

# MIPAD

MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

Payment & FinTECH  
DIASPORA

SOCIAL IMPACT NUMBER

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



“WE WANT TO MAKE ONLINE MONEY TRANSFER **FASTER, EASIER AND LOWER COST.**”

- **Ismail Ahmed**

Founder & Chairman, WorldRemit

IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS.



[www.mipad.org](http://www.mipad.org)

2017 RANKING

# MIPAD

Most Influential People of African Descent

GLOBAL TOP  
★★★☆☆  
**100** UNDER 40

IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS...



LEWIS HAMILTON  
UK  
Culture and Media

CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE  
NIGERIA  
Culture and Media

JOEL GAY  
USA  
Business and Entrepreneurship

WWW.MIPAD.ORG

CLASS OF 2018

# MIPAD

Most Influential People of African Descent

GLOBAL TOP  
★★★☆☆  
**100** UNDER 40

IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS...



COLIN KAEPERNICK  
USA  
Media and Culture

CHADWICK BOSEMAN  
USA  
Media and Culture

MEGHAN, DUCHESS OF SUSSEX  
UK  
Humanitarian and Religious

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## Most Influential People of African Descent MOTHERS OF THE NATION

# First Ladies

EDITION

IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS...



KIM SIMPLIS BARROW  
BELIZE

JEANNETTE KAGAME  
RWANDA

TSHEPO MOTSEPE  
SOUTH AFRICA

JULIET HOLNESS  
JAMAICA

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## Most Influential People of African Descent GREAT LEGAL MINDS

# LAW & JUSTICE

EDITION

IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS...



BRYAN STEVENSON  
EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE  
USA

LORETTA LYNN  
FORMER ATTORNEY GENERAL  
USA

PAULETTE MARTIN  
CHAIR, BLACK SOLICITORS NETWORK  
UK

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# MIPAD

Most Influential People of African Descent

MONARCHS • KINGS • QUEENS • PRINCES • PRINCESSES

# ROYALTY

EDITION

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OTUMFU OSEI TUTU II  
GHANA

OKA EWUARE II  
NIGERIA

KING MSWATI III  
SWAZILAND

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## Most Influential People of African Descent DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION & CYBER RESILIENCE

# 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

EDITION

IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS...



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## Most Influential People of African Descent BUILDING PAYMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

# Payment & FinTech

EDITION

IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS...



DANIEL MONEHIN  
MASTERCARD

KENNETH I. CHERNALT  
AMERICAN EXPRESS

AIDA DIARRA  
VISA

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# MIPAD

## Most Influential People of African Descent AMAZING AFRICA

# Travel & Tourism

EDITION

IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS...



ARNOLD DONALD  
USA

MINISTER CATHERINE ABELEMA AFEKU  
GHANA

UFI IBRAHIM  
UK

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GLOBAL TOP  
★★★★★

# 100

## What is MIPAD?

*The Most Influential People of African Descent (MIPAD) is a global civil society initiative in support of the United Nation's International Decade for People of African Descent.*

*The Decade, to be observed from 2015 to 2024, was proclaimed by the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 68/237), with the goal of strengthening national, regional and international action for the protection of human rights for people of African descent worldwide. The Decade also aims to promote greater knowledge of and respect for the contributions of people of African descent to societies.*

*MIPAD identifies high achievers of African descent in Four (4) Categorizes:-  
**Politics & Governance | Business & Entrepreneurship | Media & Culture and  
Religious & Humanitarian** from all around the world as a progressive network of  
relevant actors to join together in the spirit of recognition, justice and development.*



**INTERNATIONAL  
DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF  
AFRICAN  
DESCENT  
2015 - 2024**

The International Decade for People of African Descent, proclaimed by General Assembly [resolution 68/237](#) and to be observed from 2015 to 2024, provides a solid framework for the United Nations, Member States, civil society and all other relevant actors to join together with people of African descent and take effective measures for the implementation of the programme of activities in the spirit of recognition, justice and development.

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[www.mipad.org](http://www.mipad.org)



## About SOLO FEATURE

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Most Influential 100 solo features aim to amplify the stories of the most influential voices of African descent worldwide in support of the International Decade for People of African Descent proclaimed by the United Nations to observed from 2015-2024.

In-line with the 1st pillar of this UN International Decade for People of African Descent; **RECOGNITION**, MIPAD will feature past and special edition honorees to share their journey to success and the social impact their life story creating.

The social impact story of honorees featured in the solo editions will be shared within the frameworks of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to showcase their "Social Impact Number" to support with building partnerships to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

If you interested to be featured in a solo edition, send us a mail at [solo.features@mipad.org](mailto:solo.features@mipad.org)

### ELIGIBILITY

- Past Honorees
- Special Edition Honorees

### REQUIRED

- Hi-Resolution Cover Photo
- Quote affiliated with you or your company
- Interview with Editorial Team
- Corporate or Congratulatory Advert

### GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION

- Social Media assets @MIPAD100
- [blog.mipad.org](http://blog.mipad.org)
- Monthly Global Newsletter
- Print Copies (release at UN General Assembly 2019 or Africa Union Summit 2020)
- Video Interview (YouTube Channel)

## 2019 MIPAD TEAM

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**Kamil Olufowobi, Founder & CEO | Tope Esan, CCO | Segun Sobudu, Social Media Team | Chinelo L. Njaka Ph.D, Chief Research Officer | Ezeocha Amudo, Creative Director & Demilade Ojewumi, Asst. Creative Director | Eloine Barry, Public Relations | Alessia Balducci & Nkem Begho, Technology Advisory TechSOLVES.org A MIPAD Initiative**

## INSIDE COVER PAGE

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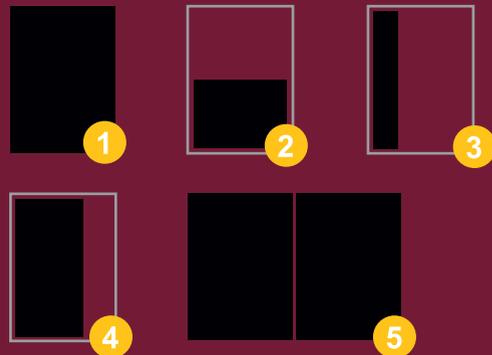
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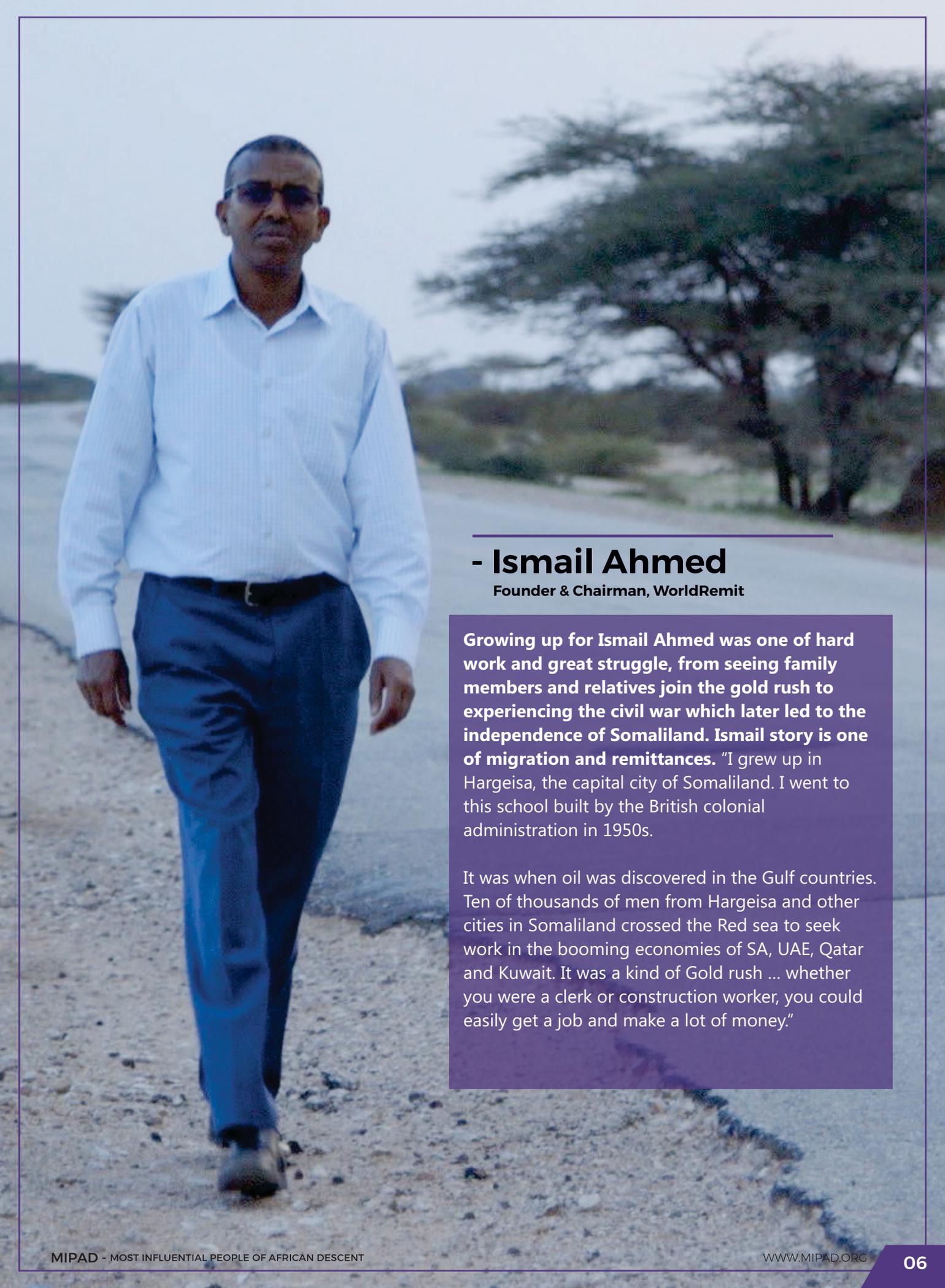
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## - Ismail Ahmed

Founder & Chairman, WorldRemit

**Growing up for Ismail Ahmed was one of hard work and great struggle, from seeing family members and relatives join the gold rush to experiencing the civil war which later led to the independence of Somaliland. Ismail story is one of migration and remittances.** "I grew up in Hargeisa, the capital city of Somaliland. I went to this school built by the British colonial administration in 1950s.

It was when oil was discovered in the Gulf countries. Ten of thousands of men from Hargeisa and other cities in Somaliland crossed the Red sea to seek work in the booming economies of SA, UAE, Qatar and Kuwait. It was a kind of Gold rush ... whether you were a clerk or construction worker, you could easily get a job and make a lot of money."



Ismail's family became recipient of remittances in Hargeisa and He gained first-hand knowledge of how the money transfer system at the time worked.

Typically a trader from Hargeisa would go to SA or UAE collect money from migrants, use the money to buy construction material and other goods and then ship these to Hargeisa. Recipients used to get money once goods were sold.

It used to take months to get the money, but recipients got 100% of the send amount at mid-market rate and no fees.

After winning a scholarship from the World Bank, he moved to London after the civil war that led to the independence of Somaliland. While studying, he found out how difficult it was to send money to his family in Africa. He then decided to make a difference in the payment sector and set up the one of the first money transfer services between UK and the Horn of Africa. With integrity as a key value, Ismail fought

corruption and even lost his job as a United Nations Officer for his conviction.

*"After trying so many different menial jobs during summer, I started one of the first money transfer services between the UK and the Horn of Africa. I set up a partnership with a family business that had network of agents in the Somali region of Ethiopia and Djibouti".*

*"When I came back and completed my PhD, I joined a research program at the University of Sussex financed by UK government. I convinced my colleagues that remittances was a key source of livelihoods and so we conducted research on remittances using Somaliland as case study".*

As part of His PhD research which was about food security .Ismail went back home to conduct a fieldwork research and understand how people survived during and after the war. This time remittances became a lifeline to about 40% of the population.



*"It's an honor and a privilege to be recognized in this edition. I've always wanted people to remember World Remit as a business group who made a significant change on people lives, this is the legacy I want to leave to the next generation"*

Immediately after Ismail's PhD, He joined a research programme at the University of Sussex financed by UK government. He convinced his colleagues that remittances was a key source of livelihoods and so they conducted research on remittances using Somaliland as case study.

One of the companies He interviewed known as Al-Barakaat during his research which was the largest African money transfer business processing up to \$400 million a year, was shut down by the US government During President George Bush regime.

Concerned about the impact this could have the local economies, the US Security Council Tasked UNDP to develop mechanisms that facilitate legitimate financial transfer, while preventing further financial flows to terrorists and terrorist groups.

The first UN remittance initiative was launched the following year. UN officials contacts Ismail because of his background and interest in remittance and he was asked to become a compliance adviser and manage the project.

Ismail's goal was to procure and implement a common money transfer and compliance platform shared by all

companies that send money to East Africa. His decision to join this programme was largely driven by a strong passion in remittance and my desire to make a difference in an industry that provides livelihoods to millions of poor people.

Within a few weeks of joining the project which was based in Nairobi, he witnessed a widespread fraud and corruption involving senior UNDP management, donor officials and consultants.

This was tough for Ismail because he was faced with a dilemma of whether or not he should turn a blind eye like everyone else in the office and deliver the compliance platform for the industry or blow the Whistle and risk sudden closure of the project as UNDP normally does in such circumstances as a cover-up. A further consideration for him was his own personal security. Most UN staff members in countries like Kenya often keep quiet out of fear for their own personal safety.

After several sleepless nights of weighing up the risks, Ismail finally decided to challenge this fraud. On a bright Sunday morning 19 February 2006, Hewent to an internet café at a shopping mall in West Nairobi and submitted a detailed anonymous disclosure to a UN



*"We need to stay positive and resilient all added to passion to raise the bar and set example".*

fraud hotline. He moved to a compound that offered armed protection to staff of international agencies and self-imposed dusk to dawn curfew until He was transferred to Dubai.

A team of investigators were immediately sent from New York. Instead of conducting an investigation, their focus became about identifying the anonymous whistle-blower and helping management to cover-up the fraud. When Ismail learned this, He decided to come out openly and file a dossier containing incontrovertible evidence of widespread fraud and corruption that He had been gathering for 8 months.

After thoroughly learning how the remittance system worked, Ismail was sure he has acquired a good sense of what the trade entailed. Today his positivity in the face of adversity has paid off. His company, World Remit, is making money transfer easier for more than 145 countries with over 3 million happy customers. With Africa being a big part of his business, Ismail is showing that African descents can reach excellence and move the lines all around the world.

Connecting the Diaspora to Africa, He strongly believes that African Descents have to understand the continent, theirs roots and bear in mind that migration has impacted their lives and will continue to do so.

*"It's an honor and a privilege to be recognized in this edition. I've always wanted people to remember World Remit as a business group who made a significant change on people lives, this is the legacy I want to leave to the next generation"*

According to him, African Youth and African Descents everywhere, should see beyond their immediate horizon and look for opportunities. **"We need to stay positive and resilient all added to passion to raise the bar and set example".**

Against all odds he came out successful. His story is an inspiration to young people who are yet to attain success. Ismail is a living evidence that perseverance and courage always leads to excellence.

A man with short dark hair, wearing a blue suit jacket over a light blue and white striped shirt, stands on a staircase. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a light-colored, textured wall. The lighting is bright, suggesting an outdoor or well-lit indoor setting.

Against all odds he came out successful. His story is an inspiration to young people who are yet to attain success. Ismail is a living evidence that perseverance and courage always leads to excellence.

# GOAL 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



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

This would work to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable. To realize this goal, Member States are called upon to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, such as persons with disabilities. In addition, the proposal calls for providing universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for persons with disabilities.

## GOAL 11 TARGETS

- By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.
- By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.
- By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.
- Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.
- By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to the global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.
- By 2030, reduce the adverse per capital environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.
- By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.
- Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.
- By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.
- Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials.



**milestones that**

**matter**

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