



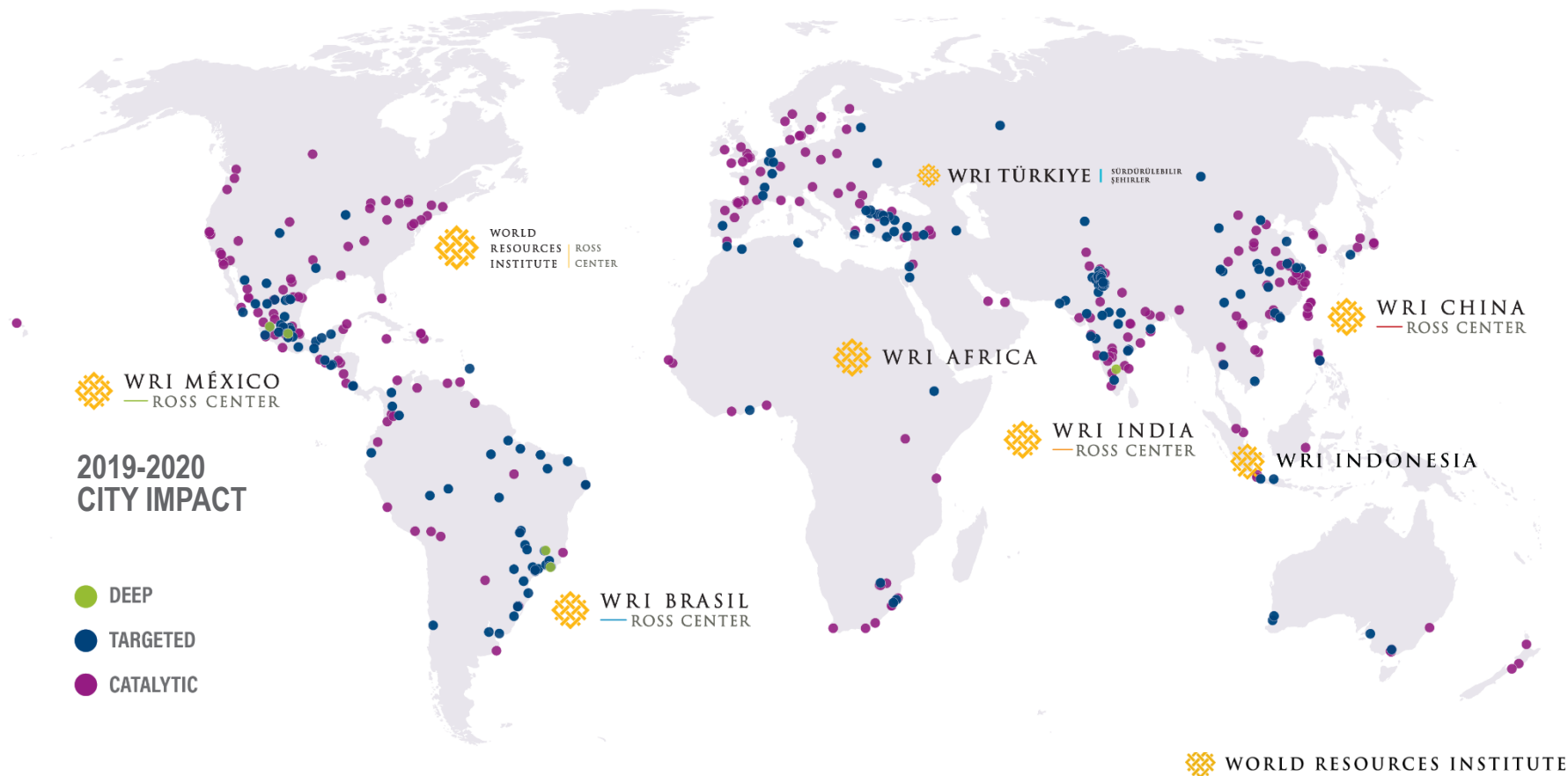
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# GREEN RECOVERY IN CITIES

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# WRI'S CITIES PROGRAM HAS 350 STAFF IN 8+ COUNTRIES





# TO BUILD INCLUSIVE, RESILIENT, LOW-CARBON CITIES



Resilient

Inclusive

Low-Carbon

# WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT FROM THE COVID CRISIS?

The crisis that did not start among the poor, but they bear a vastly disproportionate share of the pain

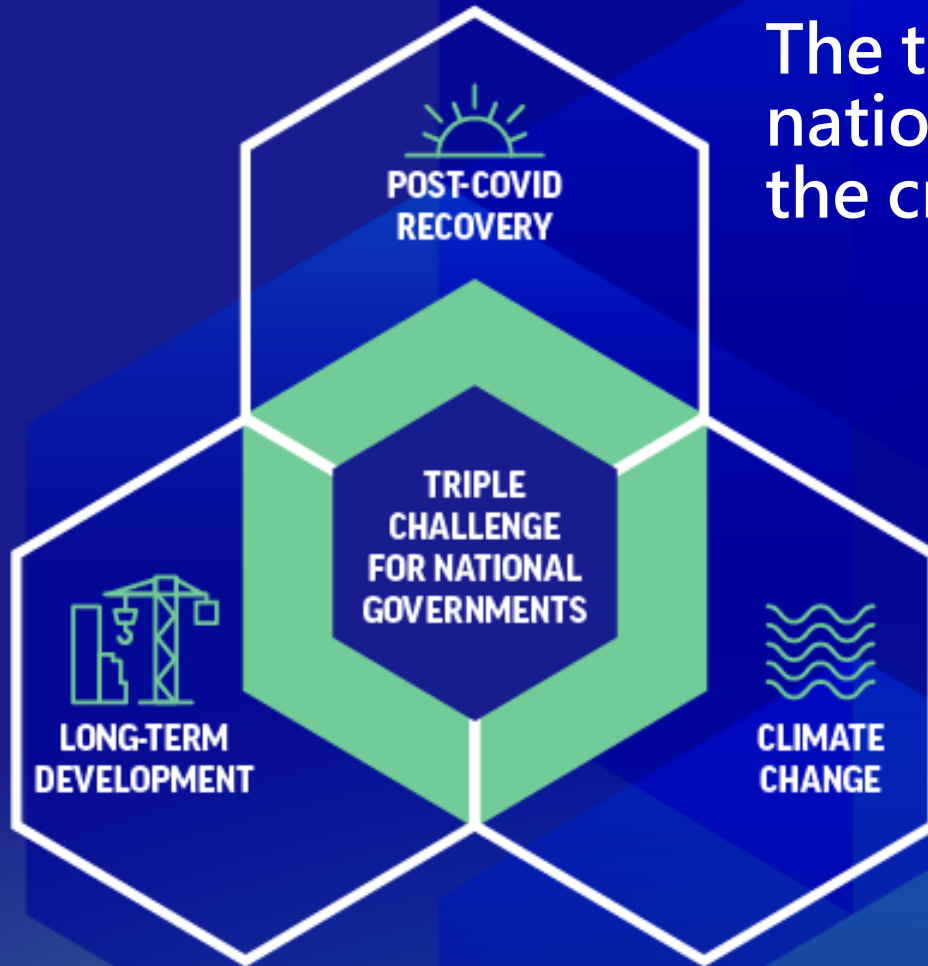
When the poor are taken out of the workforce – “essential workers” – the city ceases to be a city

Social systems are critical to economic systems and physical systems. We need to think of “city systems” very differently.

Cities have taken a huge financial hit

**But there is also new political space for change...**

# The triple challenge facing national governments and the critical role of cities...



A decorative hexagonal frame with a green outline and an orange inner border, containing statistical information about cities.

CITIES PRODUCE 80%  
OF GLOBAL GDP  
ARE HOME TO AN  
ESTIMATED 56%  
OF HUMANKIND



# Cities are key to the tackling the triple challenge

- **Economic engines**, producing 80% of global GDP
- **Development and opportunity hubs**, with efficiencies of scale, access to diverse job opportunities, vibrant communities, and cultural amenities
- **Significant emitters**, responsible for 70% of energy-related global CO2 emissions



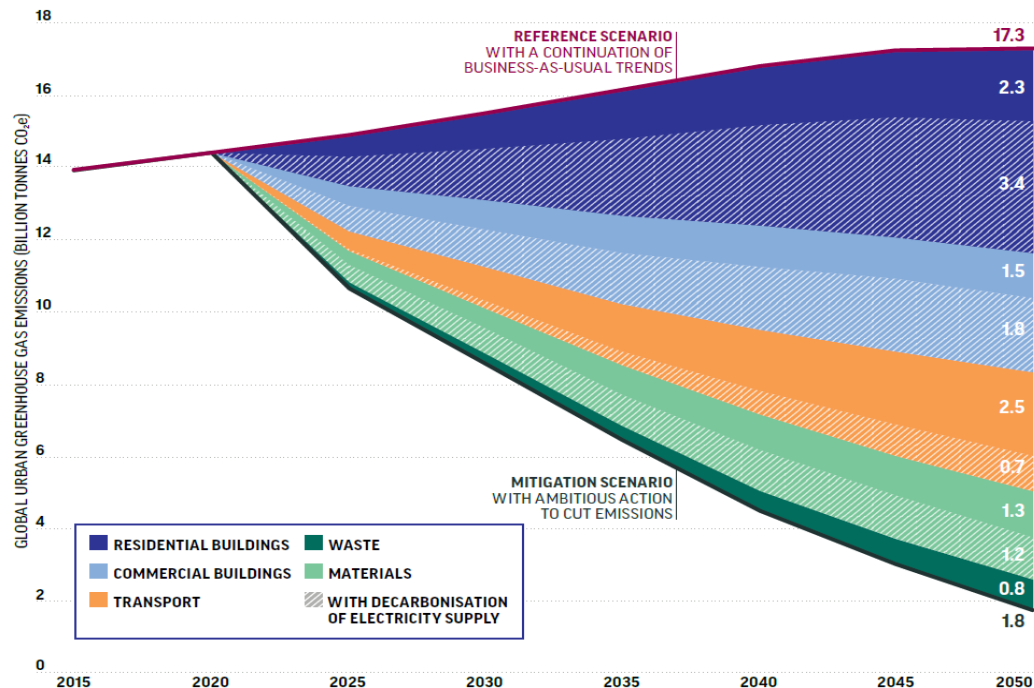
# The Solution: Zero-Carbon, Resilient, Inclusive Cities



National governments can create shared prosperity by making cities low-carbon, resilient and inclusive. This can be done by:

- Adopting technically feasible, currently available low-carbon measures to create **compact, connected, and clean cities** by major investments to transform buildings, transport, materials use, waste, and land-use.
- Enabling **climate-resilient infrastructure** and urban development, including through measures which tackle the socio-economic drivers of climate vulnerability and investments that can reduce emissions and enhance resilience at the same time.
- Introducing measures to **support marginalised communities**, making cities even stronger and more **inclusive**, with particular benefits for the most vulnerable populations

# INVESTMENTS IN CITIES OFFER SOME OF THE HIGHEST POTENTIAL TO UNLEASH ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND INCREASE HEALTH OUTCOMES



## A net zero urban transformation would:

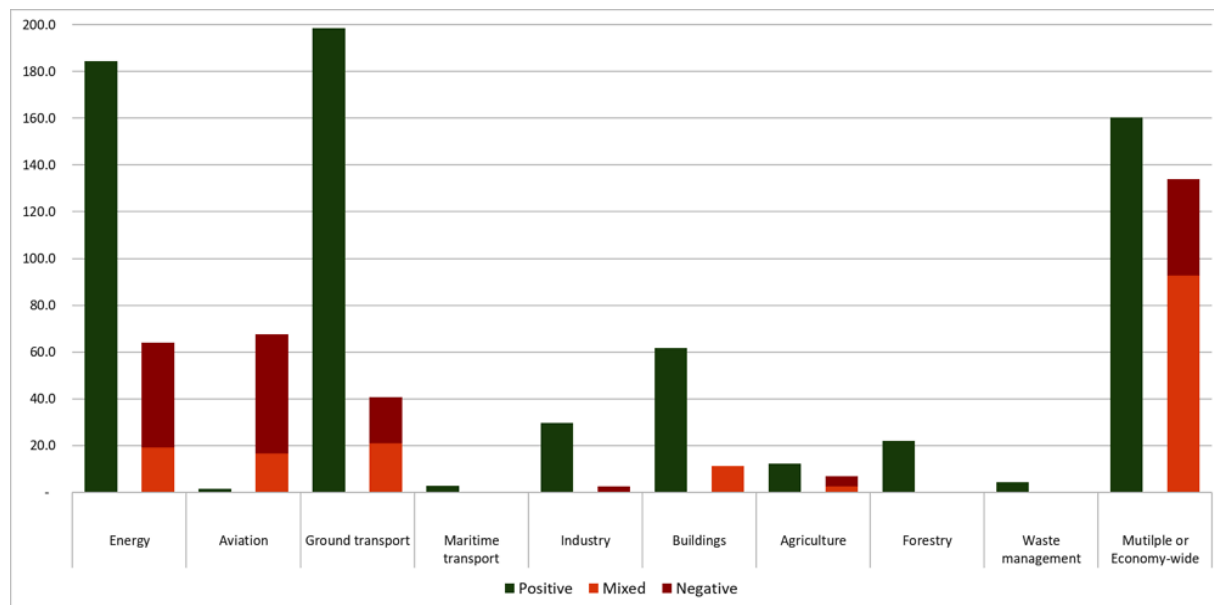
- Require new investment of ~2% of global GDP per year
- Yield annual returns of US\$2.8 trillion per year by 2030, and US\$6.9 trillion per year by 2050, from energy and material cost savings alone (\$24 trillion NPV)
- Support 87 million jobs in 2030, and 45 million jobs in 2050



# CLIMATE POSITIVE SPENDING HAS INCREASED BUT RELATIVE SHARE REMAINS LOW

- **Only 21%** of total recovery spending has been on **environmentally positive** measures (up from 17% in April 2021)
  - Green investments in energy, ground transport and buildings increased by US\$246 billion between April and July 2021
  - **Around 18% of total assessed measures were implemented at city-level**, 20% economy-wide, 62% industry-specific

Funding totals by sector and environmental impact



# A GREEN RECOVERY OFFERS TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL

## Green Construction & Retrofits

Energy  
efficiency:  
**8-21 jobs**



Fossil fuels:  
3 jobs

## Clean Mobility

EV & public  
transport:  
**15-28 jobs**



Building  
roads:  
8 jobs

## Renewable Energy

Renewable  
energy:  
**8-28 jobs**



Fossil fuels:  
3 jobs

## Active Transport

Active transport  
infrastructure:  
**11-27 jobs**



Building roads:  
8 jobs

## Nature-Based Solutions

Tree planting,  
restoration and  
management:  
**40 jobs**



'Grey' water  
Infrastructure:  
20 jobs

## Waste & Resources

Recycling,  
reuse &  
recovery:  
**3-20 jobs**



Landfill and  
Incineration:  
0.1 jobs

(per 1,000 tonnes of waste)

**Green vs. Gray Per US\$1 million in spending**

NB: For Clean R&D, the certainty around the direct job growth potential per US\$1 million in spending is insufficient to provide a comparison

For all sources view [The Economic Case for Greening the Global Recovery through Cities](#), Coalition for Urban Transitions, 2020



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# Examples of action ready opportunities to create green urban jobs

## **Clean mobility**

- Implement dedicated public transport & high-occupancy EV vehicle lanes to curb post-COVID-19 surge in private vehicle use
- Use economic stimulus to explore new / innovative approaches to generating revenue for public transport provision

## **Nature-based solutions**

- Fast-acting, climate-friendly policies like afforestation and woodland management often have low worker training requirements, minimal planning and procurement prerequisites, and most aspects of the work meet social distancing requirements

## **Green Construction and retrofits**

- Retrofit public buildings beyond code, providing initial wave of demand for the construction sector

## **Waste and resources**

- Support and build local capacity to recycle waste into new commodities, treating this as an economic development and rebuilding opportunity. This should include the development of well-functioning markets for secondary resources.



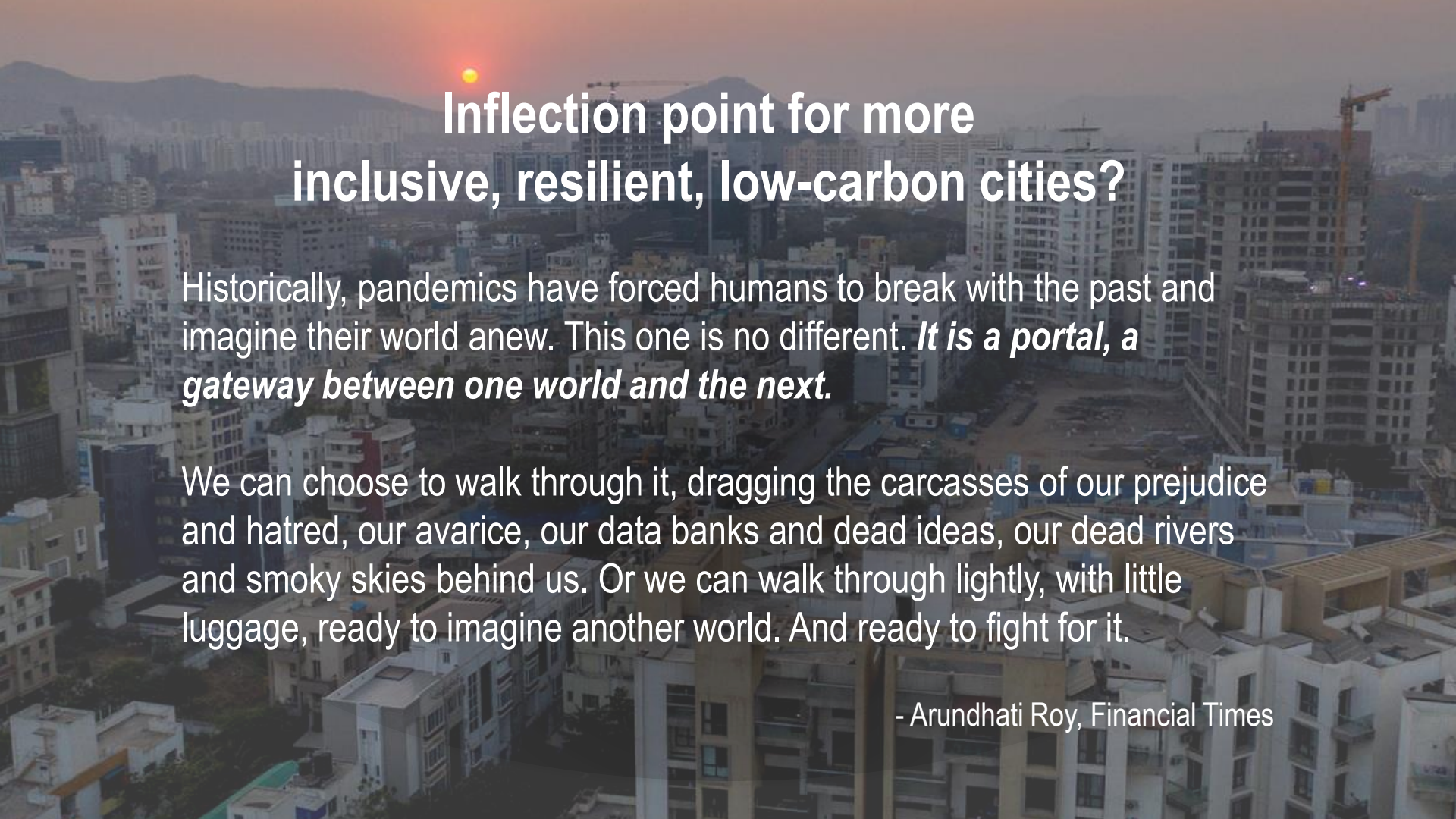
# THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW

This is a decisive decade – by 2030:

- **Trillions of dollars** will be invested into long-lived urban infrastructure, which must be directed towards zero-carbon and resilient development
- **Nearly a billion people** will be added to the global urban population, requiring compact, connected, clean and resilient places to live

Our analysis shows that greenhouse gas **emissions from cities can be reduced by almost 90% by 2050** using widely available mitigation measures but **cities cannot do this alone**. Cities require support from national governments in the form of **national policies and targeted investments**.

**The choices that governments make amid the COVID crisis can put their countries on track for a more prosperous and resilient future or accelerate the climate emergency.**

An aerial photograph of a densely populated city, likely in Asia, taken during the 'golden hour' of sunset. The sun is a bright orange orb low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the scene. The city is a complex of numerous high-rise apartment buildings and commercial structures, packed closely together. In the far distance, a range of mountains is visible under a hazy sky. The overall atmosphere is one of a bustling, modern metropolis at the end of the day.

# Inflection point for more inclusive, resilient, low-carbon cities?

Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. ***It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.***

We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.

- Arundhati Roy, Financial Times

# THANK YOU!

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