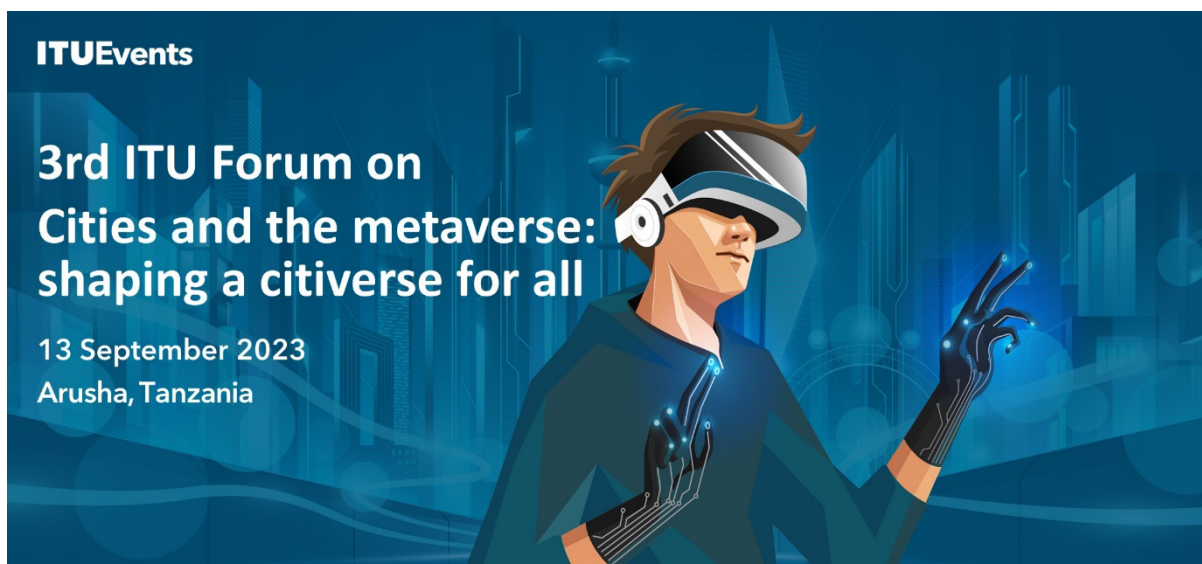


**ITUEvents**

# 3rd ITU Forum on Cities and the metaverse: shaping a citiverse for all

13 September 2023  
Arusha, Tanzania



Hosted & Co-Organized by:



## **Call to Action: Cities and the metaverse: shaping a citiverse for all in Africa 13 September 2023, Arusha, Tanzania**

We the participants of the 3rd ITU Forum on “Cities and the metaverse: shaping a citiverse for all” have acknowledged that:

- Cities act as engines of local, national, international socio-economic development. Strong urban economies are essential for poverty reduction and the provision of adequate housing, infrastructure, education, health, safety, and basic services.
- Cities worldwide are facing increasing challenges brought on by indiscriminate urbanization and climate change. Solving these challenges requires new models of inhabitant engagement, new ways of cooperation between various institutions and stakeholders, supported by novel ways of decision-making.
- Smart sustainable cities can harness the full potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and frontier technologies such as metaverse to address the urban challenges, offering the transparent and viable pathway for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG9 and SDG11.
- International standards are instrumental in disseminating best practices, guidelines, frameworks and generating key consensus that would address these urban challenges and build a more sustainable future for all.
- Recognizing the work carried out by the United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) Initiative Focus Group on metaverse, ITU-T Study Groups and in particular ITU-T Study Group 20 on IoT, smart cities and communities,
- Recalling ITU-T Resolution 98 on enhancing the standardization of the Internet of Things and smart cities and communities for global development, ITU Resolution 200 on the Connect 2030 Agenda and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

- Emphasizing the digital transformation opportunities presented by the metaverse to connect the unconnected and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We the participants of the 3rd ITU Forum on “Cities and the metaverse: shaping a citiverse for all” declare an all stakeholders Call to Action in the African region to join us in the development and standardization of an open and secure metaverse for the benefit of all including the key points of action:

1. **Energy poverty:** Call for international collaboration between public and private sector to attract more investment to expand electrification, both grid and off-grid, to ensure the 620 million African who are suffering from no or little access to electricity will achieve universal access, and that this development should be supported by appropriate policies, regulations, and incentives.
2. **Connectivity:** Accelerate the development of digital public infrastructure to enable the metaverse, which allows for the combining the physical and virtual worlds, ensuring reliable and affordable connectivity for all.
3. **Diversity and Inclusivity:** Ensure the metaverse reflects and supports the diverse needs and aspirations of the African region by promoting and facilitating participation of all stakeholders, including governments, industry, academia, and civil society.
4. **Open, Interoperable and Transparent Standards:** Working together with standards developing organizations such as ITU, industry fora and other key stakeholders to develop metaverse standards that are open, safe, secure, and inclusive.
5. **Socioeconomic Opportunities:** Create new socioeconomic opportunities to improve the quality of life for all by maximizing the opportunities of the metaverse to drive sustainable digital transformation.
6. **People-centred cities and the Citiverse:** Enable smart, sustainable, and resilient cities and communities by creating innovative metaverse applications in urban planning, transportation, health, and public services to accelerate digital transformation in cities and communities for the benefit of all inhabitants with a special focus on biodiversity.

We urge all stakeholders in the African region to join us, as we continue our metaverse journey. Together we can harness the power of the metaverse to accelerate innovation, connectivity, and prosperity, realizing the promise of the SDGs and building a better future for all to ensure that no one is left behind.