World Health Organization

Healthy and Equitable Urban Planning through Intersectoral Action

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Why urban health matters?

1. Rapid, unplanned urbanization
2. Social and economic inequities lead to inequities in health
3. Improved health increases productivity
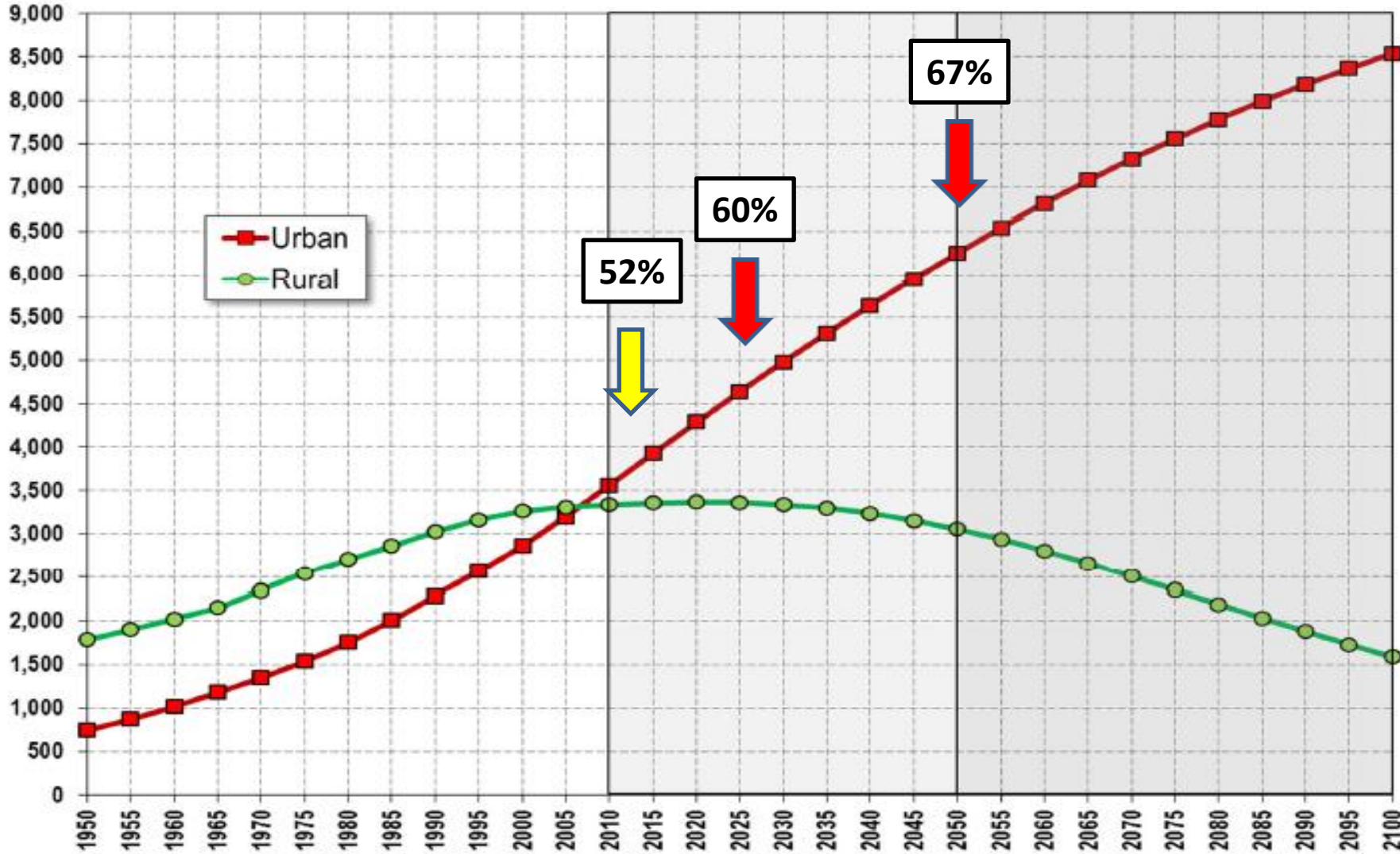4. Liveability creates social stability

"A developed country is not a place where the poor have cars. It's where the rich use public transportation."
- Gustavo Petro, Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia

World: **Urban** and **rural** Population: 2010-2100
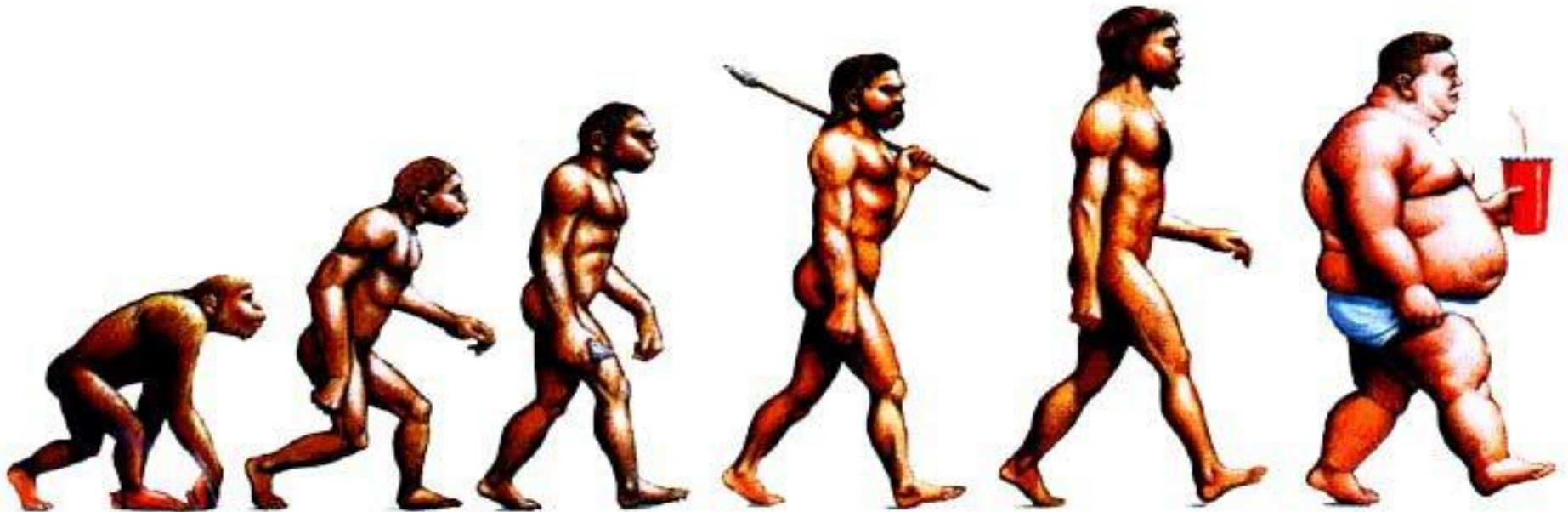
UN Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs, World Urbanization Prospects 2011
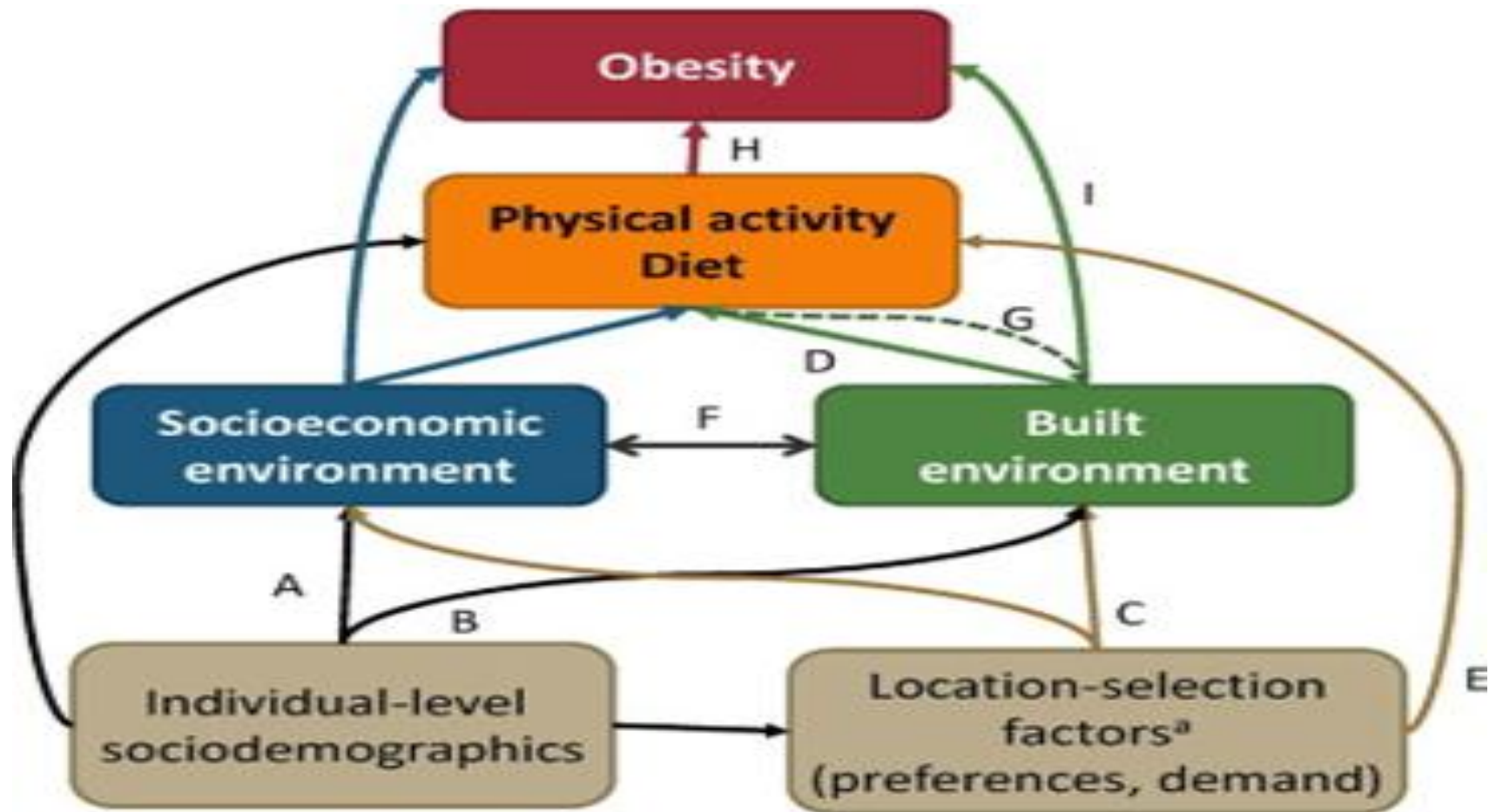
Urbanization and noncommunicable diseases

Unhealthy diet
Lack of physical exercise
Harmful use of alcohol
Tobacco use
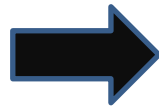
1. **Cardiovascular diseases**
2. **Cancers**
3. **Respiratory diseases**
4. **Diabetes**

The Economist 2003

Obesogenic environment

Ilona Kickbush, 2013

Health inequities

- Inequalities across different population groups

- Systematic, socially produced and unfair

    ➡ but modifiable

- Result of circumstances where people born, grow, live, work and age, and the health system they can access

- Affect everyone

Variations in life expectancy across London Tube stops
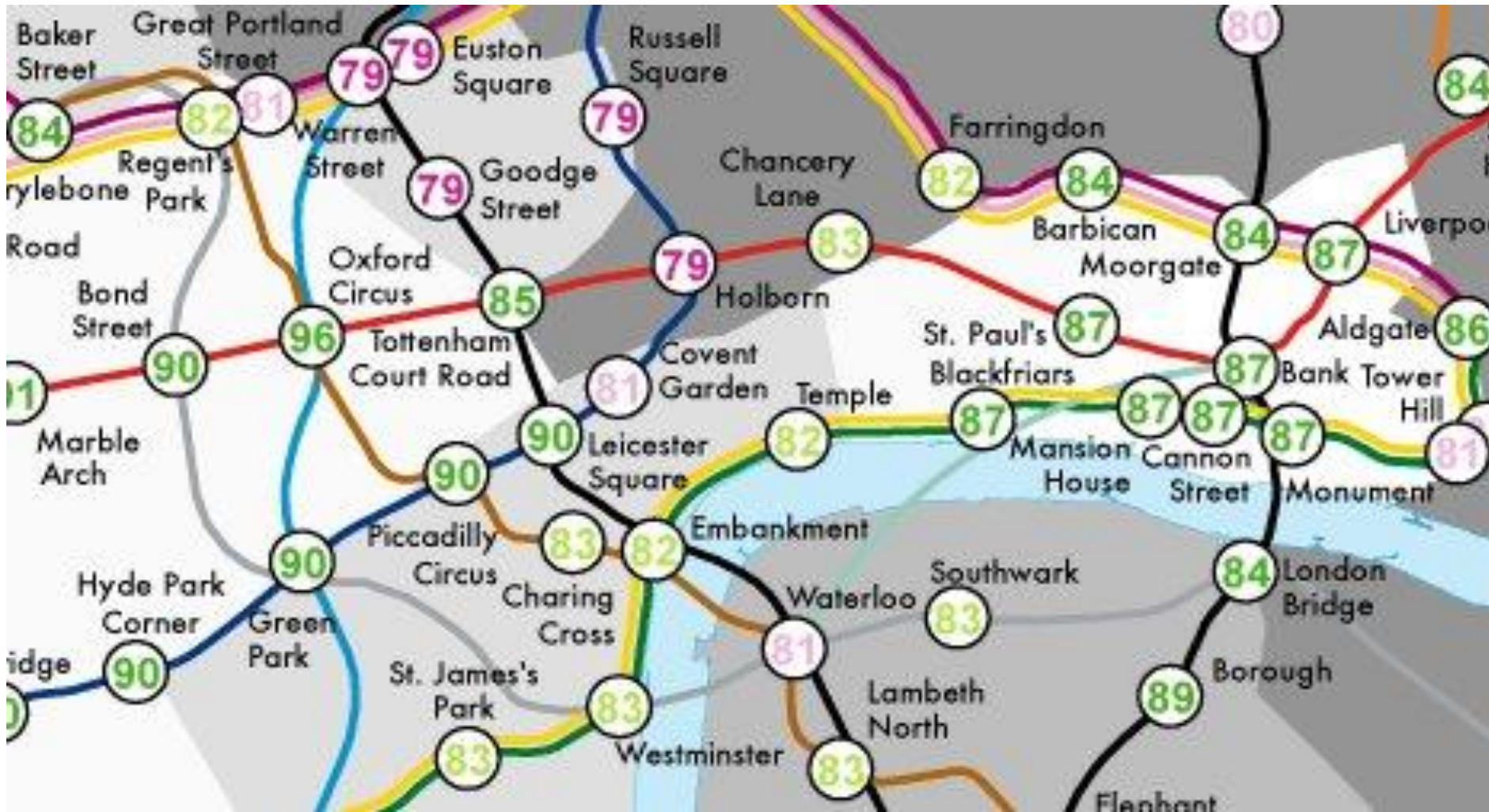
University College London, 2012. http://life.mappinglondon.co.uk/

Healthy urban planning: challenges and opportunities
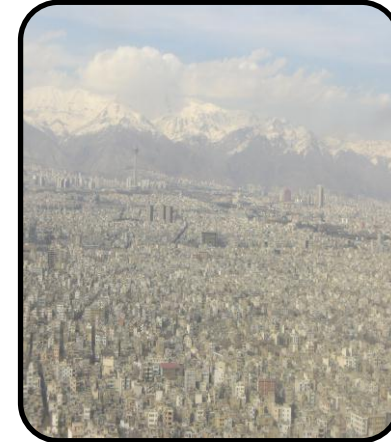

Physical activity & Healthy diet

Access to goods and services

Mental health

Accidents and injuries

Air quality

WHO/EURO 2003: Healthy urban planning in practice

# Physical activity and healthy diet

UP measures:

- Health promoting infrastructure: Streets, buildings, parks

- Active transportation policies (walking, cycling..)

- Public transportation

- Land use & zoning: Full-service supermarkets, fresh food, restricting fast food outlets

Access to goods and services

UP measures:

- Water and sanitation
- Public spaces, health and social services, education
- Healthy food and goods
- Safe neighborhoods
- Accessible and reasonable-priced public transportation
- Mixed housing
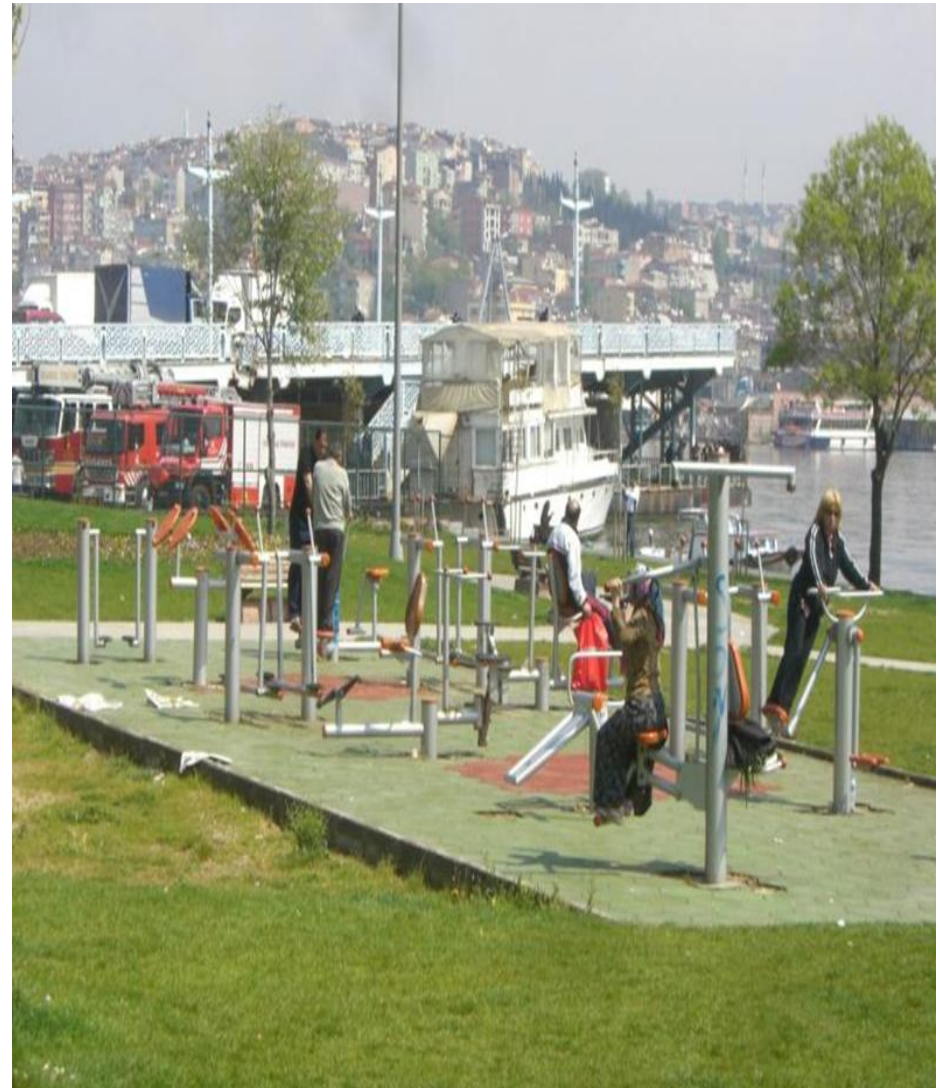
# Mental health

UP measures:

- Liveable cities with recreational areas
- Traffic/street design e.g. to control crowds
- Less dense housing
- Sound barriers, car free zones
- Access to health services

Injuries, violence and unsafety

- **Traffic**: safe and well-maintained roads for all road users, tolls, speed bumps
- **Environmental hazards**: flood barriers, strong materials, smart buildings, shadowing structures
- **Crime and violence**: mixed housing, monitoring, livability

Suvi Huikuri, WHO Kobe Centre

Road traffic deaths per 100 000 population, by WHO region

WHO Global Status Report on Road Safety, 2013
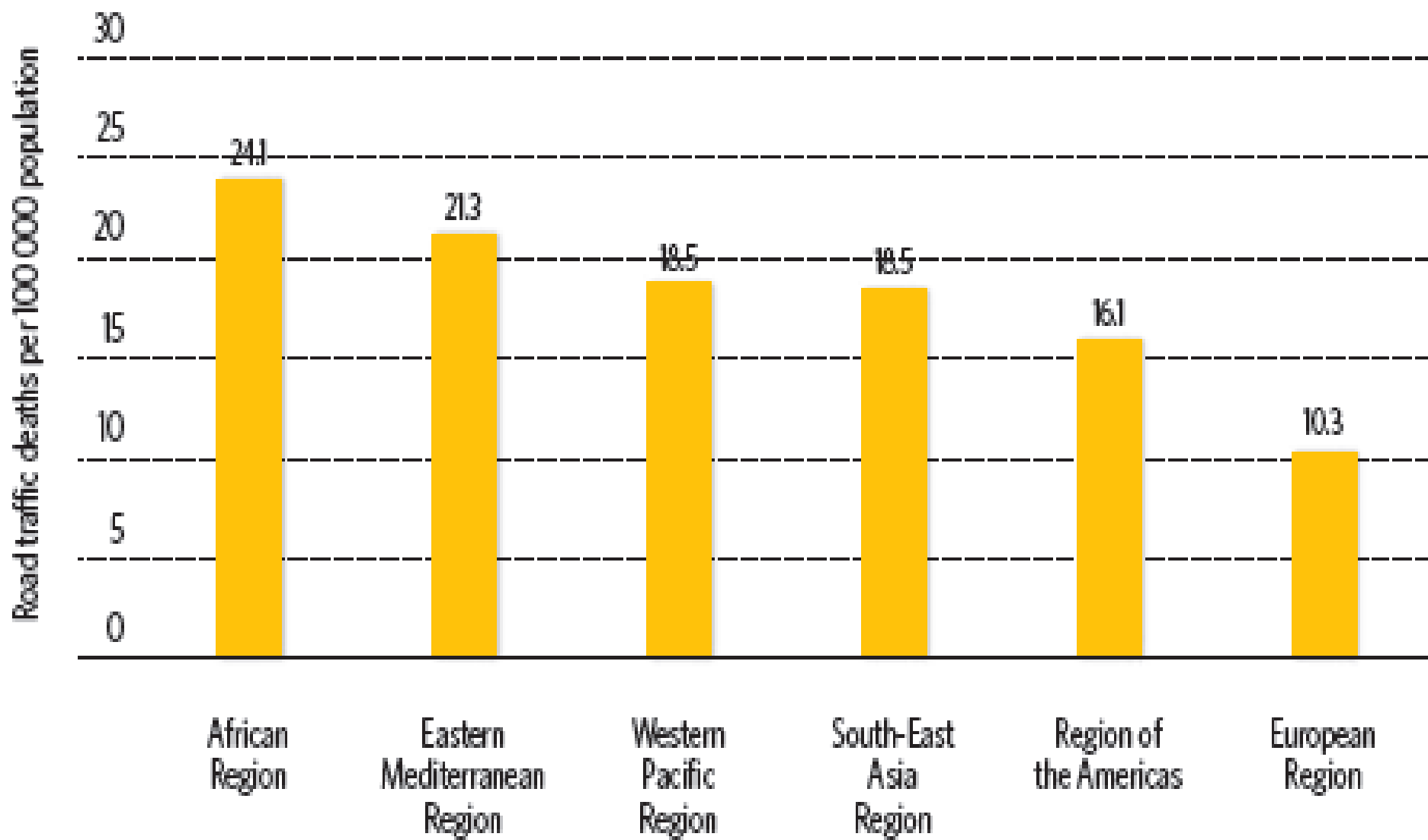
Pollution and air quality

UP measures:

- Smoke-free cooking/heating facilities

- Public and active transportation

- Tolls, car free city centres

- Parks, trees

- Avoiding mixed zoning

Suvi Huikuri, WHO Kobe Centre

Intersectoral Action for Health (ISA)

- Shared recognition of the problems, shared determination to tackle them
- Cooperation across sectors to promote health
- Integrating health concerns into the policy-making of other sectors

Strategies:

- **Broad,** e.g. Health in All Policies
- **Specific,** e.g. smoking

Tools: ISA booklet

10 "steps" for intersectoral action

1...5

1. Self-assessment
2. Assessment and engagement of other sectors
3. Analyze the area of concern
4. Select an engagement approach
5. Develop an engagement strategy and policy

6...10

6. Use a framework to foster common understanding between sectors
7. Strengthen governance structures, political will and accountability mechanisms
8. Enhance community participation
9. Choose other good practices to foster intersectoral action
10. Monitor and evaluate

Tools: Urban HEART

User-friendly guide to identify and act on health inequities

Assessment: an indicator guide

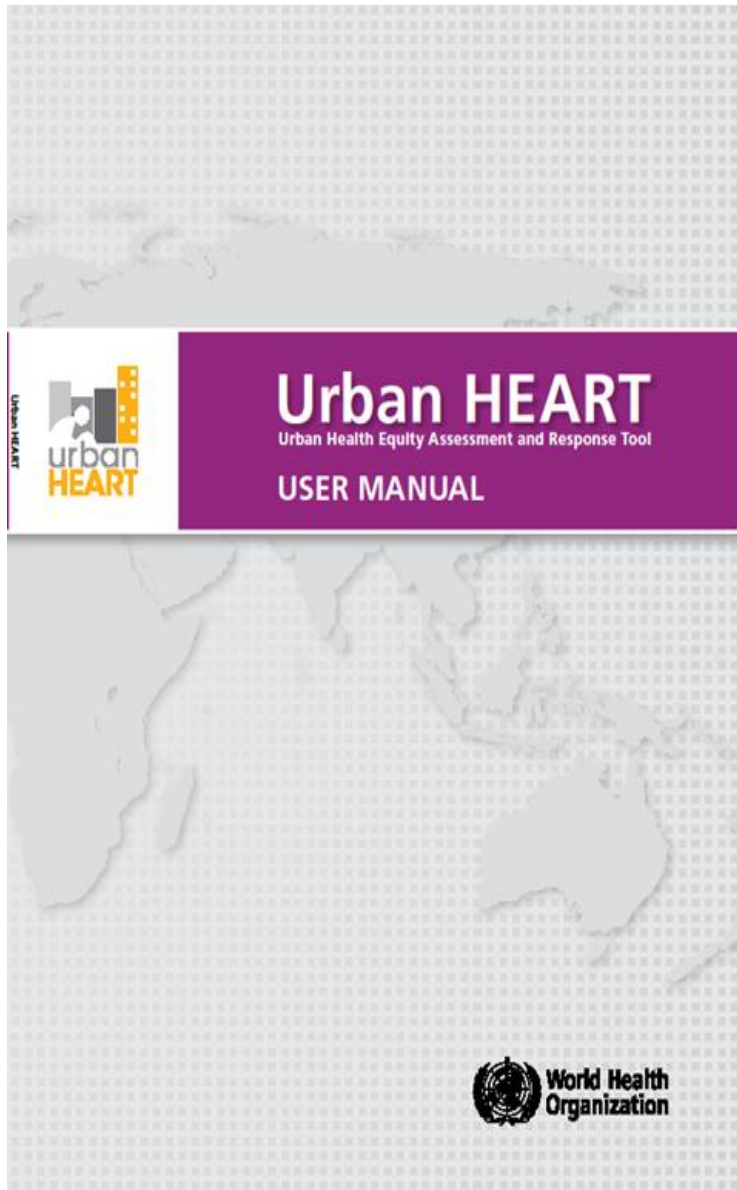Response: guide to best practices

Target audiences:

Mayors, local authorities

National government

Urban HEART *User Manual*

Detailed instructions on the Urban HEART process for those who plan to use the tool in their cities or regions.

Conclusion: promoting health and equity in cities

- Urbanization is an *opportunity* to improve equity, health and well-being

- Intersectoral action is a *possibility* to benefit from synergies

- Evidence-based interventions, tools

- Context specificity
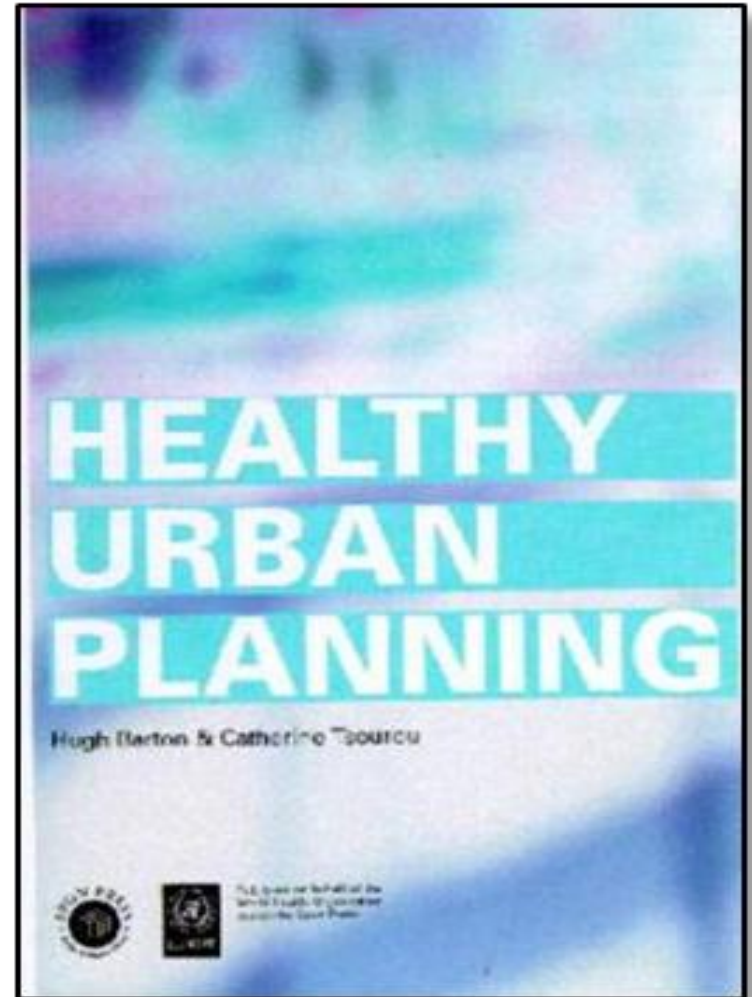
THANK YOU!

More information
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