



**26 March 2015 – UN-Habitat reports that it has signed two cooperation agreements with the cities of Colon and Panama to promote [urban renewal and revitalization](#) . These agreements, directly related to the issue of urban land use, set out a technical collaboration framework for the period 2015-2017 and seek to encourage public and private investment. Moreover, they turn our attention to the role of planning in advancing urban revitalization.**

Elkin Velásquez, the [UN-Habitat](#) Director of the [Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean \(ROLAC\)](#) states: “We are promoting a new city system at a global level, a model of compact city, connected, integrated and inclusive”.

As rapid urbanization is bringing a number of land-use challenges to cities, especially in terms of urban sprawl, UN-Habitat is supporting governments at all levels to improve their planning policies and initiatives. This is vital to ensure cities that are both sustainable and climate-change resilient.

### Improving the urban quality of life through planning of public spaces

In the case of the agreements with Colon and Panama, a specific goal addressed is the advancement of urban management tools and governance so as to regenerate public spaces.

In what way are these spaces related to urban revitalization?

UN-Habitat explains that a [well-designed public space](#) not only affects a city's visual character, but is also beneficial in terms of the urban economy and functionality. A city with pedestrian-friendly streetscapes promotes social connectivity and, consequently, more cohesive and lively neighbourhoods that are more attractive to residents and investors alike.

In Panama, the Urban Renewal of Colon City project, benefitting 25,000 residents in the city, is to be complemented with other infrastructural development such as paving streets, street lighting, restoration of historic buildings and sewage treatment.

### Sustainable human settlements

The cooperation agreements between the Panamanian cities and UN-Habitat also include the generation of plans for sustainable human settlements .

[Discover why UN-Habitat](#) is campaigning for a [Sustainable Development Goal](#) addressing urban development issues for the Post-2015 Agenda.

### More information on public spaces

- In partnership with the Project for Public Places (PPS) and the Institut Municipal de Mercats de Barcelona (IMMB), UN-Habitat is currently (March 26 – 28) hosting the [9th International Public Markets Conference](#)

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