

## A Call to Pray for August 2021 – SDG 11



### **Sustainable Development Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.**

Cities around the world have grown as huge numbers of people have been drawn to them for work. Some expect to find pavements 'paved with gold' but what they discover is often inadequate housing and transport facilities, slums, air pollution and a lack of green space in which to breathe and thrive. According to the [UN website](#) 'the number of slum dwellers continues to grow, reaching over 1 billion in 2018. Slum-dwellers are most prevalent in three regions-- Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (370 million), sub-Saharan Africa (238 million) and Central and Southern Asia (226 million). As of March 2021, 156 countries have developed national urban policies, with almost half already in the implementation stage. A further breakdown shows that 38% of the countries are in the early stages of developing their plans, while 13% are monitoring and evaluating how well these plans are functioning.'

The Covid-19 pandemic has reduced job opportunities, increased violence and revealed unacceptable treatment through trafficking and exploitation of those seeking a better life. Our cities are not yet safe, not yet resilient, not yet sustainable. Discrimination and closed doors often greet those who are seeking asylum.

Yet in each community there are initiatives that support the development of safe spaces. Refuges for survivors of trafficking and domestic violence; places of welcome for refugees and asylum seekers, community gardens and re-wilding projects; skills training schemes for income generation; provision of bicycles so that children can reach school safely, building schemes like Habitat for Humanity.....

**Read** Zechariah 8:1-8

**Pray** Lord Jesus Christ, born in the town of Bethlehem, rejected by the people of Nazareth, traveller on the dusty road, given hospitality in Bethany, arrested and tried in the city of Jerusalem, crucified outside the city walls, buried in a borrowed tomb, raised from death to life eternal with God and with all your people, we turn to you. We represent many different communities, large and small, but we all long for safety, dignity and hope for the future, for ourselves and our children. We pray that the work to build safe, resilient and sustainable cities and smaller communities, offering inclusive welcome to all people, may flourish under the guidance of your Holy Spirit. Amen

## **Respond**

Find out about the [Cities of Sanctuary](#) in the UK encouraging communities of all sizes to provide a welcoming, safe space to those fleeing violence or persecution.

Check out [Habitat for Humanity International](#) partnering with people in more than 70 countries helping them build suitable housing.

Support the work of relief and development agencies like [All We Can](#) as they work with partner churches and other NGOs to build resilience in communities.

Support activities in your own community that build up the kingdom of God.

Try to find out the policies of your country regarding SDG 11 and think carefully whether you can campaign for improvements.

To find out more about Goal 11 and other Sustainable Development Goals visit:

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>

**The World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women supports the Sustainable Development Goals.**