

For more than one night: Emergency accommodation for evacuees

How municipalities can improve the provision of medium- to long-term emergency accommodation



Overview

Municipalities are often well prepared to accommodate evacuees in the short term. However, if those affected cannot return to their homes for weeks or months, the authorities often have no plans in place. At a Connective Cities dialogue event held in Cologne from 20 to 22 March 2023, twenty-seven experts from Germany, Jordan, Somalia and the Philippines discussed how they can improve the medium- to long-term accommodation of evacuees.



Program

The agenda covered a wide range of topics. These included a global overview of the number of people who have to leave their homes due to conflicts or extreme natural events, best practice examples of housing for refugees in Germany, and intensive stakeholder communication in the city of Makati in the Philippines.

During the discussions, participants shared creative ideas on how to better provide emergency shelter, for example by involving the hotel industry. Participants were particularly interested in approaches designed to better understand the needs of affected people, and empower them to help themselves.

During an excursion to the District of Ahrweiler, the participants learned how, during the 'refugee crisis' in 2015, 300 refugees were accommodated at the Federal Academy for Civil Protection and Defence in Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler. As a second stop on their excursion, they visited a tiny house development in the Municipality of Gratschaft, where victims of the 2021 flood disaster are still being housed.

Keynotes

Siefan Martini of the Cologne Fire Brigade called for a change of perspective in disaster risk management regarding the emergency accommodation of evacuees. The aim should not always be to provide comprehensive care for those affected, he said, but rather to enable these people to help themselves as quickly and effectively as possible. Providing electricity and WiFi is often an important step in this direction.

Elise Filo from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre in Geneva told participants that in 2021, about 38 million people had to leave their homes, primarily due to weather-related disasters. It is very difficult to obtain reliable data, she added, but this is an important basis for disaster risk management.



Presentations

Liza Velle Ramos from the Makati City Government in the Philippines reported on how the city prepares for earthquakes and other hazards. The core of the strategy, she explained, is active communication with the population – especially through social media, regular events and extensive disaster preparedness drills.

Malte Mühlendorf from the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance presented the German government's mobile care reserve for civil defence. Several mobile accommodation and care facilities for 5,000 people each are planned. These can be set up quickly in emergencies and can function largely self-sufficiently, like a small mobile town.

Nils Jakubeit, Project Manager at the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief, presented the [Sphere Standards](#). These are internationally recognised minimum standards for the core areas of humanitarian emergency response, including emergency shelters. He then presented the [mess shelter capacity toolbox](#). This toolbox can support decision-makers in providing shelter for large numbers of people following a disaster. It includes recommendations and guidelines, as well as standard plans for camps.

Results

One positive conclusion drawn by participants was that many municipalities do have the basic capability to provide evacuees with short-term accommodation. Nonetheless, there is still a great need for improvement.

Despite the fact that circumstances vary from place to place, the challenges of accommodating evacuees are often similar. One crucial point is a stronger focus on the actual needs of the evacuees and their ability to help themselves. Accommodation should not be designed solely on the basis of development practitioners' expertise. Involving the population is also a key part of disaster risk management. So too is a holistic approach to the collaboration of all relevant stakeholder groups.

Finally, the participants agreed to continue to work together in the future on improving the accommodation of evacuees at the point where short-term shelter becomes medium- to long-term accommodation. This will include a special focus on strategies for accommodating evacuees in hotels.

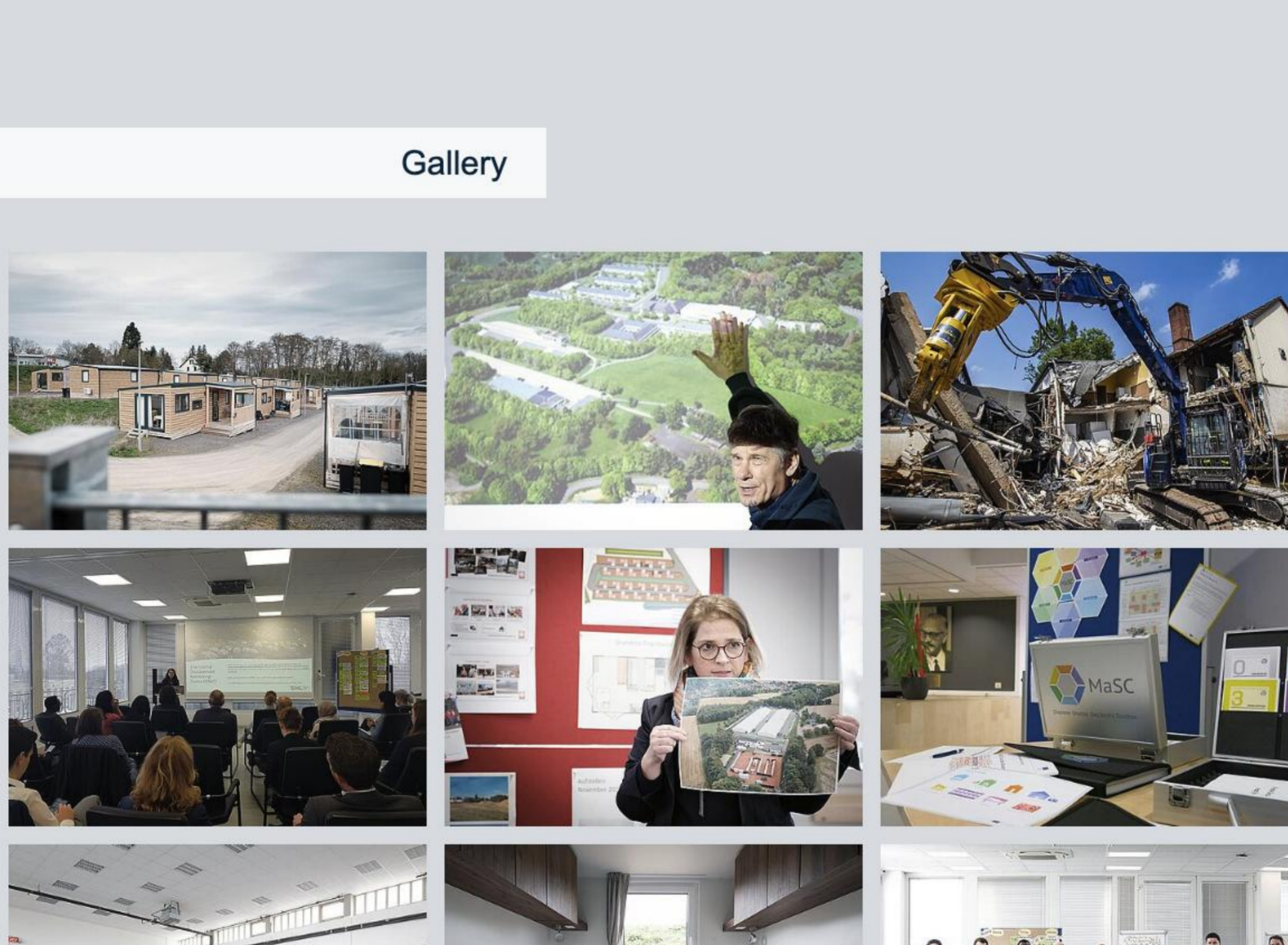


Report

Documentation:

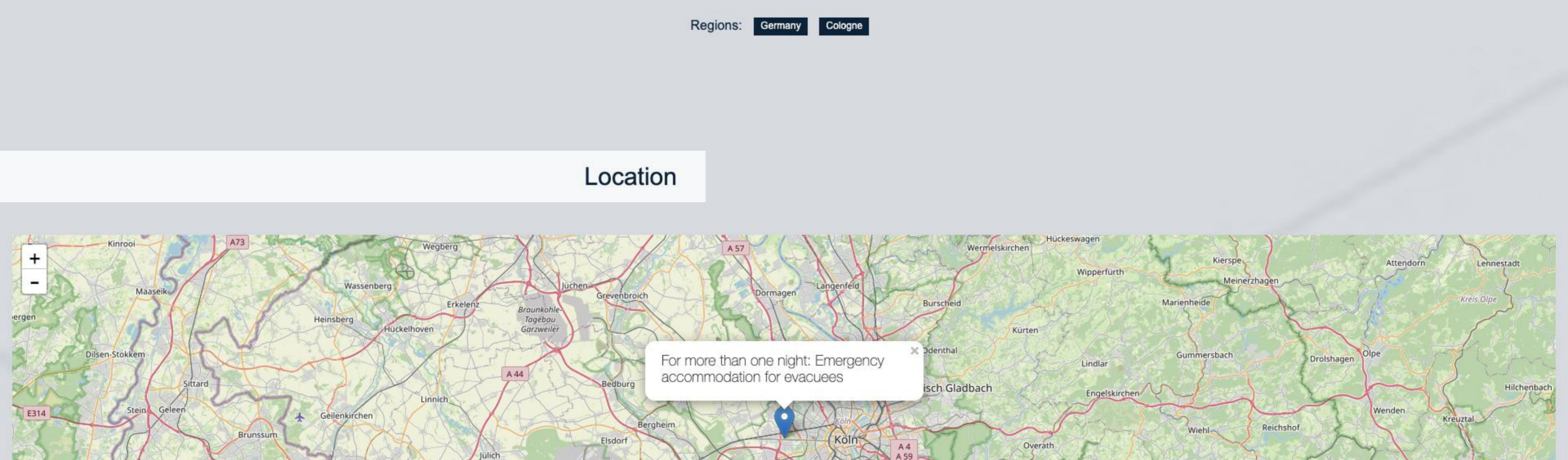
[Not just for one night: Emergency accommodation for evacuees](#)
How municipalities can also provide medium- to long-term emergency accommodation [pdf, 9 pages, 1.3 mb]

Gallery

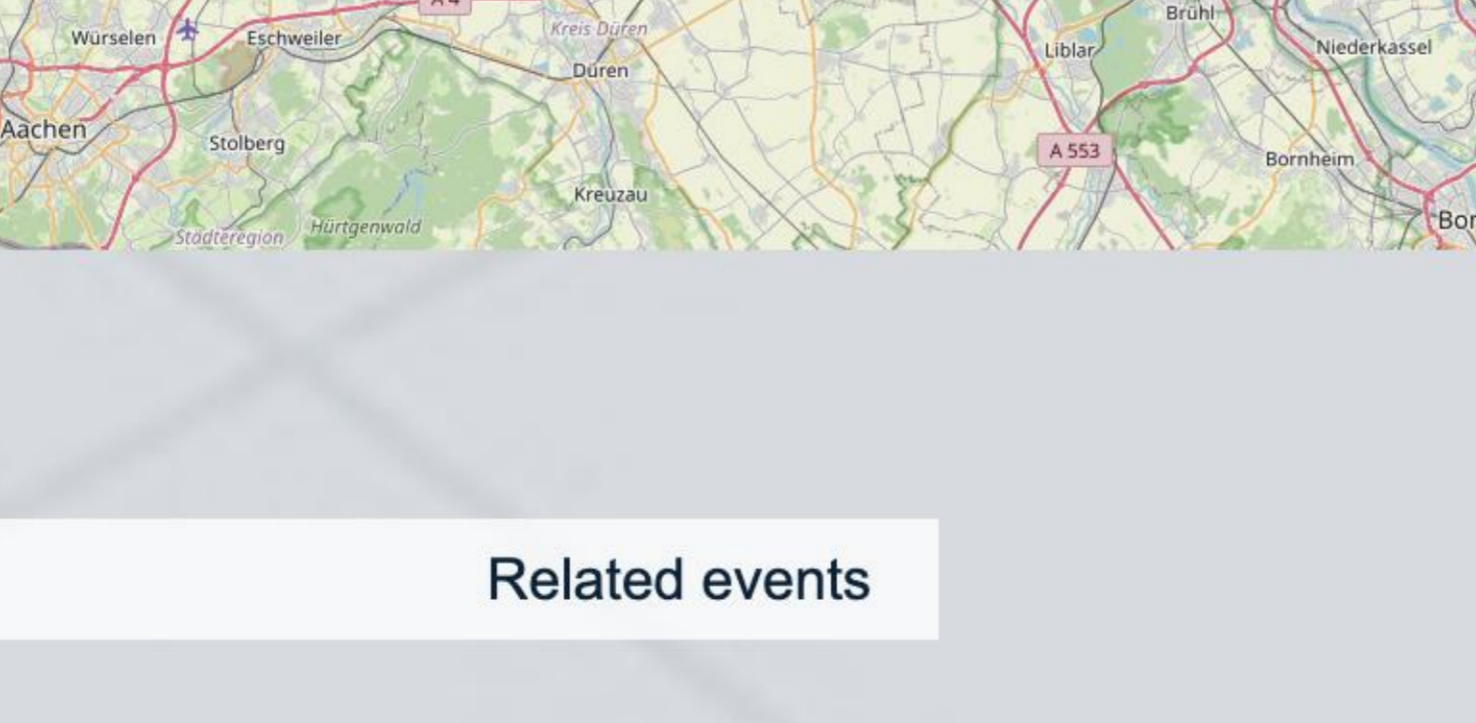


Regions: [Germany](#) [Cologne](#)

Location



Related events



Related Good Practices



[tweet](#)
[share](#)
[in share](#)
[share](#)

Peer Learning

[Overview](#)
[Announcements](#)
[Learning Processes](#)
[Documentation](#)
[Good Practices](#)
[Financial Advisory Service](#)

Topics

[Overview](#)
[Good Urban Governance](#)
[Integrated Urban Development](#)
[Local Economic Development](#)
[Municipal Services](#)
[Cross-cutting Topics](#)

Good Practices

[Overview](#)
[Good Practices on Good Urban Governance](#)
[Good Practices on Integrated Urban Development](#)
[Good Practices on Local Economic Development](#)
[Good Practices on Municipal Services](#)
[Good Practices on Municipal Responses to COVID-19](#)
[Good practices digital solutions in urban development](#)
[Good practices on gender-sensitive urban development](#)
[Good practices on urban development and climate change](#)

Media Centre

[Overview](#)
[News](#)
[Events](#)
[Publications](#)
[Videos](#)
[Newsletter](#)