

City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality

Policy Brief Submission – U20 2025 Cycle

Theme: Social Inclusion and Equity

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1. Introduction

The City of Johannesburg (CoJ) recognizes the critical role of urban centres in shaping equitable, inclusive, and resilient futures. As a committed participant in the U20 2025 Cycle, CoJ submits this statement in alignment with the overarching theme of **Social Inclusion and Equity**, and with particular focus on the inclusion of **youth, civil society, and participatory governance** at local level.

2. Context and Rationale

Johannesburg is a dynamic, culturally diverse metropolis that bears the weight of historical inequality while holding immense potential for inclusive transformation. Social exclusion remains evident in housing disparities, youth unemployment, spatial inequality, and limited access to services for marginalized groups.

In response, CoJ is committed to advancing urban justice through the systematic integration of equity into its planning, budgeting, and governance frameworks, ensuring that **no resident is left behind**.

3. Strategic Priorities

3.1 Youth Empowerment and Participation

- Establish and support youth advisory structures within municipal decision-making.
- Expand access to education, entrepreneurship, digital innovation, and dignified employment.
- Promote youth-driven urban renewal through cultural, social, and environmental projects.

3.2 Civil Society Engagement

- Strengthen partnerships with NGOs, community-based organizations, and informal networks in service co-delivery and policy advocacy.

- Enable transparent and responsive platforms for grassroots input in development planning.

3.3 Inclusive Urban Governance

- Institutionalize participatory budgeting and planning processes across all regions.
- Train local officials and ward councillors in equity-sensitive policy implementation.

3.4 Equitable Access to Services and Space

- Prioritize investment in underserved communities, especially informal settlements and peripheral townships.
 - Ensure that public spaces and services are designed to be accessible, safe, and inclusive for women, persons with disabilities, youth, and migrants.
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4. Role of Mayors and Local Leadership

CoJ recognizes the unique position of mayors and local governments to lead the transformation toward inclusive cities. Local leadership must be equipped to advocate for equity, coordinate intersectoral action, and drive implementation of people-centred urban policy.

5. Conclusion

The City of Johannesburg reaffirms its commitment to the goals of the U20 2025 Cycle and to creating a city where **every resident feels seen, heard, and valued**. Through the promotion of **social inclusion and equity**, Johannesburg aims to be a leading example of an African city that is just, participatory, and future-ready.

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