snapshot of 128 NDCs”, builds directly on UN-Habitat’s 2025 publication *Seizing the urban opportunity: A 3-Step guide for strengthening Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) 3.0*. The guide introduced a clear, replicable framework to help countries assess and strengthen the integration of cities into their NDCs. It emphasized that strong “urban content” requires clarity on evidence, challenges, responses, and the mechanisms that enable delivery. It also emphasized that in order to produce content that is meaningfully aligned with local realities, it should be the product of multilevel, multistakeholder collaboration. The process is as follows:

Table. A summary of the 3-step guide

STEP 1. ASSESS	Review existing urban content in second-generation NDCs and related national and subnational policies. Map the current state of multilevel partnerships and institutional frameworks.		Stocktake and context mapping
STEP 2. PREPARE	Build and align relationships between national and local stakeholders through structured consultations to ensure institutional readiness for implementation.		Strengthen coordination
STEP 3. CO-DESIGN	Combine evidence and partnerships to create an implementation-ready NDC by defining urban baselines (GHGs and climate risks), identifying mitigation and adaptation challenges , outlining responses to those challenges, and integrating means of implementation .		Develop actionable NDCs

The framework, therefore, asks four key questions that together determine the quality of urban content within NDCs:

Table. An outline of the scoring criteria

Criterion	Definition	Examples of evidence in NDCs
Baseline	Does the NDC identify an urban baseline, such as GHG emissions or climate risks?	City-level GHG inventories, climate-risk maps, vulnerability data
Challenge	Does it describe specific urban challenges linked to mitigation or adaptation?	Energy use, housing deficits, heat risk, transport emissions
Response	Does it outline urban responses, such as policies, measures, or interventions?	Building codes, cooling plans, public transport, greening
Means of Implementation	Does it explain how these actions will be delivered?	Finance, governance, partnerships, technical assistance

Each NDC is assessed based on the number of these four core components it includes.

Table. A summary of the scoring methodology

Total urban content included out of Baseline, Challenges, Responses	Rating of NDC		Bonus if implementation is included
3/3 actions	A	STRONG	A+
2/3 actions	B	MODERATE	B+
1/3 actions	C	LOW	C+
0/3 actions	-	No urban content	-

This approach converts qualitative evidence into quantitative insight, allowing comparisons across NDC revision cycles. It provides a simple, transparent way to evaluate the extent to which urban priorities are embedded in national climate frameworks.

From manual assessment to scalable analysis

To apply this scoring system consistently across a growing number of submissions, UN-Habitat developed an AI-enhanced methodology capable of analyzing hundreds of pages of policy text quickly and systematically. Using natural language processing (NLP), the tool extracts, classifies, and scores relevant text from each NDC against a set of priority urban indicators, which include major climate risks (e.g. floods, droughts, sea level rise), critical mitigation and adaptation sectors (e.g. energy, waste management, transport), and various means of implementation (e.g. multilevel governance, finance, capacity-building)¹. Each indicator was coded into prompts that the AI tool used to extract and classify text from NDCs.

For this report, the tool was applied to all 128 NDCs 3.0 published by December 31, 2025, alongside a retrospective analysis of second-generation submissions, providing a basis for trend comparison. The previous Snapshot Report titled “Urban Content in NDC 3.0 – A global snapshot for COP30” analysed second- and third-generation NDCs from 67 Parties that had submitted revisions by October 15, 2025.

Table. A summary of the AI-workflow

Step		Process	Description
1	Indicator database	Foundation	Structured indicators covering baselines, risks, mitigation, adaptation, and MOI.
2	Text extraction	Data capture	NLP scans NDCs to identify relevant text segments.
3	Classification	Organization	Extracts sorted into sub-indicators (e.g., mitigation sectors, adaptation themes).
4	Scoring	Quantification	The tool applies the A–C (+) system based on detected elements.
5	Aggregation	Synthesis	Scores are compiled to generate national, regional, and global trends.

Levels of analysis

The resulting data and analysis are therefore based on two levels: the ‘extract’ level and the ‘global’ level. ‘Extracts’ refers to the actual text within the NDC that has been extracted, classified, and scored by the AI. The extract level enables us to assess the quality and volume of urban content within the total NDC dataset, as it includes sentences and paragraphs extracted directly from the NDCs. The global level considers the dataset as a whole and includes statistical commentary on scores, key indicators, and general themes. In the report, ‘extract’ always refers to the content itself, while ‘global’ refers to the dataset as a whole.

Caveats and next steps

The analysis presents an early application of UN-Habitat’s AI-enhanced analysis methodology and should be interpreted as an initial indication rather than a definitive result. All extracted information has been reviewed through targeted human verification, but it is important to note that the current tool remains a beta release and, whilst delivering very strong analytics, has known opportunities for incremental improvements in document recall and thematic classification. The findings within this report may be refined as the model is updated and as additional NDCs are added to the UNFCCC registry. Next steps will prioritize incremental gains in precision, reliability, and transparency – supported by clear model evaluations, confidence scores, and fine-tuning on more expansive human-verified training datasets. In addition, indicator definitions will be refined to ensure the capture of all edge cases – supporting more consistent outputs across regions, phrasing, document formats. A full report covering the complete NDC dataset – providing expanded regional and contextual analysis - is planned for mid-2026 and will contain a comprehensive technical methodology note. An external expert group will provide periodic guidance during this next phase of development.

¹ The indicators used build on the framework co-developed by UN-Habitat, the University of Southern Denmark (SDU.Resilience), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the support of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM). See *Urban content of NDCs: Local climate action explored through in-depth country analyses* (2024).



The global picture

NDCs 3.0 include a record number of climate responses in urban sectors

NDC 3.0 submissions reveal a decisive political shift: cities are increasingly recognized as central actors in national climate strategies.

Analysis of the 128 NDCs submitted by 31 December shows that the majority (81 per cent) present well-developed urban content (grade B-A), a significant rise from just 49 per cent in the previous cycle. This represents not only an increase in NDCs containing urban content but a sharpening focus on implementation strategies.

Mainstreaming urban action. NDCs 3.0 no longer mention cities in isolation; rather, they integrate cities and urban actors across climate risk analysis, adaptation, mitigation, and means of implementation. Consequently, the total mentions of cities across all NDCs have nearly doubled between the second and third generations NDCs.

Strong on risk, weak on baselines. While the narrative commitment is strong, technical gaps remain. Urban baseline information is superficial, with only 4 per cent of NDCs including urban greenhouse gas (GHG) emission baselines. Conversely, reporting on urban climate risk is robust, citing key challenges such as sea-level rise, floods, storms, and drought.

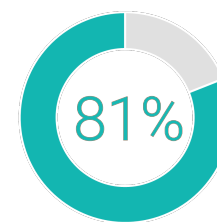
Sharpening focus on sectoral priorities. There is an increasing focus on sectoral priorities across both mitigation and adaptation, with many NDCs outlining multiple climate actions in cities.

- **Mitigation:** 104 NDCs now mention the role of cities in key mitigation sectors, up from 75 in NDC 2.0 (+39 per cent). Commitments include critical sectors such as transport and mobility (focusing on EVs, BRT, and metro systems); energy (renewable energy and energy-efficient infrastructure, including green buildings); and waste management.
- **Adaptation:** Similarly, 104 NDCs explicitly outline the role of cities in critical adaptation sectors, up from 60 in NDC 2.0 (+73 per cent). Priority sectors include infrastructure, ecosystems and biodiversity, and water management.
- **Emerging priorities:** Nature-based solutions for urban areas are included in 41 per cent of NDCs, focusing on urban greening, community parks, and mangrove restoration. Distinct urban dimensions of loss and damage are also emerging, as 33 per cent of NDCs now address loss and damage in the urban context, referencing water-related shocks (floods, storms), heat-related risks (droughts, wildfires), or systemic challenges such as displacement and infrastructure failure.

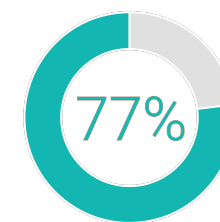
Moving from planning to implementation. The focus is shifting from planning to delivery. The number of NDCs citing enablers of urban climate action (including multilevel governance, finance, technology, and capacity-building) has increased significantly, with more than three-quarters (101 of 128 NDCs) mentioning at least one – up 63 per cent from the previous cycle.

- **Multilevel governance:** Cited in 77 per cent of submissions, this remains the most visible means of implementation.
- **Finance:** Whilst growing in representation, only 37 per cent of NDCs mention mechanisms to support financing for urban climate action.

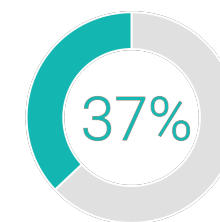
Out of 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



Have well-developed urban content



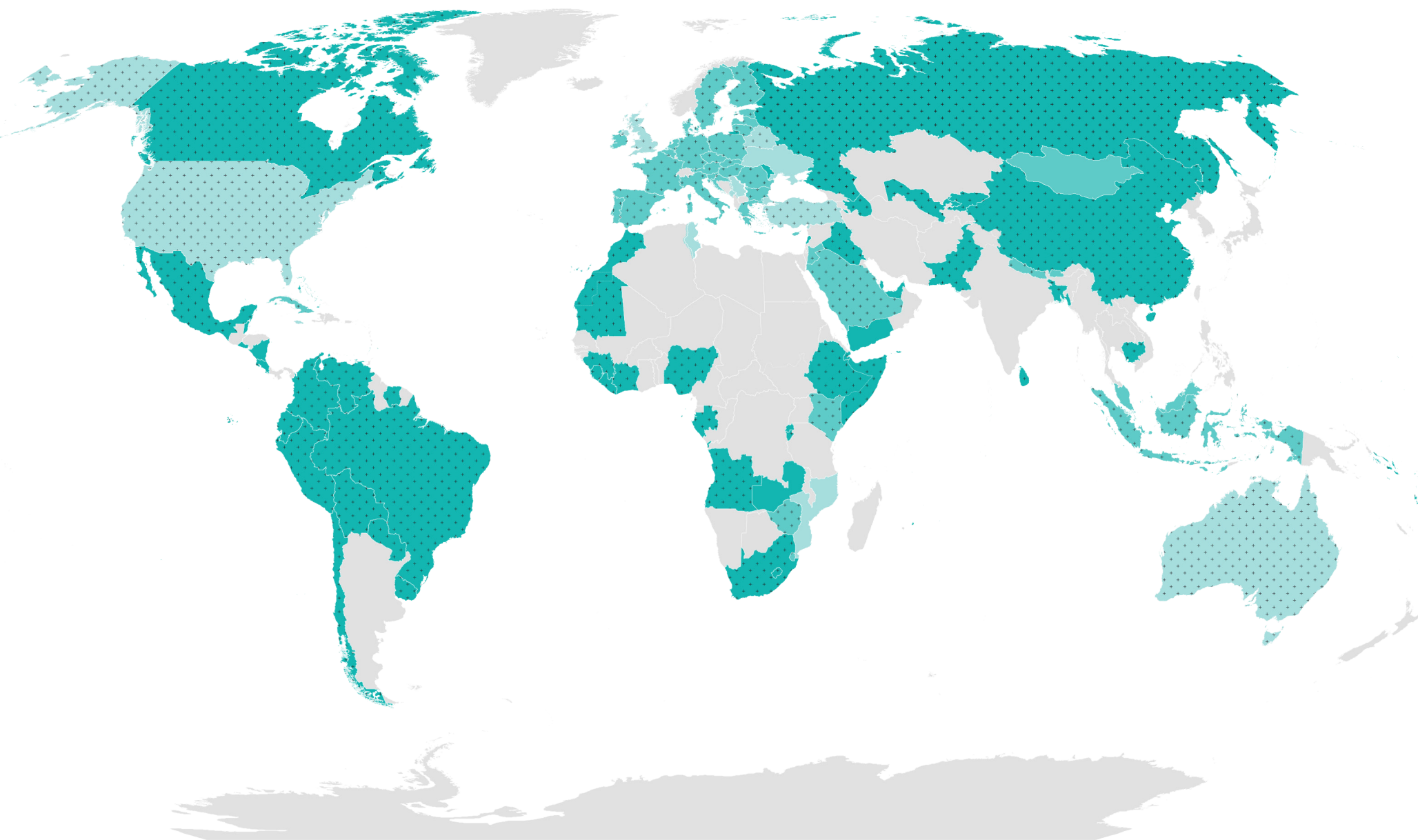
Include multilevel governance



Mention finance



Increase in well-developed (B-A grade) NDCs



Strong urban content (Cluster A)

Moderate urban content (Cluster B)

Low urban content (Cluster C)

No data or no urban content

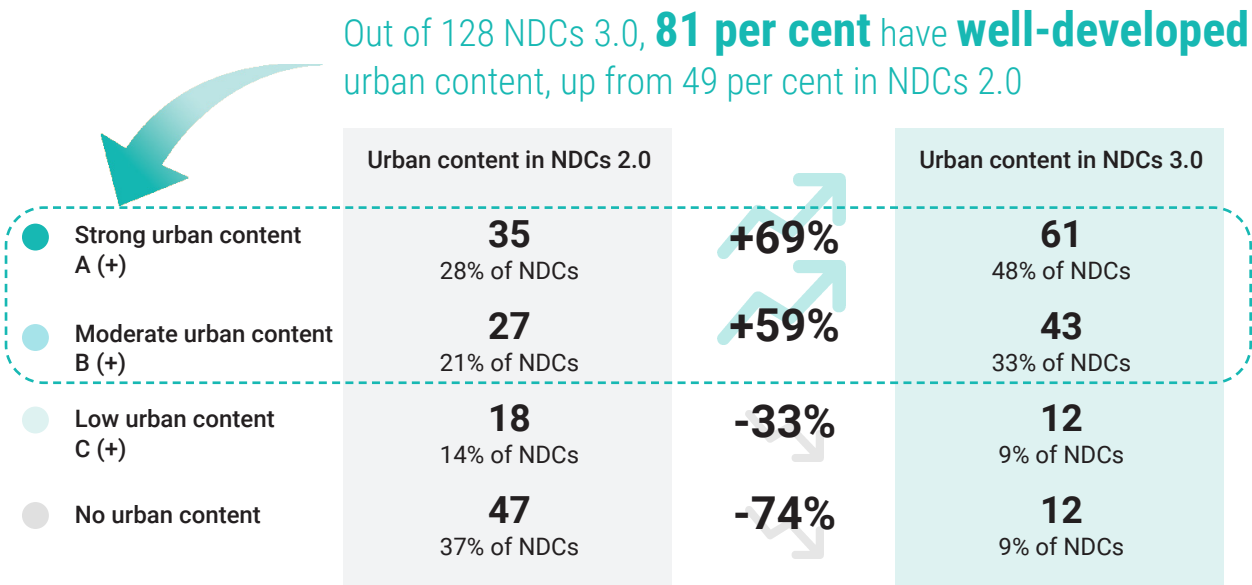
++ Bonus point

Tracking progress across NDCs

Transformative shift towards urban content in NDCs 3.0

Of the 128 NDCs submitted by the end of 2025, 81 per cent have well-developed urban content (B-A grade), up from 49 per cent in the second generation of NDCs. This means that almost two-thirds of all NDCs 3.0 achieved a higher category than their previous version, although positive trends are evident across all score categories:

- **A-A+ scoring categories:** Most significantly, the number of NDCs receiving the highest possible rating (A+) – reflecting the inclusion of means of implementation – nearly quintupled, rising from 11 to 54, a 391 per cent increase.
- **B-B+ scoring categories:** NDCs with moderate urban content (B/B+) increased by 59 per cent, increasing from 27 to 43 NDCs, highlighting a significant improvement in the global baseline.
- **C-no scoring categories:** NDCs with low urban content (C/C+) or no urban content dropped from 65 to 24 countries, and NDCs with no urban content at all plummeted by 74 per cent. This trend signals that the historical omission of urban areas in national climate planning is ending.
- **CHAMP endorsing countries:** Now endorsed by 77 countries and the European Union, the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) is a proven driver of urban climate ambition. Of the 60 signatories that have submitted NDCs 3.0, 90 per cent successfully increased their urban content scores, and signatories were 3.5 times more likely to achieve an A+ rating than non-signatories.



COUNTRY	NDC 2.0	NDC 3.0
Andorra*	B+	A
Angola	B	A+
Australia*	C	C+
Austria	No	B+
Azerbaijan*	B+	A+

Bahamas*	B+	A+
Bahrain	C	A+
Bangladesh*	C+	A+
Barbados	B+	B+
Belarus	No	C+
Belgium*	No	B+
Belize	A	A+
Bhutan*	B+	B
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)*	A+	A+
Brazil*	No	A+
Bulgaria*	No	B+
Brunei Darussalam*	B	C
Burkina Faso*	C	B+
Burundi	B	A+
Cabo Verde*	A+	A+
Cambodia	A+	A+
Canada*	A+	A+
Chile*	B+	A+
China	A+	A+
Colombia*	B+	A+
Costa Rica*	B+	A+
Côte d'Ivoire*	B	A+
Croatia	No	B+
Cuba	A	B+
Cyprus	No	B+
Czechia	No	B+
Denmark*	No	B+
Djibouti	A	A+
Ecuador	B+	A+
El Salvador*	A+	A+
Estonia*	No	B+
Eswatini*	B+	B+
Ethiopia*	A+	A+
European Union*	No	B+
Fiji	No	A+
Finland*	No	B+
France*	No	B+
Gabon	A+	A+
Germany*	No	B+

* CHAMP endorsing countries
The EU endorsed CHAMP in 2025. In addition, several EU member states have endorsed CHAMP, which are included in this lists.
These scores are subject to change pending update submissions.
The scores include the NDCs 3.0 submitted to the UNFCCC registry by 31 December 2025, as well as the NDCs 2.0 for comparison.

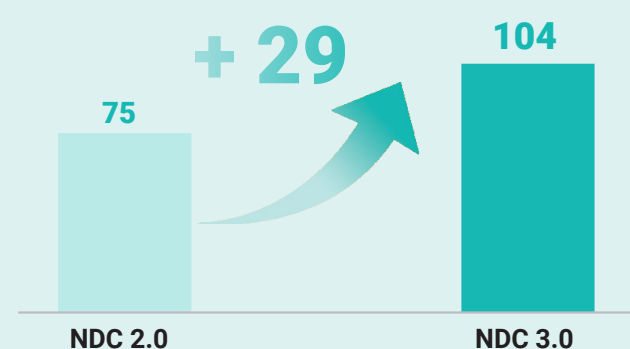
Greece	No	B+
Guinea	B+	A+
Holy See	A+	A+
Hungary*	No	B+
Iceland*	No	No
Indonesia	B+	B+
Iraq	A	A+
Ireland	No	B+
Italy*	No	B+
Jamaica*	No	C
Kazakhstan	C+	A
Japan*	B+	No
Kenya*	A	B+
Kyrgyzstan*	B	A+
Latvia	No	B+
Lebanon*	B+	A+
Liberia	C+	A+
Liechtenstein	No	No
Lithuania	No	B+
Luxembourg	No	B+
Malaysia	A	B
Maldives	B+	C+
Malta	No	B+
Marshall Islands	No	B+
Mauritania	A	A+
Mauritius	A+	A+
Mexico*	A	A+
Micronesia (Federated States of)	C	A+
Monaco	A	A
Mongolia*	C	B
Montenegro	B+	C
Morocco*	B+	A+
Mozambique	A	C
Nepal	C+	B+
Netherlands*	No	B+
New Zealand	No	No
Nicaragua*	A+	A
Nigeria*	No	A+
Niue	C	No
Norway*	No	No
Pakistan*	A+	A+
Panama*	A+	No

Paraguay*	A+	A+
Peru	C	A+
Poland*	No	B+
Portugal*	No	B+
Qatar	C	A+
Republic of Korea*	A+	No
Romania	No	B+
Republic of Moldova*	A+	A+
Russian Federation	No	A+
Rwanda*	A+	A+
Saint Lucia	No	No
Sao Tome and Principe	No	A+
Saudi Arabia	A	B+
Serbia*	No	C
Seychelles*	B+	No
Singapore	A+	B+
Solomon Islands	C+	A+
Somalia	C+	A+
Sierra Leone*	B	A+
Slovakia	No	B+
Slovenia	No	B+
Spain	No	B+
South Africa	A+	A+
Sri Lanka*	A+	A+
Suriname	A+	A+
Sweden*	No	B+
Switzerland	No	No
Thailand	C+	No
Tonga	C	B+
Türkiye*	A+	C+
Tuvalu	C+	B+
Ukraine*	C	C
United Arab Emirates*	A+	A+
United Kingdom*	No	C+
United States of America*	No	C+
Uruguay	A+	A+
Uzbekistan	C	A+
Vanuatu	B+	A+
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	B+	A+
Yemen*	No	A
Zambia	No	A
Zimbabwe	B+	B+

Scaling implementation and delivery

NDCs 3.0 are characterised by specific measures to address urban climate challenges, with many NDCs outlining multiple responses.

MITIGATION RESPONSES



81% of NDCs 3.0 include urban mitigation.

Urban mitigation is no longer a niche consideration but a standard feature of national climate planning. 104 out of 128 NDCs 3.0 mention at least one urban mitigation measure to cut emissions, an increase of 38 per cent since NDCs 2.0. In addition, many NDCs mention multiple mitigation measures, such as low-carbon transit, energy-efficient buildings, and waste-to-energy systems.

Record number of mitigation responses in NDCs 3.0, with top performers including **transport and mobility**, **energy**, and the **built environment** in cities.

70%

of NDCs 3.0 mention mitigations in **transport and mobility**

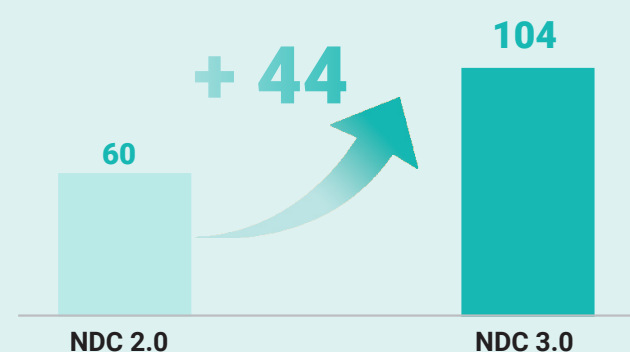
53%

of NDCs 3.0 mention mitigations in **energy**

51%

of NDCs 3.0 mention mitigations in the **built environment**

ADAPTATION RESPONSES



81% of NDCs 3.0 include urban adaptation.

Adaptation remains a critical entry point for urban climate action. 104 out of 128 NDCs 3.0 reference at least one concrete urban adaptation measure, up by 73 per cent since NDCs 2.0. Many NDCs mention multiple adaptation measures, and the number of suggested actions outlined across the NDCs has almost doubled, including responses such as nature-based solutions for flood management, urban heat island mitigation, and resilient water infrastructure.

Record number of adaptation responses in NDC 3.0, with top performers including **ecosystems and biodiversity**, **infrastructure**, and **water management** in cities.

69%

of NDCs 3.0 mention adaptations for **ecosystems and biodiversity**

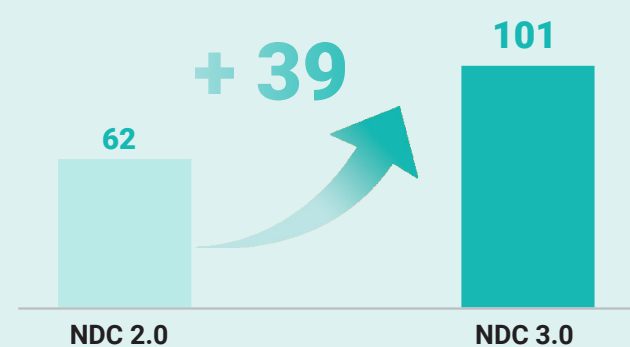
58%

of NDCs 3.0 mention adaptations for **infrastructure**

46%

of NDCs 3.0 mention adaptations for **water management**

MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION



80% of NDCs include means of implementation.

The shift toward implementation is significant. More than three-quarters of NDCs now include specific means of implementation such as multilevel governance, finance, and capacity building – an increase of 63 per cent since the previous cycle – citing specific mechanisms such as blended finance, public-private partnerships, and training programmes for local government.

Means of implementation are also being strengthened, with increased reference to enablers such as **multilevel governance**, **capacity-building**, and **finance** in cities.

77%

of NDCs 3.0 mention **multilevel governance**

44%

of NDCs 3.0 mention **capacity-building**

37%

of NDCs 3.0 mention **finance**

Housing & informal settlements

The housing and climate crises are intertwined. Housing and informal settlements sit at the centre of the urban climate and development nexus (UN-Habitat, 2024a; 2023a). More than a billion people already live in inadequate or insecure housing, and by 2050, up to three billion could be living in informal conditions. These communities are often the most exposed to floods, heat waves, and landslides, facing severe livelihood disruption from damaged infrastructure and displacement (UN-Habitat and UNDESA, 2023).

Transformative approaches to reduce risk and improve well-being include integrated upgrading that combines resilient design, secure tenure, nature-based flood and heat management, and community-driven delivery (Cities Alliance, 2023; Dodman et al., 2019). Linking land, tenure security, and building standards in national policies makes these approaches scalable and equitable, aligning new and existing housing with national climate goals (UN-Habitat, 2024b).

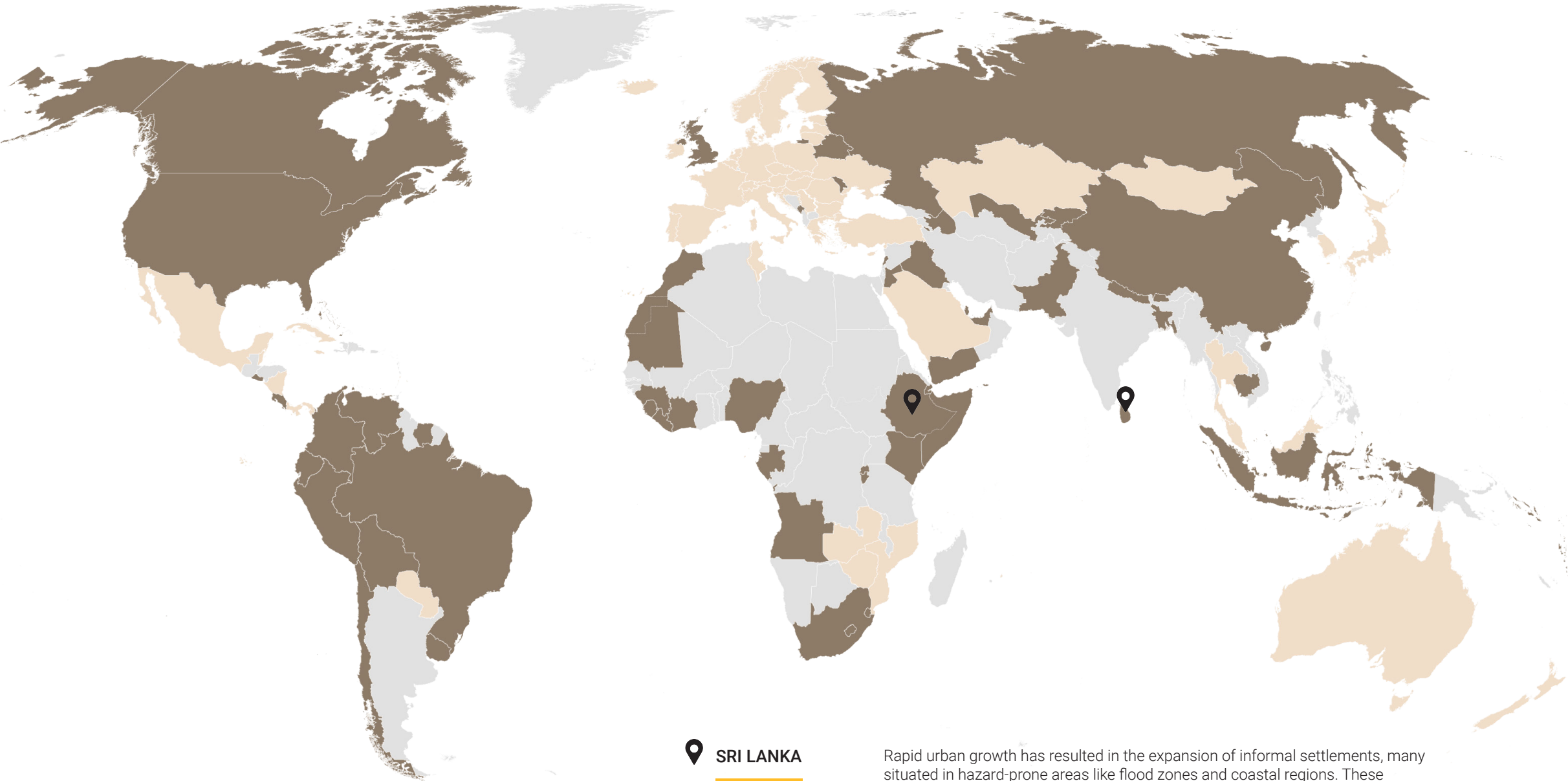
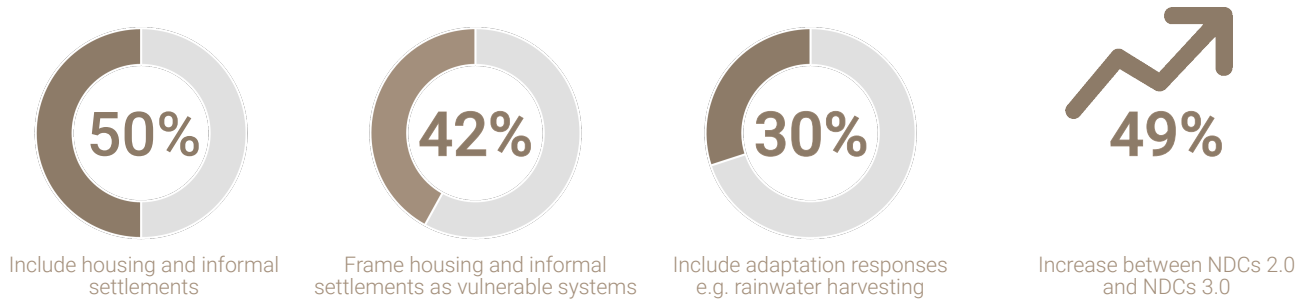
Housing and informal settlements in NDCs 3.0 Across the 128 NDCs analyzed, half explicitly reference housing and informal settlements (64 of 128) within an urban context – a 49 per cent increase since the previous cycle – indicating that the integration of housing and informality into national climate strategies has reached a critical tipping point. While the primary focus remains on climate risk and adaptation, the framing has become significantly more sophisticated:

- **Vulnerability framing:** Just under half of the NDCs referencing this sector (27 of 64, or 42 per cent) now frame housing and informal settlements as inherently vulnerable systems that require targeted adaptation responses.
- **Adaptation measures:** Moving beyond problem identification, 30 per cent of NDCs now include concrete adaptation measures, such as rainwater harvesting and resilient structural design.
- **Mitigation measures:** 13 per cent of NDCs now link housing or informality to emission-reduction opportunities, emphasizing circular materials and passive cooling strategies.

This widespread increase in active responses confirms that housing is no longer a peripheral issue, but a core component of national climate planning.

“50 per cent of NDCs 3.0 now mention housing and informal settlements.”

Of 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



NDCs referencing housing & informal settlements

- Mentioned
- Not mentioned
- No data

SRI LANKA

Rapid urban growth has resulted in the expansion of informal settlements, many situated in hazard-prone areas like flood zones and coastal regions. These communities are disproportionately affected by flooding, as was seen with the 2017 floods that caused extensive damage for the urban poor in Colombo and Gampaha.

ETHIOPIA

Between 2018 and 2024, the proportion of urban residents residing in slums decreased from 74 per cent to 54 per cent. This reduction is attributed to comprehensive urban development programs that enhanced housing standards and introduced climate-resilient infrastructure, such as improved drainage systems, reliable water supply, and improved sanitation facilities in underserved communities.



Urban heat

Cities at the epicenter of extreme heat

Extreme heat is one of the deadliest manifestations of climate change, and cities are at the epicentre. By 2050, an estimated 1.6 billion people will experience temperatures of at least 35°C, with the majority living in urban areas (World Bank and C40 Cities, 2023; UNEP, 2021). Due to the urban heat island effect and rapid land-cover change, cities are warming at roughly twice the global average rate, intensifying both chronic heat stress and acute heat waves (UNEP, 2021; IPCC, 2022). Heat-related mortality disproportionately affects vulnerable groups such as the elderly, infants and pregnant women, underscoring the dual challenge of protecting people while limiting emissions from inefficient cooling technologies (WHO, 2020).

Urban heat in NDCs 3.0

Reflecting its status as an immediate threat, urban heat prioritization has surged. Across the 128 NDCs analyzed, 60 per cent (76 of 128) now refer to urban heat in risk analysis or mitigation and adaptation strategies – a 138 per cent increase since the previous cycle. The framing of heat risk is becoming more specific. Four primary risk categories are emerging: droughts (25 per cent) and heatwaves (24 per cent) are the most frequently cited, followed by general temperature rise (21 per cent) and wildfires (7 per cent). Crucially, the analysis of this risk is maturing: just over a third (37 per cent) of NDCs describe physical exposure, a quarter (25 per cent) discuss inherent vulnerabilities, and 11 per cent specifically mention heat-related loss and damage.

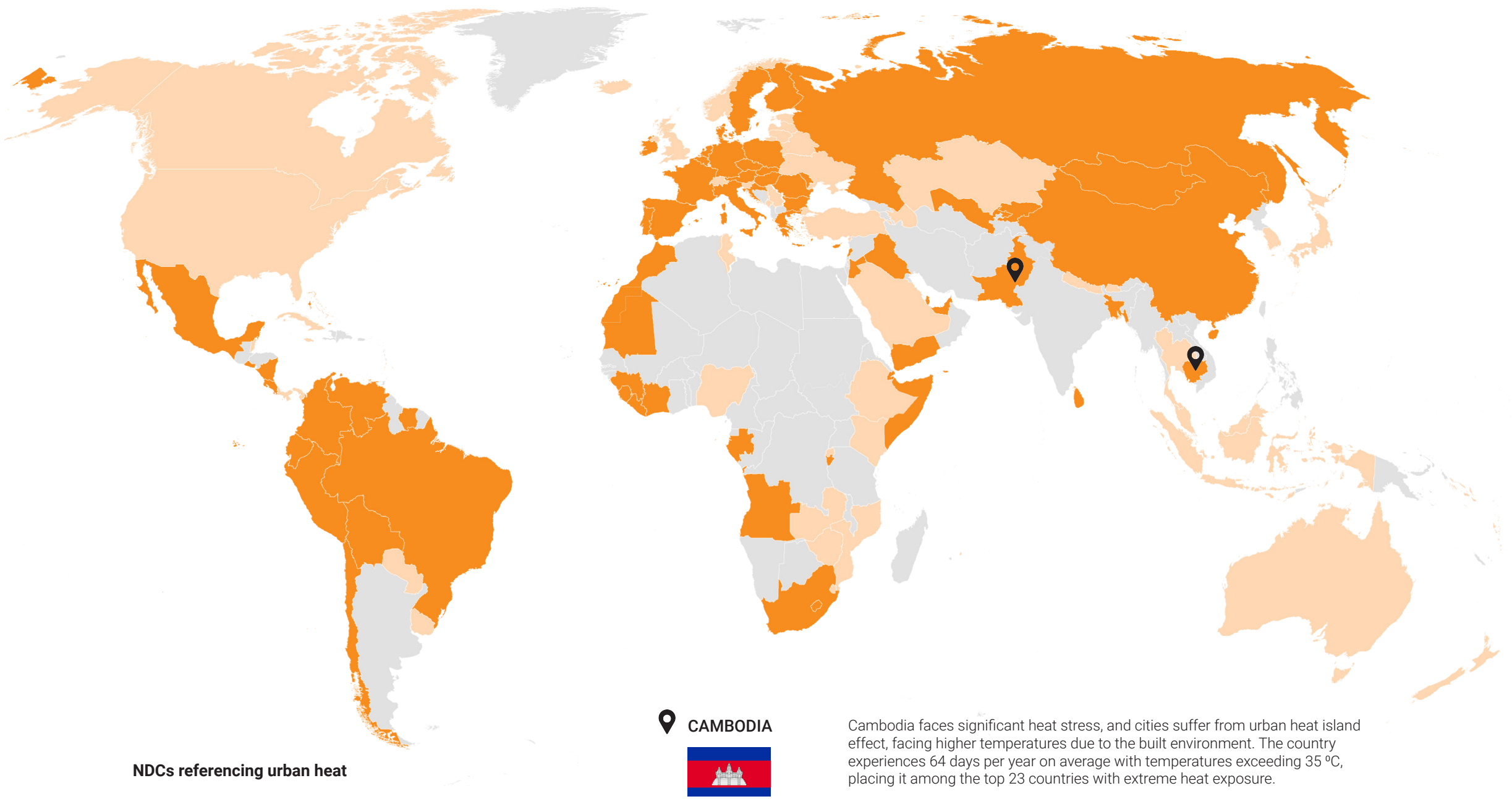
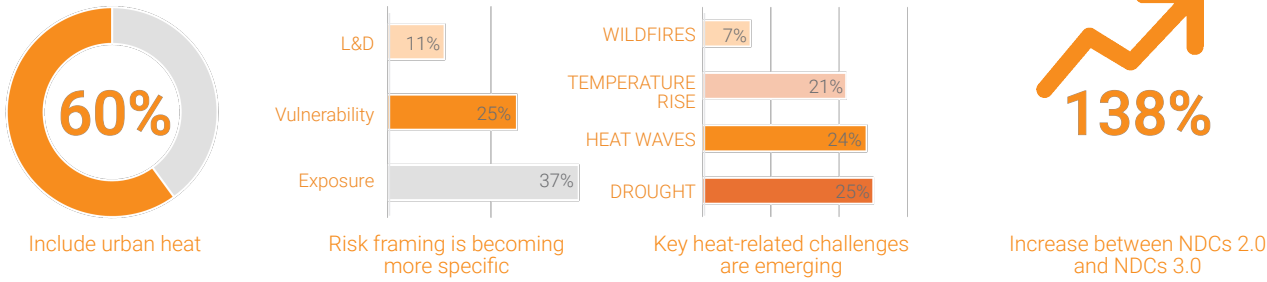
Response strategies are maturing in parallel, demonstrating a cross-cutting approach:

- **Adaptation:** Nearly half of urban heat references (49 per cent) focus on exposure and one-third (33 per cent) addressing vulnerability, while 17 per cent now link heat directly to loss and damage.
- **Mitigation:** 20 per cent link urban heat to mitigation efforts such as energy-efficient cooling and low-carbon urban design.

This widespread shift from passive risk identification to active cooling strategies confirms that urban heat management is now a critical pillar of national climate resilience.

“60 per cent of NDCs 3.0 include urban heat, more than double than NDCs 2.0.”

Of the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



Urban transport and mobility

Sustainable urban mobility shapes cities
The transport sector accounts for around 24 per cent of global CO2 emissions (IEA, 2023). As urbanization and economic growth accelerate, global mobility demand is projected to triple by 2050 (ITF, 2023). This trajectory places transport decarbonization – through modal shift, electrification, and demand management – as one of the single strongest levers for achieving the Paris Agreement goals.

However, decades of car-oriented development have locked many cities into high-emission pathways and chronic air pollution. Vulnerable populations who rely on walking, cycling, and public transport often face the most unsafe and polluted conditions, despite contributing the least to the problem (World Bank, 2022). Reversing these trends requires a fundamental shift toward people-centred mobility. Prioritizing active travel, shared transport, and mixed-use design can reduce emissions, cut congestion, improve public health, and ensure equitable access to opportunities.

Urban transport in NDCs 3.0
Reflecting this urgency, urban mobility has emerged as one of the most robustly integrated themes in the latest cycle. Across the 128 NDCs analyzed, over three-quarters (76 per cent, 96 of 128) now include the sector in risk analysis or mitigation and adaptation strategies – more than double the level seen in the previous generation.

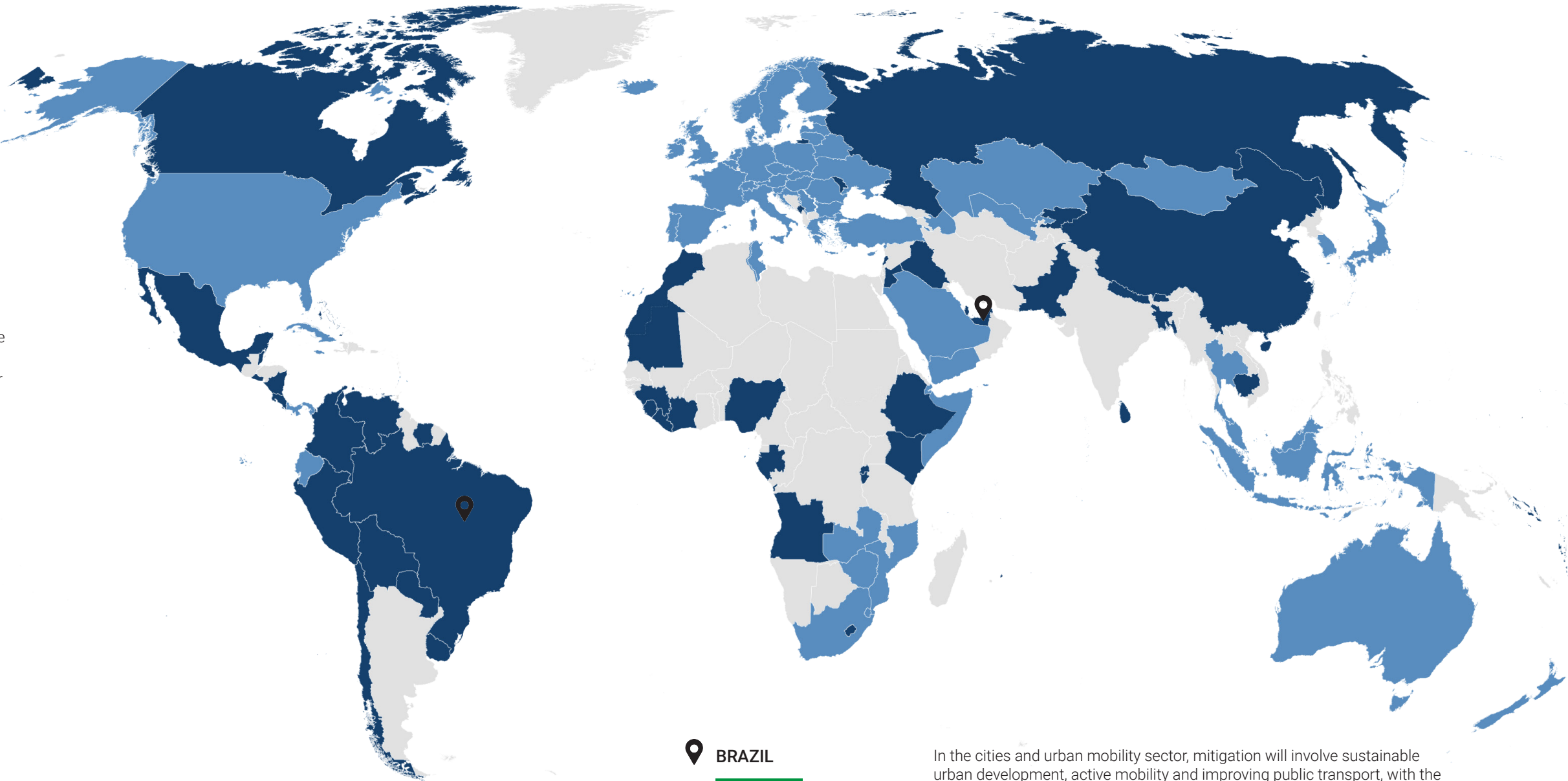
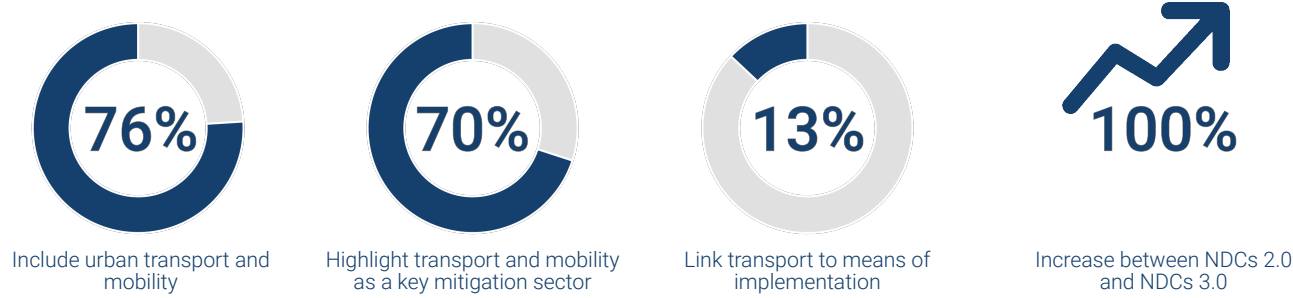
Crucially, NDCs 3.0 are moving from ambition to implementation. The sector is increasingly framed around concrete action plans rather than high-level goals:

- **Mitigation measures:** 70 per cent of all NDCs now include specific, actionable mitigation measures for urban transport – one of the highest rates of response-ready content across all urban themes. The majority of these references emphasize tangible solutions: expanding public transit networks, accelerating vehicle electrification, and promoting active travel infrastructure.
- **Means of implementation:** 13 per cent of NDCs now explicitly link transport goals to specific means of implementation, ensuring that ambition is backed by dedicated finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building.

This high level of integration confirms that sustainable transport is becoming a critical pathway for national climate delivery.

“Over three-quarters on NDCs mention transport and mobility.”

Of the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



NDCs referencing urban transport and mobility

- Mentioned
- Not mentioned
- No data

BRAZIL

In the cities and urban mobility sector, mitigation will involve sustainable urban development, active mobility and improving public transport, with the strong aim of reducing dependence on individual transportation. In parallel, the trends observed for urban mobility follow the logic of electrification and increased use of biofuels.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Ras Al Khaimah has launched new generation solar-powered bus shelters, using locally sourced materials, as part of the RAKTA plan 2023-2030. These shelters aim to encourage public transportation use and promote sustainable mobility...Sharjah has integrated 83 per cent of hybrid and eco-friendly vehicles into its taxi fleet, targeting 100 per cent by 2027.



Built environment

Building stock on the rise
Buildings and construction account for 37 per cent of global CO2 emissions, reaching a record 10 gigatonnes in 2022 (UNEP, 2023). Simultaneously, the global building stock is expanding rapidly: half of the buildings that will exist in 2050 are yet to be built, with most growth occurring in rapidly urbanizing regions of Africa and Asia.

The decisions made today will lock in either decades of high emissions or decades of climate resilience (IPCC, 2022). A transition to zero-carbon buildings requires coordinated action across policy, design, and materials. Retrofitting existing stock can drastically reduce energy demand, while resilience measures – such as natural cooling and thermal comfort strategies – protect lives and assets from escalating climate hazards (UN-Habitat, 2023).

Built environment in NDCs 3.0
Reflecting this critical role, the built environment remains a dominant theme in national planning. Across the 128 NDCs analyzed, over half (57 per cent, 73 of 128) now include the sector in risk analysis or mitigation and adaptation strategies – a 21 per cent increase from the previous cycle.

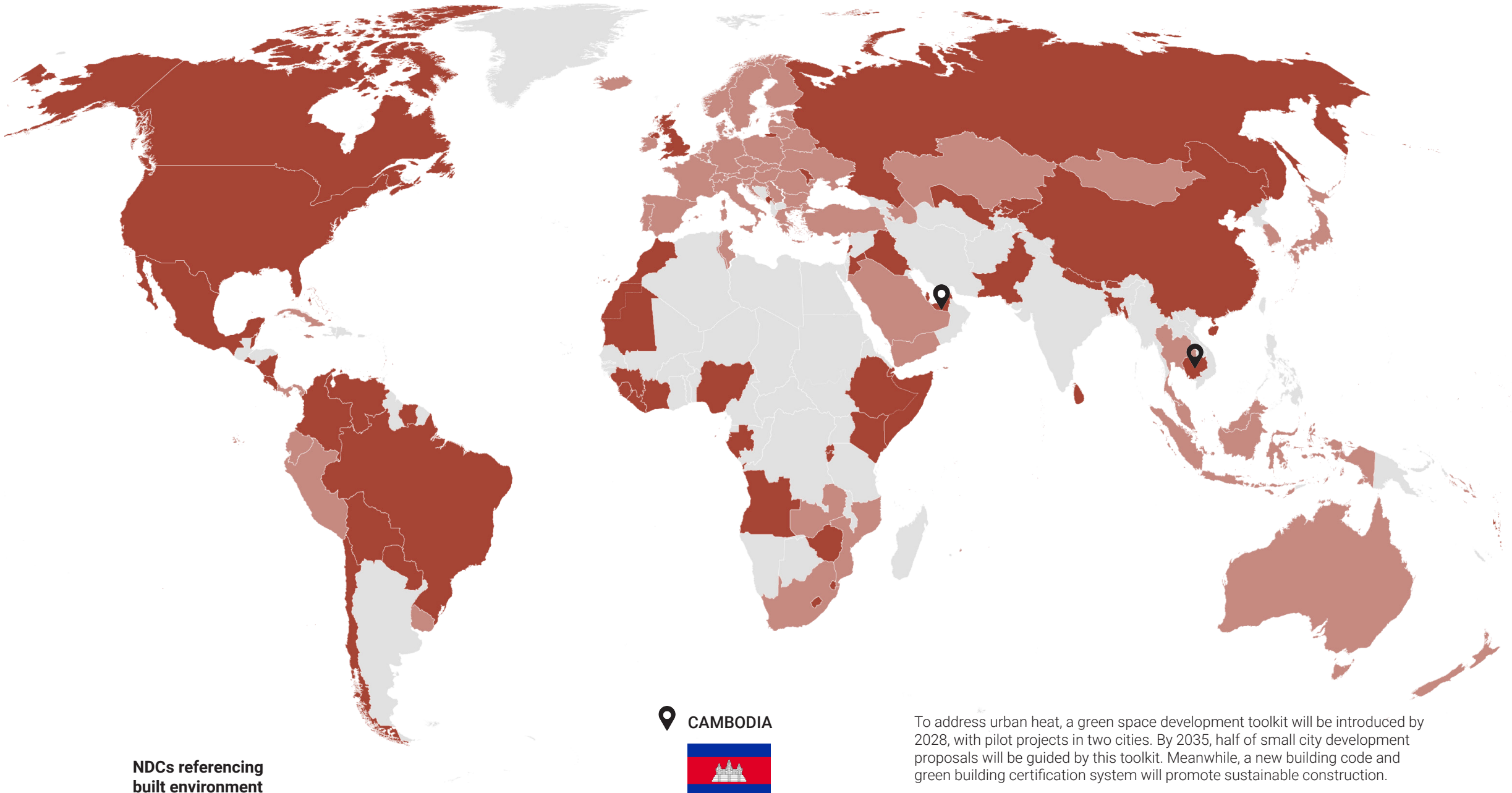
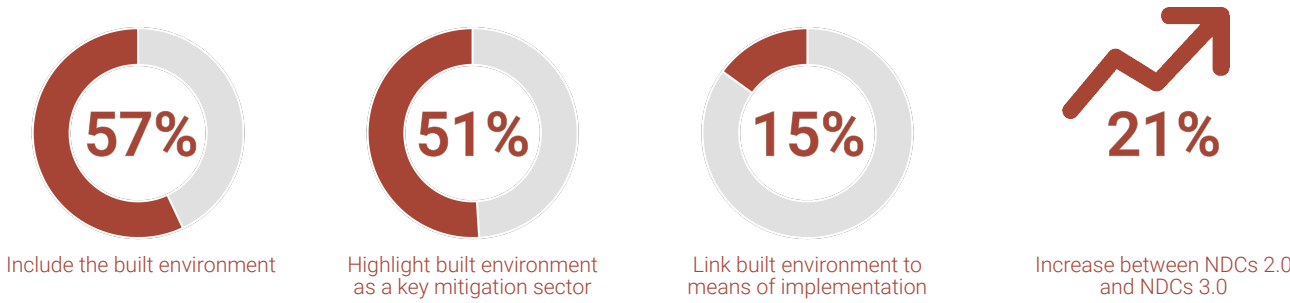
Crucially, NDCs are shifting from describing barriers to outlining specific actions, positioning the built environment as an implementation-ready sector:

- **Focus on mitigation actions:** National commitments are heavily focused on mitigation, with 51 per cent of NDCs outlining specific actions. These include improving energy performance, enforcing strict efficiency standards, and promoting circular construction materials.
- **Adaptation measures:** While less prevalent, adaptation commitments are becoming more concrete, focusing on resilient design, passive cooling, and the use of green roofs to moderate urban heat.
- **Means of implementation lagging behind:** A critical gap remains in support frameworks. Only 15 per cent of NDCs currently link these actions to specific means of implementation, such as finance and capacity building.

As the sector matures, bridging this gap through dedicated finance and technology cooperation will be essential to turning actionable building standards into widespread reality.

“Over half of NDCs 3.0 include the built environment in cities.”

Of the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



Urban water

Water challenges in cities

Many climate impacts manifest directly as water-related challenges, including flooding, sea-level rise, drought, and storms. In cities, this translates into growing pressure on water supply, drainage, and sanitation systems already strained by rapid urbanization and ageing infrastructure. Globally, climate change is making water scarcer and more polluted, creating cascading effects on health, ecosystems, and economic stability (UN-Water, 2023).

Urban water management is a frontline adaptation priority and an emerging opportunity for mitigation. Energy use in water pumping, treatment, and distribution accounts for a significant share of municipal emissions, while poorly managed wastewater releases potent greenhouse gases like methane. Integrated, climate-smart water strategies such as nature-based flood buffers, rainwater harvesting, and efficient treatment technologies can simultaneously reduce emissions and vulnerability (UN-Habitat, 2022).

Urban water in NDCs 3.0

Urban water remains a cornerstone of national climate planning. Across the 128 NDCs analyzed, urban water is included across risk analysis and mitigation and adaptation planning in 58 per cent of submissions (74 of 128), maintaining a similar level of prioritization as the previous cycle. What sets the sector apart in this generation is a clear shift toward execution. Concrete measures are outlined across both adaptation and mitigation in 52 per cent of NDCs, ranging from upgrading urban drainage networks and reinforcing coastal defences to methane capture from wastewater treatment.

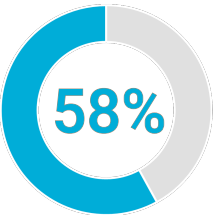
Overall, urban water stands out as one of the most institutionally developed and implementation-ready themes in the current NDC cycle:

- **Focus on risk:** Nearly half of the NDCs (42 per cent) that include content on urban water identify it as a key climate risk, with a primary focus on storm events (31 NDCs), droughts (27 NDCs), and sea-level rise (25 NDCs). Submissions increasingly link these hazards to the vulnerability of dense coastal settlements and strained drainage infrastructure.
- **Means of implementation:** Of the NDCs prioritizing urban water, the majority now explicitly link these actions to specific means of implementation, most notably finance, ensuring that water security goals are supported by the necessary investment frameworks.

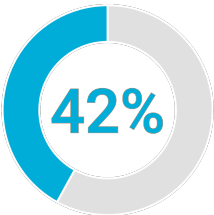


Urban water **remains a priority sector** in NDCs 3.0.”

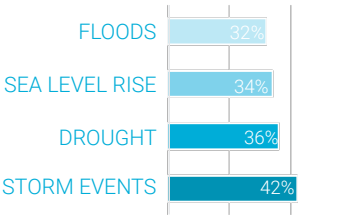
Of the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



Include urban water



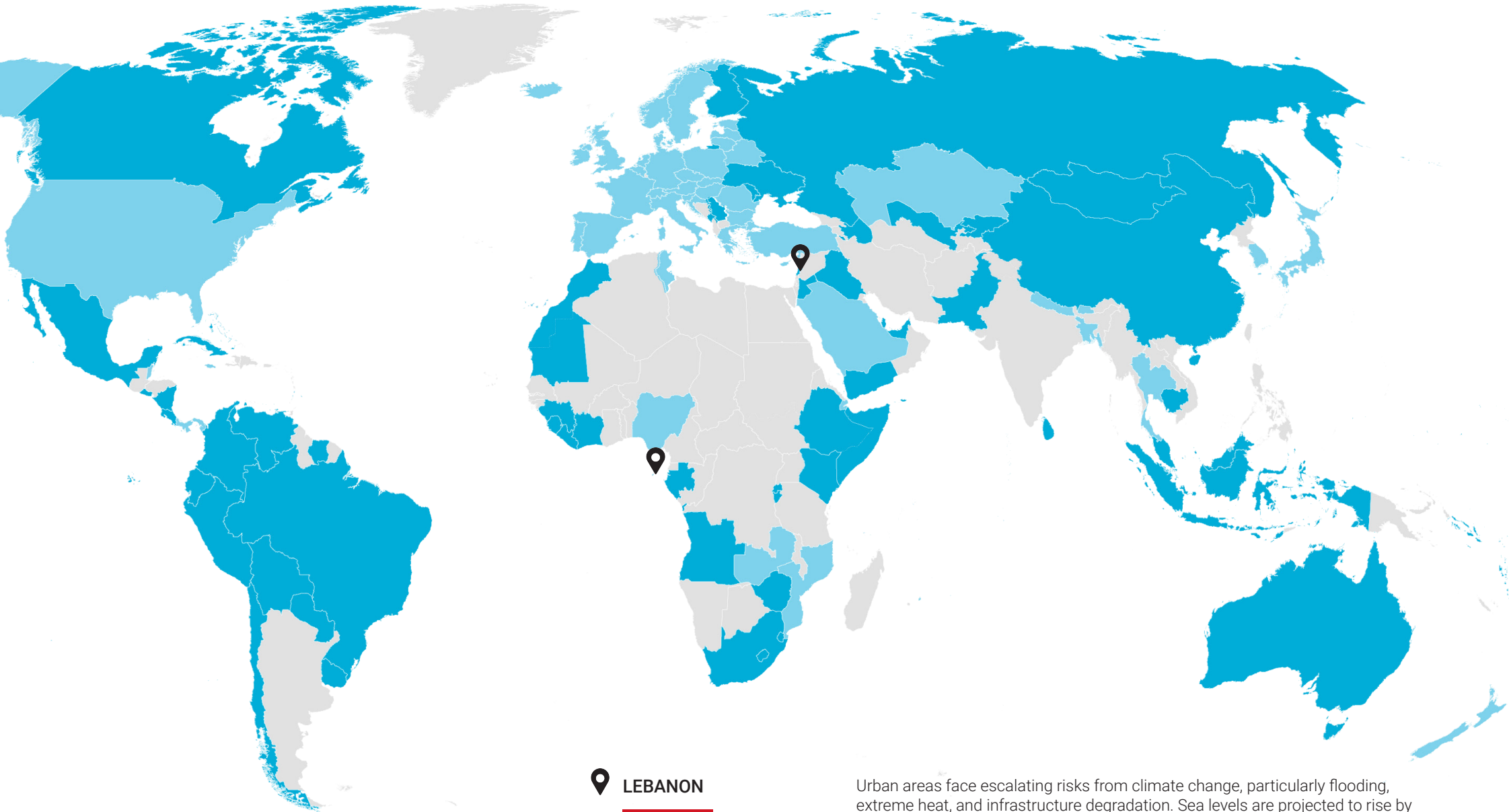
Highlight urban water as a key climate risk



Key water-related challenges are emerging



Increase between NDCs 2.0 and NDCs 3.0



NDCs referencing urban water

- Mentioned
- Not mentioned
- No data



LEBANON

Urban areas face escalating risks from climate change, particularly flooding, extreme heat, and infrastructure degradation. Sea levels are projected to rise by 30-80 cm by 2100, increasing coastal erosion, flooding and seawater intrusion. Flash floods are becoming more frequent, exacerbated by poor drainage systems and unplanned urban expansion.



SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

World Bank estimates indicate expected annual losses from flooding of 1.9 per cent of GDP in 2020, 2.8 per cent in 2050 and 4.1 per cent in 2080 if there is no adaptation...the costs of repairing damage and losses will far exceed investments in early adaptation. Investing in urban drainage, resilient agricultural practices, sustainable water management, coastal protection and early warning systems...



Loss and damage

Loss and damage in cities

Loss and damage represents the most severe expression of climate risk, where adaptation limits are breached, and impacts become irreversible. While often framed globally, cities are emerging as the epicentres of this crisis. Concentrating people, infrastructure, and economic activity, urban areas face compounded disruption from floods, storms, and heatwaves (UN-Habitat, 2023).

Urban losses span multiple dimensions. Economic impacts include damage to housing, transport, and energy systems, while non-economic losses encompass displacement, health crises, cultural erosion, and the breakdown of social fabric (IPCC, 2022). This burden falls disproportionately on Least Developed Countries (LDCs), where climate-related disasters have had tenfold greater economic impacts than in wealthier nations (UNOHRLLS, 2022).

Urban loss and damage in NDCs 3.0

There is growing recognition of cities as sites of irreversible impact. Across the 128 NDCs analyzed, a third (33 per cent) now explicitly identify urban settings as sites where climate impacts translate into significant loss and damage. Reporting on urban loss and damage is becoming more robust:

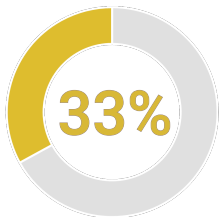
- **Climate risk drives loss and damage:** Of the NDCs that mention urban loss and damage, flooding is the most frequently cited driver (26 NDCs), followed by storm events (13 NDCs), droughts (11 NDCs), and land degradation (8 NDCs). The language remains grounded in systemic disruption, detailing damage to critical infrastructure and essential services.
- **Vulnerability inclusion:** 22 per cent of references now detail non-climatic stressors, such as forced displacement, migration, and the failure of ageing urban assets.
- **Means of implementation:** Moving from recognition to solutions remains a significant challenge. Currently, only 10 per cent of NDCs include direct measures to address urban loss and damage through specific policy, institutional, or financial mechanisms.

This emerging focus marks a crucial first step, but the gap between recognizing the problem and funding the solution remains significant.

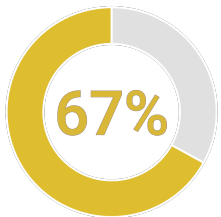
“

Urban loss and damage is included in 33 per cent of NDCs 3.0.”

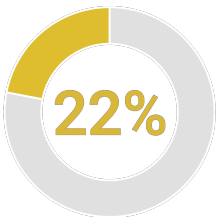
Of the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



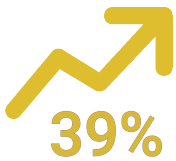
include loss and damage



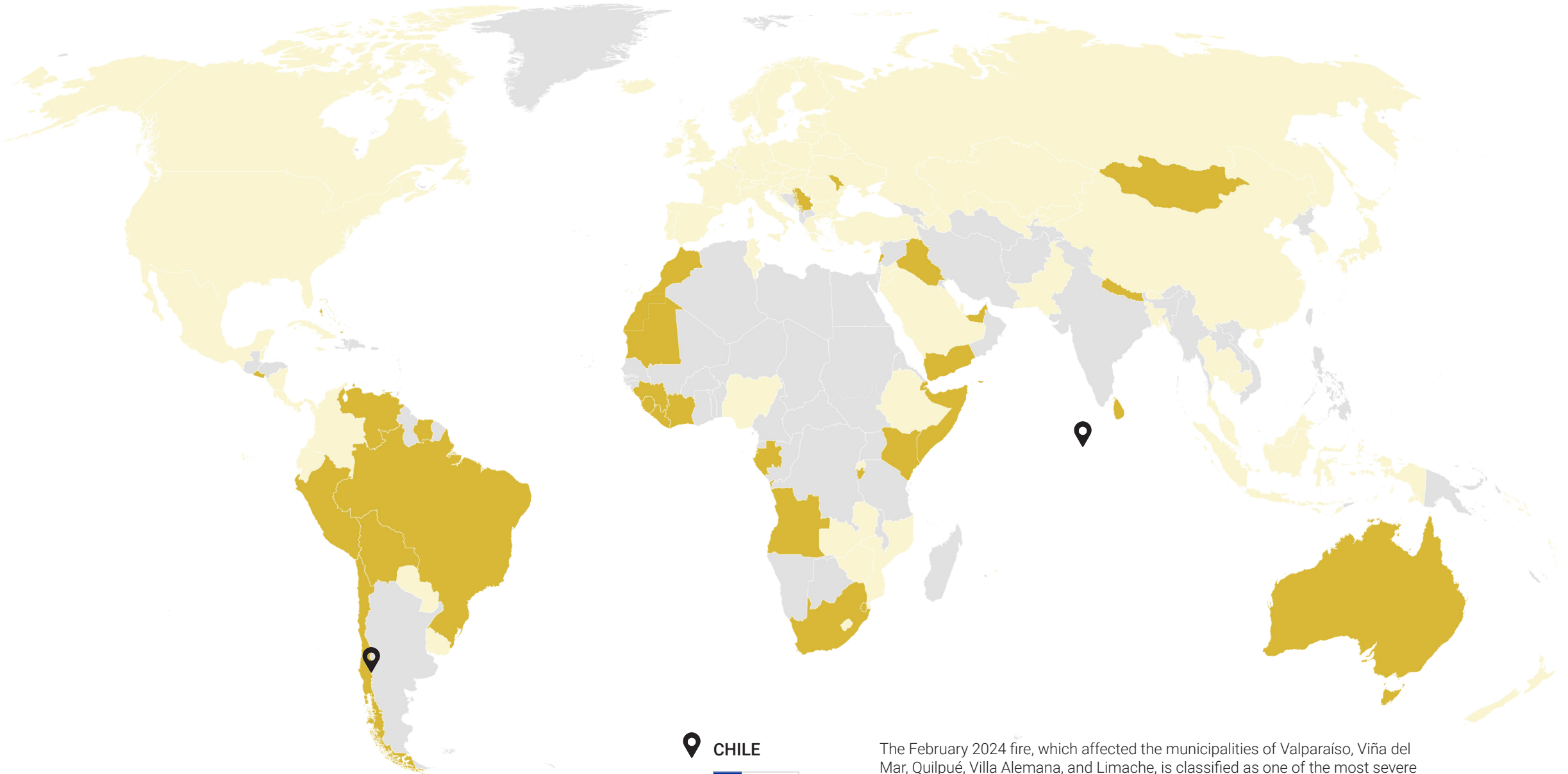
Mention flood-related loss and damage



Mention socio-economic loss and damage



Increase between NDCs 2.0 and NDCs 3.0



NDCs referencing urban loss and damage

- Mentioned
- Not mentioned
- No data



CHILE



The February 2024 fire, which affected the municipalities of Valparaíso, Viña del Mar, Quilpué, Villa Alemana, and Limache, is classified as one of the most severe in the last 30 years in Chile. This event consumed 9,215.9 hectares and resulted in 136 deaths and 3 presumed missing persons.



MALDIVES



In August 2024, prolonged rainfall across the country led to the declaration of a state of emergency, with around 200 properties affected and several households requiring temporary shelter. This was followed by a record amount of heavy rainfall within a 24-hour period, which flooded many areas of the capital city, Male' on 3rd January 2025...



Urban climate finance

Finance bridges ambition and action

While cities generate more than 80 per cent of global GDP, they receive only a fraction of total climate finance. Despite housing the largest concentration of climate risk and emissions, urban areas face a chronic investment shortfall. Global urban climate finance flows reached USD 831 billion in 2022, yet this remains far below the estimated USD 4.5 trillion required annually through 2030 to deliver mitigation and adaptation at scale (CCFLA, 2024).

Closing this gap requires structural reform across all levels of governance. Globally, multilateral funds and Just Energy Transition Partnerships need to establish direct subnational access windows. Nationally, fiscal decentralization and subnational climate funds are essential to empower local investment. Locally, better financial management, credit enhancement and blended finance instruments can attract private capital while protecting social equity (ICLEI and CDP, 2025).

Urban finance in NDCs 3.0

Across the 128 NDCs analyzed, urban climate finance has emerged as a significantly more visible priority. Just over a third of all NDC submissions (37 per cent) now explicitly reference urban finance or funding. This reflects a 61 per cent increase in global representation since NDC 2.0, signalling a growing consensus about the need for finance for urban climate ambition.

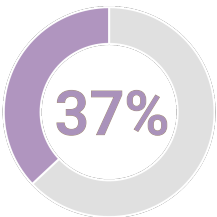
- **Finance recognition is growing:** While the recognition of urban climate finance is increasing in NDCs 3.0, finance remains less commonly cited as a delivery tool than other enablers, such as multilevel governance. This suggests that the integration of finance as a core, systematized component of national delivery is still in its early stages.
- **Evolving financial models:** The data suggests that a variety of financial models are being recognised in the NDCs, laying the groundwork for a more investable urban climate pipeline. Multiple NDCs are increasingly identifying blended finance structures, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), and results-based grants as the primary vehicles for investment in cities. urban investment.

Bridging the gap between these initial commitments and the trillions required for full implementation remains the defining challenge of this decade.



“Over a third of NDC submissions reference urban climate finance.”

Of the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



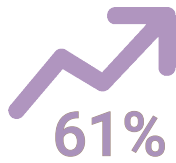
Include urban finance



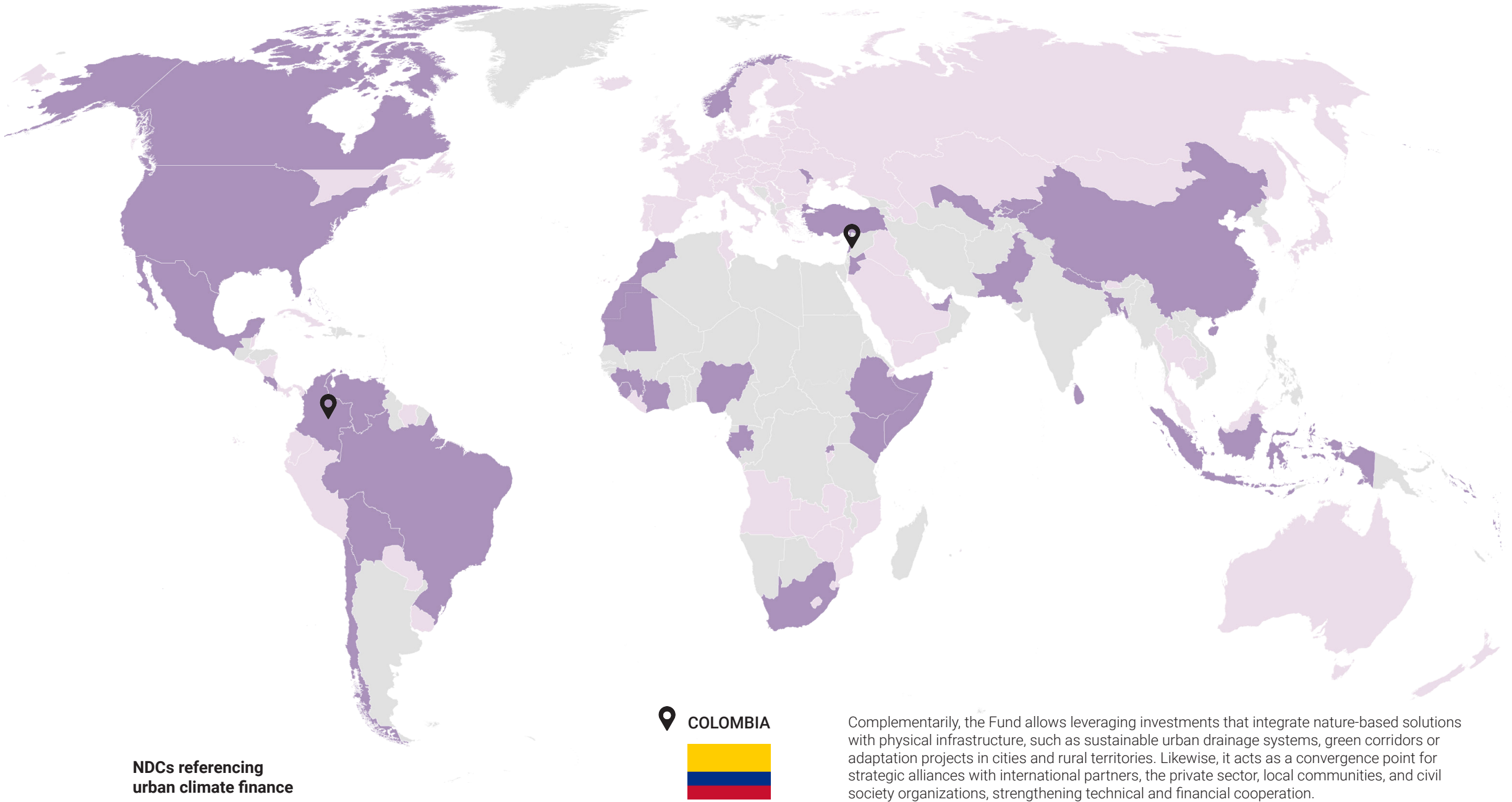
NDCs in total



Most cited means of implementation



Increase between NDCs 2.0 and NDCs 3.0



📍 COLOMBIA

Complementarily, the Fund allows leveraging investments that integrate nature-based solutions with physical infrastructure, such as sustainable urban drainage systems, green corridors or adaptation projects in cities and rural territories. Likewise, it acts as a convergence point for strategic alliances with international partners, the private sector, local communities, and civil society organizations, strengthening technical and financial cooperation.

📍 LEBANON

Secure investment and operational costs through a mix of municipal and national budgets, donor funds, low-interest loans, private operators, fees from waste generators, gate fees, and revenues from recycled materials. This might include economic instruments such as landfill/incineration taxes, product taxes, PAYT schemes, deposit-refund systems, extended producer responsibility, green public procurement, tax reliefs, and environmental funds to support waste hierarchy and financial sustainability.

Multilevel governance

Multilevel governance for climate action
Multilevel governance – the vertical and horizontal integration of decision-making – is a fundamental framework for operationalising climate commitments. Vertical coordination links national, regional, and municipal governments, ensuring that high-level targets are supported by aligned finance flows, policy frameworks, and reporting mechanisms. Horizontal coordination harmonises policies across key ministries (such as housing, transport, energy, and water), public- and private-sector entities, and civil society to improve efficiency and ensure policy coherence.

The importance of subnational actors has been consistently recognized in COP outcomes since the adoption of the Paris Agreement, supported by the advocacy of the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) constituency. Initiatives such as the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) and SURGe further reinforce the position of cities and regions, establishing them as essential partners in global climate governance (COP28 Presidency and UN-Habitat, 2023).

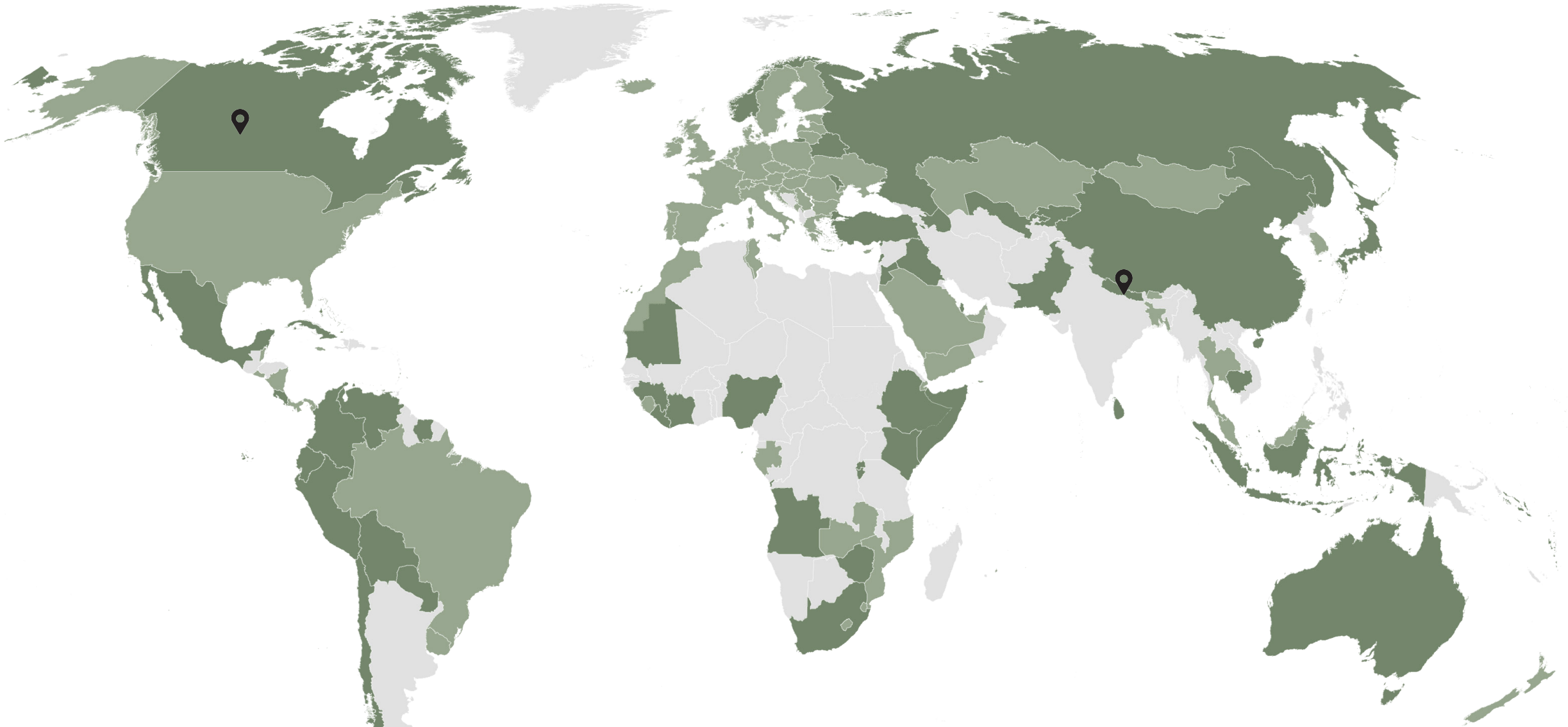
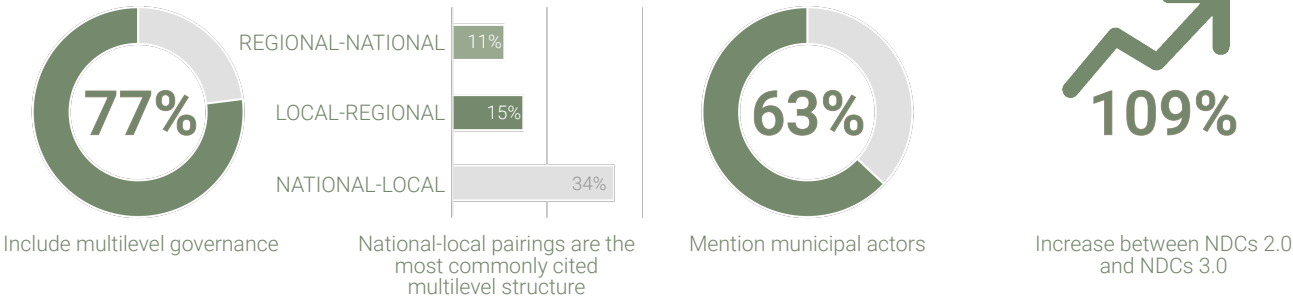
Multilevel governance in NDCs 3.0
Consistent with this trend, multilevel governance is the most frequently cited enabler of urban climate action in the current cycle. Across the 128 NDCs analyzed, it is referenced in 77 per cent of submissions (98 of 128), maintaining its position as the primary means of implementation. The frequency of these references has more than doubled since the previous cycle, indicating a significant shift toward integrated delivery systems that align national ambition with local implementation.

These coordination structures are becoming increasingly institutionalised:

- **Vertical integration and coordination structures:** Over half of NDCs 3.0 now detail governance structures involving two or more levels of government. Direct national–local linkages are the most common configuration, followed by regional–local frameworks.
- **Increasing inclusion of local government and urban actors:** The role of local governments and urban actors is explicitly mentioned in 63 per cent of all governance-related entries. This inclusion marks a move away from top-down mandates, ensuring that national implementation plans are better aligned with municipal frameworks to facilitate coherent climate action.

“Multilevel governance is the **most prominent enabler** of urban climate action.”

Of the 128 NDCs 3.0 submitted by 31 December 2025



NDCs referencing multilevel governance

- Mentioned
- Not mentioned
- No data

CANADA

The Government of Canada also works with third- party organizations, such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, to support municipalities to create resilient, net-zero communities, particularly through the Green Municipal Fund.

NEPAL

By 2030, national policies and acts on energy, renewable energy and energy efficiency will be formulated and the overall capacity will be strengthened to ensure adequate energy security and energy mix. By 2035, 400 local governments will formulate and start implementing the Municipal Energy Plans.



Looking ahead and FAQ

How this report can help guide new submissions and support implementation of NDCs 3.0

What do the findings tell us?

The results from the 128 NDC 3.0 submissions analyzed offer a clear signal: **urban content is strengthening and increasing in volume and coverage.**

- Mentions of challenges and responses are increasing, and references to means of implementation are becoming more explicit.
- Many NDCs still lack quantified baselines, clear urban risk assessments, or measurable targets that connect national priorities to city-level action.
- Integration of cities in key mitigation and adaptation measures is stronger, and sectors that have historically been sidelined (housing and informal settlements) are now well represented
- Means of implementation are now more detailed but there is still a long way to go to close the urban climate finance gap

Together, these trends suggest that national governments are moving from broad recognition of cities toward more operational approaches that link ambition with delivery. Yet the data also show that progress is uneven and that there is much room for improvement. Addressing these gaps will be essential to realize the full potential of urban climate leadership in the next revision cycle.

How can I use the “Urban content in NDC 3.0 – Snapshot of 128 NDCs” report?

There is still time for NDCs to be updated, revised, or redeveloped. This report is designed as a guide, resource, and trend analysis of NDCs 3.0. Countries preparing or updating their NDC 3.0 submissions can use its insights to benchmark progress, identify missing elements, and align with the best-practice structure outlined in “Seizing the urban opportunity: A 3-step guide for strengthening Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) 3.0”.

This report also supports multilevel collaboration where local governments can reference these results to engage national ministries, development banks and donors, while regional and global partners can target capacity-building and technical assistance where it is most needed. Partners such as UN-Habitat, CHAMP, SURGe, UNDP and Climate Promise, the NDC Partnership, and the Baku Continuity Coalition can provide resources such as training, advisory services and peer-learning exchanges. These resources ensure urban commitments are well-defined, measurable, and financially ready, increasing their chances of successful implementation.

Why did the scores change since the previous snapshot report?

The scoring system is designed to track the presence of specific elements rather than the substantive quality of the content. An NDC is awarded a grade (A, B, C, and a bonus ‘+’) based on whether it explicitly includes:

- Urban baselines: GHG emissions or climate risks.
- Urban challenges: Specific mitigation or adaptation challenges.
- Urban responses: Mitigation or adaptation actions.
- A bonus ‘+’ is awarded if means of implementation are included.

While this allows for high-level statistical analysis across a global dataset, we recognise it does not always capture the depth of a country’s urban climate portfolio. An NDC could score a ‘B’ while having a highly sophisticated and costed mitigation plan, simply because it didn’t explicitly outline a specific “challenge” or “baseline” at the urban level.

This can create a sense of downgrading when, in reality, the policy remains robust. Based on this, discussion are underway on how to evolve this methodology, either by refining the thresholds or shifting toward analysing actions, responses, and implementation pathways rather than categorical scoring. This also aligns with the move towards implementation-oriented NDCs 3.0.

What is next for the NDC flagship series?

Developing the AI-enhanced methodology further.

Between now and WUF13, UN-Habitat will continue to refine its AI-enhanced tool to improve accuracy, transparency and usability. The next version will:

- Incorporate additional language models and validation layers.
- Integrate cross-referencing with contextual metadata.
- Begin integrating additional datasets and policy documents
- Begin conceptualizing how the tool can be used to build digital tools that can support implementation beyond COP30 and WUF13.
- Begin conceptualizing additional workstreams that can be supported by the AI-enhanced insight generated here

By combining these advances with the insights from this Snapshot, UN-Habitat aims to strengthen evidence-based support for NDC implementation. This advanced methodology will be used to inform a more comprehensive and technical report.

The technical report

The full report will use the advancing methodology to analyse all of the NDCs submitted by March 2026, allowing for a better understanding of the global narratives surrounding climate change in cities. This is expected to be launched at WUF13. The forthcoming technical report will:

- Expand the dataset to global coverage.
- Offer detailed regional and thematic analysis.
- Present refined metrics and scoring methodologies.
- Highlight best-practice examples and actionable recommendations.
- Use our data to support UNDP with the implementation of the Climate Promise.

The energy report

As part of this flagship series, we will be expanding a series of spin-off reports and deep dives into emerging priority sectors, starting with the energy sector. Focusing on urban energy content in the NDCs, the report will highlight NDCs that prioritise a just energy transition and their means of implementation and will be launched at the Innovate4Cities in June 2026.



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UN-HABITAT

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
unhabitat-info@un.org
www.unhabitat.org

   @UNHABITAT

