

NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

FRAMEWORK FOR

A RAPID DIAGNOSTIC

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

National Urban Policy

Framework for a Rapid Diagnostic

First published in Nairobi in 2015 by UN-Habitat

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www.unhabitat.org

HS Number: HS/092/15E

ISBN Number(Series): 978-92-1-133366-4

ISBN Number:(Volume) 978-92-1-132691-8

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SUMMARY

The purpose of the framework for Rapid diagnostic is to identify some of the key elements for a policy diagnosis to formulate a NUP while emphasizing an integrated approach that espouses a three pronged approach; Planning and design, Legislation, urban economy and finance.

The NUP diagnostic phase is a crucial step that informs and engages policy and decision-makers, and provides them with the evidence needed to design choices and support critical decisions in the NUP formulation process. Formulating a National Urban Policy requires a detailed stocktaking of relevant issues, challenges and opportunities; the NUP diagnostic is therefore an umbrella activity that gathers the necessary information to deliver on NUP objectives and other related principles. Once the diagnostic and formulation process is complete, the national urban policy gives strategic direction, promotes coordination and, therefore, the most efficient use of resources. The National Urban Policy framework for a rapid diagnostic therefore identifies some of these key elements to be considered in undertaking a policy diagnosis to formulate a NUP.

The framework serves as the background and input to initiate the discussion on the process of developing an NUP in a manner that is consultative, participatory, integrated, coordinated and inclusive. The structure proposed may respond better in a context of high urbanization rate and low GDP of less than

USD1,000 per capita. The Framework seeks to ultimately answering the following key questions: WHY do we need a (new) national urban policy, WHAT are the critical elements that need to be considered for that to happen (the framework) and WHO are the actors and HOW to proceed?

The NUP diagnostic framework focuses mainly on the following critical elements; urbanization drivers, trends and projections, urban legislation and urban regulations, urban planning, housing, infrastructure and basic services, urban economy and municipal finances, the urban network and other issues that can be deemed to of strategic importance including cross-cutting issues. All these elements are at the intersection of the environmental, social and economic objectives and issues pertaining to the pillars of sustainable urbanization. The guidance therefore gives the background and context for each element, and sample generic guiding questions that can be followed in conducting relevant assessments. There is a scope for questions to be more specific, as the context demands. The suggested length for each area is purely a guide and can be modified accordingly as the assessment context dictates.

The different context of a country takes precedence in the choice of the elements, including the level of priority that will be accorded to each of them to give the policy a unique character that directly responds to challenges and opportunities on the ground.





1

BACKGROUND

Globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, with 54 per cent of the world's population residing in urban areas in 2014¹. Continuing population growth and urbanization are projected to add 2.5 billion people to the world's urban population by 2050, with nearly 90 per cent of the increase concentrated in Asia and Africa. As the world continues to urbanize, sustainable development challenges will be increasingly concentrated in cities, particularly in the lower and middle income countries where the pace of urbanization is fastest.

The process of urbanization historically has been associated with other important economic and social transformations. Cities are the engines of growth. However, rapid and unplanned urban growth threatens sustainable development when the necessary infrastructure is not developed or when policies are not implemented to ensure that the benefits of city life are equitably

shared. Today, despite the comparative advantage of cities, urban areas are more unequal than rural areas and hundreds of millions of the world's urban poor live in sub-standard conditions. In many cities, unplanned or inadequately managed urban expansion leads to rapid sprawl, pollution, and environmental degradation, together with unsustainable production and consumption patterns.

Although urbanization is strongly linked to development, both social and economic, in many countries, particularly in the developing world these are not effectively harnessed for development and in fact urbanization's challenges often seem to outpace the development gains for the following reasons:

- 1) Many countries lack the supporting policies and frameworks that can leverage it for increased development gains and guide it towards sustainable patterns.

¹ *World urbanization prospects; the 2014 revision*
(United Nations, 2014)

- 2) The overall understanding of the importance of cities in national development is very limited and likewise the appreciation of the structural transformations represented by the dynamics of growth in urban centres.
- 3) Inadequate institutional capacities at neighborhood, city, metropolitan, regional and national level to apply integrated approaches so as to attain urban sustainability.

In order to harness urbanization and mitigate its negative externalities, and promote an urban paradigm shift there is need for a coordinated approach and clear policy directions.

Governments need formulate and implement policies to ensure that the benefits of urban growth are shared equitably and sustainably. ²The Rio +20 Conference outcome, “The future we want”, recognized that cities can lead the way towards economically, socially and environmentally sustainable societies, but that a holistic approach to urban planning and management is needed to improve living standards of urban and rural dwellers alike. The introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 11, has given further leverage to encourage effective urban planning, and make cities and human settlements inclusive,

² *Report of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2012)*

safe, resilient and sustainable, and to develop efficient urbanization as a tool for development. A specific target that bolsters the case for NUP is that “by 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels”.

Sustainable urbanization requires that cities generate better income and employment opportunities, expand the necessary infrastructure for water and sanitation, energy, transportation, information and communications; ensure equal access to services; reduce the number of people living in slums; and preserve the natural assets within the city and surrounding areas. Diversified policies to plan for and manage the spatial distribution of the population and internal migration are needed. Sustainable urbanization requires competent, responsive and accountable governments charged with the management of cities and urban expansion. ³As complex challenges faced by cities cannot be solved by spatially blind sectorial policies, governments

³ *Evolution of National Urban Policies: A global overview (UN-Habitat, 2014)*

need to become more sensitive to the threats and opportunities posed by rapid urban growth. A political process is required to mobilize and sustain active support from across the conventional line functions of government. A national urban policy is one of the crucial strategy governments could adopt to effectively manage their urbanization.

1.1 NUP: A UN-HABITAT'S STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION

A national urban policy (NUP) is an integral component of UN-Habitat's strategy for sustainable urbanization, in particular to address the needs of urbanization in all types of human settlements, from villages and market towns to the great cities and megalopolises of the world. This is also backed by the Governing Council resolution HSP/GC/24/L.6 which “requests the Executive Director in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives to develop a general guiding framework for the development, where appropriate of national urban policies, based on international good experiences, to further support member states when developing and improving their urban policies.



Market place at Onitsha, Nigeria © UN-Habitat/Alessandro Scotti

The 4th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (“AMCHUD”), held in Nairobi in March 2012, also paved the way to a new reflection on the development of transformative National Urban Policies in Africa aiming at supporting “more creative, productive and inclusive urban development.

A national urban policy (NUP) is at the centre of UN-Habitat’s more strategic and integrated approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century cities and human settlements, based on two premises:

- 1) “The first is the empirically verified positive correlation between urbanization and development, which demonstrates clearly that urbanization

can be used as a powerful tool for transforming production capacities and income levels in developing countries. However, a mind-set shift is required on the part of policymakers, away from viewing urbanization as a problem and towards viewing it as a tool for development for this to take place.

- 2) The second premise is that the major challenges facing cities and human settlements today are an outcome of the inadequacy of the fundamental systems underlying the efficient and effective functioning of cities and human settlements, in particular urban legislation, urban design and financial systems. These challenges, which cannot be overcome without addressing the underlying systems, include unemployment, especially among young people; social

and economic inequalities, often manifested in numerous housing problems and the emergence of slums and proliferation of the informal sector; a deficit in urban infrastructure and services, unsustainable energy consumption patterns; urban sprawl and increasing emissions of greenhouse gases.

An NUP therefore embodies an integrated rather than sectorial, transformative rather than piecemeal approach, and it links urbanization and human settlements to sustainable development by focusing on prosperity, livelihoods and employment, especially among young people. It is the entry point for a three-pronged approach adopted by UN-Habitat which places emphasis on: urban legislation; urban planning and design; and urban finance and economy, as levers for the transformation of cities and human settlements towards greater environmental, economic and social sustainability. ⁵At the centre of the three-pronged approach are the following foundational principles to promote systematic change in how urban development is managed;

- 1) Plan for development in advance, counted in terms of decades not years. Planning in advance of urban growth is necessary to direct growth in efficient, equitable, and

⁴ *Activities of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat, 2015)*

⁵ *Urbanization for prosperity. UN-habitat (2015).*

environmentally healthy patterns. The quality of urban planning and design has a determining impact on the value generated by human settlements through efficient and equitable public space, streets and buildable areas.⁶ It is less socially disruptive and more cost-effective to plan for urbanization in advance.

- 2) Ensure that the **legislative frameworks and institutional structures** are designed to support the implementation of long term policies and plans. Adequate planning rules and regulations are a prerequisite to the design, production and management of efficient and equitable human settlements.
- 3) Promote a balance in the **financial gain** from urban development between the private sector and the public interest and support the sharing of these gains and other opportunities among the broadest range of stakeholders to ensure the maintenance of infrastructure and encourage consistent political support for projects. Efficient and transparent finance systems are key to investments, maintenance and management of the city, and should ensure redistribution of benefits generated by urban endogenous development.

To achieve these requires a national framework to guide interventions in an integrated manner. While the legislative framework can organize the relationships between institutions and guide the implementation of projects, a clear **national urban policy** is required to provide an overarching coordinating framework, to describe the intended national system of cities, to inform the development of legislation and to provide coordination in the implementation of the three pronged approach. National urban policies also need to consider the social and political sustainability of the approaches they propose. Central elements of social and political sustainability are guarantees for:

- Practical enablement and participation
- Gender equality
- The Human Rights-Based Approach and the rule of law

The NUP also promotes core level principles related to urban designs that are capable of capturing the benefits of agglomeration. Cities should be:

- compact
- integrated
- connected
- socially inclusive
- resilient to climate change
- human rights-based

1.2 A NUP DEFINED

A National Urban Policy (NUP) is a deliberate government-led process of coordinating and rallying various actors for a common goal/vision for the desired urbanization in a set period of time (e.g. 20-30 years horizon or more). In some context, NUP can be referred to as urban development policy or urbanisation policy. It is a multi-sectorial, multi-level, multi-stakeholder and human development centred process aimed at the transformation urban areas and other human settlements. Actors include various ministerial departments, local authorities, private sector, civil society organizations, research and academia.

A **progressive NUP** should promote inclusive national urban policies that assert urban space and territoriality, the positive role of urbanization in national socio-economic development and provide an overarching coordinating framework to address urban challenges in order to maximize the benefits of urbanization, while mitigating potential adverse externalities. Such an NUP seeks to strengthen the link between urbanization and socio-economic development and environmental sustainability by guiding the urbanization process based on compact, connected, integrated and inclusive cities. More importantly and as a bare minimum, an innovative NUP should take into account the economic and urbanization

⁶ *Evolution of National Urban Policies: A global overview (UN-Habitat, 2014)*

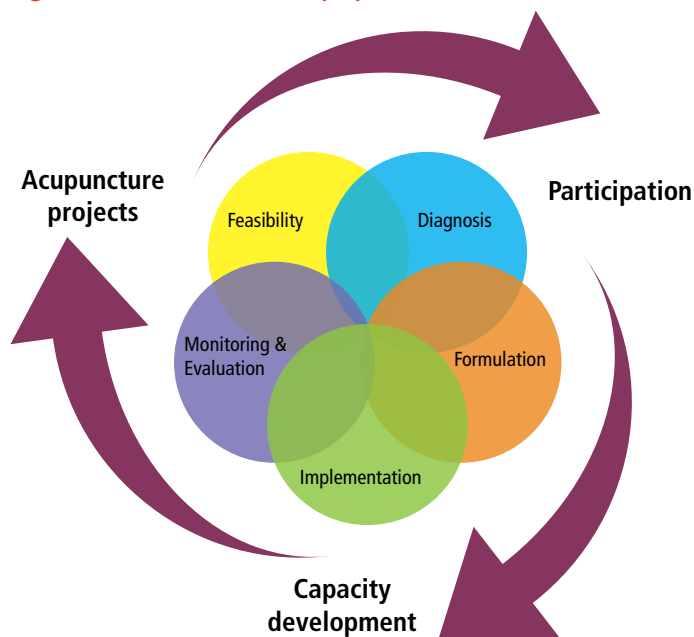
levels. For instance, countries with high urbanization rates with low GDP per capita will need a different set of national urban policy compared to medium to high income countries with low or shrinking urban population. Furthermore, the new generation NUP should aim at fostering the outcomes such as: (1) adequate space for street and mobility, (2) high and sustainable density, (3) mixed land use and built-up areas/public space, (4) adequate spatial distribution of land use, and (5) Improved access to adequate housing, infrastructure and services. It shall be stressed that an NUP document will then inform other processes such as sectorial policies, urban strategies, urban plans and planning. The NUP remains a rolling document that aims to predict and guide urbanization and urban development and should be updated as the situation evolves. The NUP is regularly reviewed and tested against priority benchmarks that are consequential and not formalistic. A national urban policy, amongst others, should allow for:

- (a) The identification and setting of national priorities for urban development and the recognition of weaknesses that must be addressed in order to achieve sustainable urbanization.
- (b) Improved inter-governmental and inter-agency coordination for a common purpose

- (c) More coordinated public and private investment in urban areas and prioritization of urban investments.
- (d) Integration of all stakeholders, including the most vulnerable populations, such as youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)

This guidance document covers one of the initial stages of NUP development, namely the feasibility and diagnostic stages (see figure 1). The rapid assessment or diagnostic will inform the subsequent interactive stages; formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Separate, but complementary guidance notes shall be prepared on the subsequent stages of the NUP process to include formulation, implementation and monitoring & evaluation of a national urban policy. This guidance is not meant to be exhaustive, but captures some of the fundamentals to be considered for initiating the process of developing an NUP.

Figure 1: National Urban Policy Cycle







2

THE NUP DIAGNOSTIC FRAMEWORK

The National Urban Policy framework for a rapid diagnostic provides the key elements in the crucial step that informs and engages policy and decision-makers, and provides them with the evidence needed to design their choices and support critical decisions in the NUP formulation process. As formulating a National Urban Policy requires a detailed stocktaking of relevant issues, challenges and opportunities, the NUP diagnostic is therefore an umbrella activity that gathers the necessary information to deliver on NUP objectives and other related principles. Once the diagnostic and formulation process is complete, the national urban policy gives strategic direction, promotes coordination and, therefore, the most efficient use of resources.

The elaborated outline below serves as the background and input to initiate the discussion on the process of developing an NUP in a manner that is consultative, participatory, integrated, coordinated and inclusive. The structure proposed

may respond better in a context of high urbanization rate and low GDP of less than USD1,000 per capita. The guiding structure (see figure 1 below) is mainly about ultimately answering the following key questions: WHY do we need a (new) national urban policy, WHAT are the critical elements that need to be considered for that to happen (the framework) and WHO are the actors and HOW to proceed?

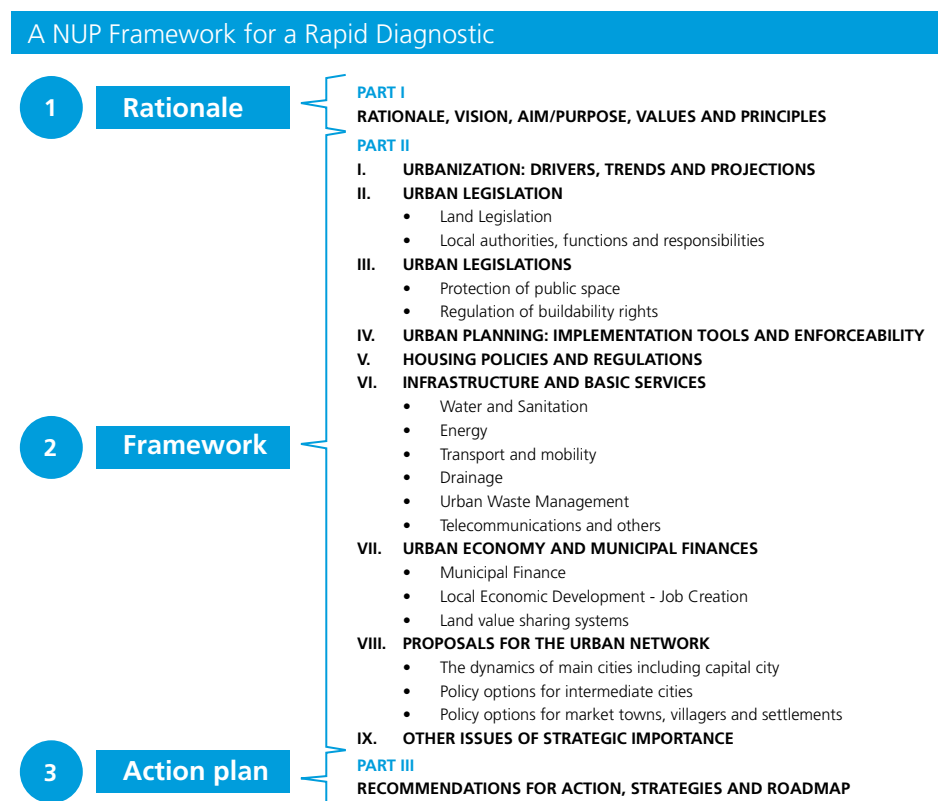
This guidance note focuses mainly on the critical elements of the framework; urbanization drivers, trends and projections, urban legislation and urban regulations, urban planning, housing, infrastructure and basic services, urban economy and municipal finances, the urban network and other issues that can be deemed to of strategic importance. All these elements are at the intersection of the environmental, social and economic objectives and issues pertaining to the pillars of sustainable urbanization. The guidance therefore gives the background and context for

each element, and sample generic guiding questions that can be followed in conducting relevant assessments. There is a scope for questions to be more specific, as the context demands. The suggested length for each area is purely a guide and can be modified accordingly as the assessment context dictates.

Various methodologies can be used to achieve the stocktaking. These

methods include rapid appraisal, desktop studies, surveys, SWOT analysis, assets/ opportunities and negative externalities analysis, consultative meetings, focus groups, etc. The output of this diagnosis could range from an issues/background paper to a detailed diagnostic for an NUP. The process for undertaking and producing the information required in the diagnostic stage should not take more than 6 months.

Figure 2: An NUP diagnostic framework



3

RATIONALE, VISION/PURPOSE, VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

This section may be best completed after an entire diagnostic assessment has been undertaken. The section may cover the rationale for the NUP, its aim/purpose, vision, values and principles underpinning the policy. The introduction should set the tone by explaining why an NUP might be needed to respond to what imperatives and level or phase of urbanization in a country or a region. The NUP design and approach may significantly vary for low income countries, medium, high and very high income countries. The assessment hereafter proposed is suitable for low income countries with high urbanization

rate. Questions that could be reflected upon include the following:

- (a) Why is an NUP imperative for the country?
- (b) What could be the aim/purpose, vision, values and principles to underpin the policy (often a culmination of an entire NUP diagnostic assessment)?
- (c) What is the country's definition of urban, and the classification of different sizes of the urban conurbations, and how may these affect the policy direction?



4

CONTEXT ASSESSMENT AND BACKGROUND

This section is the key focus of this document. It is important that there is a good understanding of what exist and what is doable to decide if and what national policy could be developed and for what purpose. This phase is mainly about stocktaking to understand the urban systems. Additional processes could be designed for an in-depth diagnostic assessment of the issues or areas⁷. The issues outlined below are not to be seen as standing alone, but all **integrated and complementary** elements to the process. The common thread is a function of intersections amongst each of them and how it impacts on the environmental, social and economic objectives and issues pertaining to the pillars of sustainable urbanization. The final document may be organized differently and issues listed below may be rearranged. The

⁷ *The structure proposed is flexible and the final document or report could be organized in many ways including (1) using the 3 main pillars of sustainable development, namely social, economic and environment or (2) using the expected and desired outcomes such as mixed land use, street and mobility, productivity, urban governance, etc.)*

list below (not in a particular order of importance) can serve as guide to the reflection. To address the fundamental systems underlying the efficient and effective functioning of cities and human settlements, it is encouraged that the urban legislative, planning and design and financial systems are given elaborate attention as key features to enable planning in advance for rapid urbanization.

4.1 URBANIZATION OVERVIEW: DRIVERS, TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Factors influencing urbanization, trends and projections represent an important context on which future planning to manage urbanization could be based. Urban growth causes could range from the emergence of new towns, the expansion of existing urban areas, migration – both internal and external.

However, the root causes need to be explored to understand the far ranging causes of urbanization. This section should include a brief description of the key specific drivers of urbanization (economic, demographic, political, social, environmental, regional supranational or national etc.) that should underpin the NUP. Key national and urban facts, statistics and figures on urbanization and slum proliferation could be highlighted here. This section may reflect population dynamics and trends in relation to urbanization outcomes and patterns (past, present and future). Some countries may have undertaken urban profiles from which information could be extracted. Understanding the domestic urbanization trends and dynamics should help to improve the policy response. Questions to be reflected upon may include the following:

- (a) What is the share of the urban population (including structure), urban growth rate and density?
- (b) What are the key drivers (past, present and future) of urban growth (economic, demographic, political, social, environmental, regional supranational or national etc.)?
- (c) What is the projected urban population in 20, 30, 50 years (can be disaggregated by regions, cities and towns etc.)?
- (d) What is the average population density in urban areas (can be

disaggregated by different regions and levels of urban centres)?

4.2 SPATIAL AND POPULATION DYNAMICS ANALYSIS

The important elements in this section include demographic, population dynamics and projections with a spatial consideration. The projections and spatial distribution of future population of various age groups across the country can be covered taking into account the capital and other bigger cities as well as intermediate, small and market towns/villages and potential new settlements (both rural and urban). In recognition of the complementarity, interdependency of an integrated system of cities (based on the functions and dynamics of each of them) to ensure sustainable urbanization, this section may map the evolution and projection of spatial distribution of cities and towns for at least 30 years. The section may also explore how a better distribution of (emerging) urban patterns or their extensions can emerge through a better design that takes into account key features such as compactness, connectivity, inclusiveness and integration. This section should be supported by maps, illustrations and graphs. This section dovetails with the section on “analysis of urbanization processes”.

4.3 URBAN LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

Law is a central element in determining sustainable urban development outcomes; physical, social, economic and environmental. It provides long term stability, predictability, guidance on policy objectives. Non-restrictive, enabling and evolving law geared to take cities ahead is a fundamental prerequisite. The need for law needs to be considered and prioritized, as in many situations there is too much law than what urban authorities can manage. The foundation elements of law need to be rethought to make sure they are functionally effective. Implementation needs to be the cornerstone for the design of the legal instruments. It is therefore important to consider the efficiency of the mechanisms that are proposed and the outcomes, especially for the different groups, and reviewed periodically. Urban Law should aim to better the outcomes of the different groups, including the vulnerable; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)

Legislative and regulatory frameworks need to be supportive of planning objectives. While this section may look

at the overall legislative and regulatory frameworks relevant to urban areas by assessing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOTs), it is important that it focuses on assessing if and how the legislative frameworks are supportive of the planning objectives i.e. urban planning, urban services, housing etc. It is important that the mapping or inventory of policies and laws are done along with the assessment of their implementation and practices. Potential gaps and opportunities can be identified with the view to create a more conducive environment for the NUP.

There are three related concerns regarding urban legislation and

regulations. The most important is that the law reflects the **technical standards needed to deliver on the fundamental systems underlying the efficient and effective functioning of cities and human settlements, in particular urban legislative, urban design and financial systems.** The most important of these relate to, amongst others, these five areas:

- i. Minimum levels of efficiency and transparency in land management, regardless of the local concepts of property rights
- ii. The provision and maintenance of public space, including both streets and green space, and the creation

of appropriate block sizes and patterns

- iii. Plotting systems that encourage appropriate plot sizes, allowing for relative ease in consolidation and subdivision and that promote rational patterns
- iv. The level of public influence, or control, over development rights and associated value gains (e.g. setbacks, build able areas etc.)
- v. The existence of a building code that allows for a diversity of affordable and locally appropriate building options.

A second area of concern regarding legislative frameworks is their quality, understood in terms of their **functional effectiveness.** The foundation elements of law need to be rethought to make sure they are functionally effective to deliver policy objectives. Functional effectiveness depends upon a number of factors, including the clarity of objectives, the precision of the language used and the degree to which the legislation is designed to specifically address the identified issue in the most straightforward manner possible. Implementation needs to be considered as the fundamental part of the design of the legal instruments.



Public space in Medellín, Colombia © Flickr/Eduardo F.

Finally, the third concern regards the process by which legislative frameworks are adopted. If they are not **evidence based and validated by a broad cross section of interested parties**, their potential for implementation may be doubtful, regardless of how good their technical content might be.

Policy and law are mutually interdependent. Law depends upon policy for its 'instructions' – what is it meant to achieve. Policy depends upon law as its primary means for implementation.

4.4 URBAN LEGISLATION

4.4.1 Land regulation

The most important fundamental as far as land regulation is concerned regards the **minimum levels of efficiency and transparency in land management, regardless of the local concepts of property rights**. This sub-section may deal with existence and enforceability of land policies, land laws, land authorities, urban land markets, land records and fit for purpose land administration and registration systems, etc. The tenure system and protection of land rights is also of paramount importance.

Questions that could be answered by this assessment include the following:

- (a) Do the current legislative, regulatory and other related instruments provide the minimum levels of efficiency and transparency in land management, regardless of the local concepts of property rights to promote tenure security?
- (b) What other specific challenges are associated with the regulation and management of land? Do fit for purpose land administration and registration systems exist?
- (c) What opportunities exist, including a range of reforms to land and property regulation and management to improve the operation of the urban land markets in order to facilitate land development and redevelopment?
- (d) To what extent is the regulation of land compounding or contributing to improved development outcomes for the most vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?



Diepsloot secondary city, South Africa © Cities Alliance/William Cobbett

4.4.2 Local authorities, functions and responsibilities

Local governments are at the centre of urban development. The need to strengthen local bodies so that they can effectively implement urban development plans and mobilize local revenues is urgent. The capacity and capability of local government with jurisdiction over urban areas is often inadequate. Municipalities rarely possess adequate financial resources or even access to funds, or the ability to absorb funds in order to finance urban investments. The ability to identify, design and appropriately package bankable projects is limited, and severely restricted in many cases. It is not uncommon that urban policies, programs and projects are also often compromised by institutional limitations at the local level. This calls for National governments to strengthen the responsibilities and resources of local governments because they are closer to the ground and more in tune with emerging problems. This requires that the general nature of functions across levels of government be clearly defined, including fiscal decentralization to give city authorities more direct control over public spending and to strengthen transparency, local service delivery and democratic accountability.

Local government is better placed to make a difference because it has

superior knowledge, perspective and accountability to manage urban development in a rounded and responsive manner. City-level institutions can engage more effectively with local communities, private investors and other interests to build a common strategic agenda for the future of the city. They have greater flexibility to experiment with different approaches and learn from experience. City development strategies or integrated development plans help to make the difficult long-term decisions that balance economic, social and environmental considerations, and that align plans for the future with government investment in infrastructure and other facilities.

There are different laws that set out the functions of central government and local bodies, intergovernmental relationships. This sub-section should draw the link between the local, regional and national governments. The analysis could refer to other components of governance such effectiveness, transparency and accountability. Questions that could be answered include the following:

- (a) Does the legislative and regulatory provide for clear delineation of roles between the different spheres of government, including intergovernmental relations?
- (b) What challenges (from human

resources management, fiscal decentralization, structure for accountability, and legal framework assignment of functions) bedevils decentralization efforts and what opportunities exist to improve the situation?

- (c) To what extent is decentralization or lack of, compounding or contributing to improved development outcomes for the most vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?

4.5 URBAN REGULATIONS: PUBLIC SPACE, PLOTTING, “BUILDABILITY” RIGHTS AND BUILDING CODES

This section is predominantly concerned with the technical standards needed to deliver on the legislative fundamental systems which underlie the efficient and effective functioning of cities and human settlements. These relates to, amongst others, the following areas:

- i. **Public space:** the provision and maintenance of public space, including both streets and green space, and the creation of appropriate block sizes and patterns
- ii. **Plotting:** plotting systems that encourage appropriate plot sizes, allowing for relative ease in consolidation and subdivision and that promote rational patterns
- iii. **Regulation of buildability rights:** the level of public influence, or control, over development rights and associated value gains (e.g. setbacks, build able areas etc.)
- iv. **Building codes:** the existence of a building code that allows for and promotes a diversity of affordable, low-impact and locally appropriate building materials and designs.

This section therefore may include an assessment of existing urban-related laws, policies and regulations (including sectorial) along with their implementation effectiveness, the roles and responsibilities of actors (and their effectiveness) in controlling development – **buildability - rights**, delimitation and management of public space, effective plotting systems and building codes. Legal and institutional mapping and analysis could be addressed, mainly in terms of need for an opportunity for effective coordination. Opportunities for enhancing other related concerns can be

also explored. Questions to be answered may include the following:

- (a) Does the legislative and regulatory provide for the delimitation and maintenance of public space including both streets and open green space, and the creation of appropriate block sizes and patterns? What is the minimum standard for public space that is promulgated, if any? What is the target range for street connectivity, if any?
- (b) Does the legislative and regulatory provide for plotting systems that encourage appropriate plot sizes, allowing for relative ease in consolidation and subdivision and that promote rational patterns? What is the plotting system and what is the size and typology?
- (c) Does the current legislative and regulatory provide effective regulations of buildability rights (that create value) and building codes that allows for and promotes a diversity of affordable, low-impact and locally appropriate building materials and designs?
- (d) How effective is the implementation of the regulations related to public space, plotting, buildability rights and building codes?
- (e) What other challenges and

opportunities exist to improve the management of public space, plotting systems, buildability rights and building codes?

4.6 URBAN PLANNING: IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS AND ENFORCEABILITY

Rapid unmanaged and unplanned urban growth is manifesting in a range of urban ills; slums proliferation, inadequate and unaffordable housing, inadequate and poor urban infrastructure and services, urban sprawl etc. Poor spatial planning has promoted car dependency and is largely characterized by high level of zoning, segregation and exclusion, loss of street life, high energy demand and emission of greenhouse gases, increasing number of urban disasters amongst others. A new urban model that promotes a more compact, socially inclusive, better integrated and connected cities that foster sustainable urban development and are resilient to climate change should be the new norm.

The new urban model should espouse such characteristics including, but not limited to, promoting high quality of public space, adequate density, mixed urban uses, efficient mobility, mixed social structure (social inclusion and integration and equity in access to services), urban resilience (climate change

resilience, disaster preparedness and management) sustainable energy and be underpinned by clear, practical, fit for purpose, enforceable norms and rules. Urban and spatial plans have to be fit for purpose, because when they are too comprehensive or take too long to prepare have resulted in limited implementation. They need to combine design with financial considerations that are supported by appropriate rules and regulations, coordinated across scale and sectors and building on effective institutional arrangements.

Adequate spatial planning and implementation holds a greater promise for sustainable urban development. Planned, productive and integrated city growth, to ensure sustainable mobility, public spaces including green spaces, urban regeneration and infills in order to contain urban sprawl, promoting access to affordable, reliable and sustainable modern energy services and energy efficiency, reduced environmental impacts of rural urban convergences and mitigation and adaptation to climate change, reducing air pollution while also promoting urban health and enhancing national and local authorities capacity to provide basic services are pivotal for urban planning for sustainable urban development.

An assessment on urban planning and design should assess the role of urban

planning to secure quality design of the urban fabric. Existing urban centres, city extensions, redevelopment of inner city areas (planned city infill) and new cities (often developed to offset pressures on the current system of cities) provide a vantage platform to assess the role of urban planning and design to secure quality design of the urban fabric of a country. Planned city extensions should focus on the laying out of the principal street and block patterns, the establishment of the rules on plotting and subdivision design, mechanisms to ensure that consequent value gains can be partially applied to offsetting infrastructure costs and on the phasing of developments in an organized manner. Planned city infills are more focused on increasing the efficiency of already urbanized areas. They optimize land use to minimize transport and service delivery costs per capita, improve street life, and enhance economic viability and walkability, availability and connectivity of public space. New town development is usually considered where a need to re-balance population distribution in national system of cities has been identified. If proposed, new city development must be based on real development dynamics with a careful consideration of location for need and environmental impact, as well as whether it is possible to guarantee the resources required over the long term.

Whichever approach is most appropriate, it should be developed considering the realities of the local situation. Most importantly it should be developed at a scale adequate to meet projected demand over the long term and, to the extent possible, to lessen the scarcity of serviced urban land. These new supplies of serviced urban land need to be delivered in proximity to existing centres and poles of growth to maximize their relevance, particularly to vulnerable groups. The need for scale, and to a lesser extent proximity, lead to a further requirement: for phased implementation. Demand for serviced urban land is something that accumulates with time and plans should be designed with this in mind, as an early over supply can be counterproductive as well as necessary. Phased implementation also allows for more efficient resource planning, particularly where resources are scarce, and can also often address social and political challenges by avoiding dramatic change.

This section therefore deals with the role of urban planning to secure quality design of the urban fabric predominantly geared to provide adequate space for streets, promote high density, mixed land-use, social mix, and limit land-use specialization. The section may also identify planning capabilities, instruments and systems, as well as planning policies and practices as evident



Mexico City, Mexico © Flickr/Threthny

in the expansion of cities, redevelopment of cities and development of new towns. Issues of capacity development in urban planning and urban management could also be analyzed and discussed here. The urban environment (e.g. biodiversity) urban public space, etc. could also be addressed here, particularly in terms of constraints and opportunity for urbanization and linked to other issues such as population, planning and design, etc. Urban natural risks and their management/mitigation should be identified (e.g. avoiding building and development in ecologically and culturally fragile ecosystems); This section will make the link between urban planning instruments and practices, for instance in terms of proportion of space allocated to built-up areas, public space, street patterns, and connectivity. Questions to be addressed may include

the following:

- (a) What is (and how effective is) the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks guiding urban planning to secure a better design of the urban fabric?
- (b) What is the role of urban planning to secure quality design of the urban fabric? To what extent do existing urban areas, city extension areas, planned city infills, new towns demonstrate urban planning that secures quality design of the urban fabric i.e. providing adequate space, provision and connectivity of the street pattern, effective plotting to ensure adequate supply of buildable plots, promote high density, mixed land-use, social mix, and limit land-use specialization etc.?

- (c) What are the main challenges and opportunities to foster urban planning and design that secures quality design of the urban fabric, including but not limited to planning capabilities, instruments and systems etc.?
- (d) To what extent are city developments undertaken through a phased approach and at a scale adequate to meet projected demand over the long term and, to the extent possible, to lessen the scarcity of serviced urban land as a means of increasing its availability?
- (e) To what extent does urban planning and design address the interests and need of various groups including different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?
- (f) To what extent is urban planning or lack of compounds or contributes to improved development outcomes for the most vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples

and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?

4.7 HOUSING POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Access to adequate housing, an internationally recognized legal right, for all is an important condition for the welfare of households. Housing is also an integral element of a nation's economy, with important backward and forward linkages with other parts of the economy. The centrality of housing for urban development is underpinned by UN-Habitat "Housing at the Centre approach" positions housing at the centre of national and local urban agendas with the ultimate goal to contribute to the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing for all and sustainable urbanization. 'Housing at the Centre' promotes housing policy and national urban policy blended in a context of increased importance on housing as an imperative for socioeconomic development and the sustainable future of cities. It aims to shift the focus from simply building houses to a holistic framework for housing development, orchestrated with national urban agendas and urban planning practice.

⁸A simultaneous twin-track approach with curative (slum upgrading) and preventive (new provision) housing policies and programmes should be promoted ensuring participatory and coordinated efforts of national and local governments. The informal sector has been one of the main providers of housing for the poor in urban areas, filling important gaps in urban society. Therefore the upgrading of informal settlements should be an integrating part of housing responses. Whenever possible, in situ upgrading should be encouraged, in ways to minimize the social costs often related to relocation processes. In other cases, site consolidation and land readjustment may be feasible or, as the last resort, the relocation processes can be the alternative in cases such as when people are at risk of landslides or flooding. The challenge is to facilitate housing provision in ways to strengthen the positive outcomes of housing for people, for the economy and for cities. .

A well-functioning housing sector should enable the delivery of affordable and adequate housing opportunities for all, at a scale while also offering opportunities for slum prevention and improvement. Housing development and improvement involves a complex range of components such as land,

⁸ *Evolution of National Urban Policies: A global overview (UN-Habitat, 2014)*

infrastructure, finance, labour, and building materials along with the accompanying construction industry with its technology and institutions permeate the supply and demand of housing.⁹ These are shaped by the legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks within which they operate. Therefore the assessment requires focus into the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework as a starting point. It also requires an examination of issues relating to housing rights, needs and demand (including affordable housing), housing supply, urban land supply for housing, building materials and the construction industry and housing finance. Demographic dynamics and population distribution are also important aspects to take into consideration as they inform on important aspects of the housing demand. Additionally cross-cutting issues such as gender, climate change, youth and human rights should be explored as far as they relate to housing. Questions to guide the assessment of housing may include the following:

- (a) What is (and how effective is) the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks governing the housing sector development, including important housing inputs such as: land (development control, property rights and inheritance), infrastructure, finance, labour,

⁹ *A Practical guide for conducting housing profiles (UN-Habitat, 2011)*

and building materials and the construction industry?

- (b) What are the main housing sector constraints and opportunities in meeting housing needs and demand and improving the supply of adequate housing, improving access to serviced urban land, housing finance and prompting construction industry?
- (c) How housing is reflected within the national development framework or agenda i.e. what is the national budget for the housing sector including slum upgrading, what are the curative and preventive programmes?
- (d) What is the scope and how sustainable are the housing programs under implementation as far as they relate to social, cultural, economic, spatial and environmental sustainability?
- (e) How does access to housing differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular country or society?
- (f) Are there specific housing challenges experienced by groups in vulnerable situation such as the poor, youth, older persons, landless,

slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, minority groups and women in these categories (? What measures are in place to address their needs?

4.8 INFRASTRUCTURE AND BASIC SERVICES

Infrastructure determines a city's welfare and economic activity¹⁰. Lack of development in urban infrastructure to keep pace with a growing population in cities is huge concern for the sustainability of cities. Adequate infrastructure and access to basic services has a catalytic effect on the economic potential of cities. Water and Sanitation, energy, transport and mobility, drainage, urban waste management as well as improving air quality constitute key infrastructure and services cities need. This section should also provide a profile of the urban infrastructure and services at national level, by identifying the gaps, potentials and needs.

4.8.1 Water and sanitation

Water supply is a critical factor in urban growth; a reliable water supply of adequate quantity, quality and price is therefore critical. This sub-section deals

¹⁰ *Urban planning for city leaders (UN-Habitat, 2013).*

with provision and access to adequate water for various uses and users. Water sectors and actors have to be looked into.

The sanitation component should investigate the liquid waste management regulations and practices. This section should look at household liquid waste (black, brown and grey water). Options along the waste cycle such as reduce - reuse - recycling, including environmental protection could be explored. Questions to be addressed may include but are not limited to:

- (a) Who has the mandate for delivering water and sanitation services?
- (b) What is (and how effective) is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks guiding water and sanitation in the country?
- (c) What is the coverage of improved¹¹ water supply (percent of residents), sources and adequacy, safety/quality of water supply? Is water available all the time?
- (d) How affordable is water? Are water pricing schemes in place favouring the poor?
- (e) What are the country's urban sanitation systems and their coverage?

¹¹ *Improved Water Sources: piped water connection in premises (located inside the user's dwelling, plot or yard), public taps or standpipes, tube wells or boreholes, protected dug wells, protected springs, and rainwater collection.*



Residents of Harar town in Ethiopia line up for water. © UN-Habitat

- (f) Which proportion of the urban population has access to improved sanitation?¹²
- (g) What is the coverage of the official solid waste collection?
- (h) What are the main challenges and opportunities for the water and sanitation sector?
- (i) How access to water and sanitation differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular country or society? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum

dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)

4.8.2 Energy

The importance of the adequacy of energy sources, and access thereof cannot be underscored. A reliable supply of energy is a basic prerequisite for economic development and improvement of living standards for all. The use of energy, the types of energy used and the lack of access to sufficient energy have far reaching implications for urban development, environmental health and for the poor. Energy serves the eclectic purposes for heating, cooking and lighting homes, but also as electricity for running machinery

and equipment for powering health facilities and schools. No country has had sustained development without corresponding increase in energy demand per capita. Optimal energy efficiency, low carbon energy supply, and accessible, equitable and good energy service provision to users is pivotal.¹³The energy sector and carbon mitigation have to be at the centre of any sustainable development strategy.

This section looks into the availability of energy, adequacy and access to, from a view point of all users. Since energy is often a scarce resource, energy efficiency options have to be explored to ensure a sustainable energy path to achieve sustainable urbanisation. The analysis shall be linked to other sectors with competing needs (housing, industry), environment, economy (green economy), safety, job creation, (green) infrastructure, and quality of life. Questions that could be addressed include the following:

- (a) What is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks governing the energy sector?
- (b) How effective is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks governing the energy sector?
- (c) How sustainable is the energy

¹² use of flush/pour flush to piped sewer system, septic tank or pit latrine; ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrine; pit latrine with slab or composting toilet.

¹³ Sustainable urban energy planning (UN-Habitat)



Chunnakam Power Sub Station, Sri Lanka © Flickr/Mahinda Rajapaksa

environmentally sound, safe, and affordable transportation as a means to improve social equity, health, safety, resilience of cities, or urban-rural linkages is paramount. However, urban transport systems are faced by a multitude of challenges.

Many cities particularly in the developing world have been largely unprepared for the consequences of the rapid population growth – leaving mobility needs in the hands of private vehicles or uncoordinated and unsafe paratransit operators.

Transport interventions have long been focusing on “cars” – while ignoring the needs of non-motorised transport users and those relying on public transportation. This is to the detriment of the “urban poor” who have to depend on their feet as an affordable but unsafe transport option. Globally, private motorization has been accelerating – resulting in impacts such as severe traffic congestion, air and noise pollution as well as accidents.

High-quality, city-wide public transport systems and integrated non-motorised transport networks are urgently needed – two features that illustrate indispensable elements in creating a city where people and community come first. Sustainable transport systems essentially connect people to amenities and daily

sector in terms of energy efficiency, low carbon energy supply, and accessibility etc.

- (d) What are the main challenges and opportunities for the energy sector?
- (e) How access to energy differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular country or society? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons

with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)

4.8.3 Transport and mobility

Transportation and mobility are central to sustainable development, as they can enhance economic growth, reduce GHG emissions and air pollution - and improve accessibility to opportunities.¹⁴ The importance of efficient movement of people and goods, access to

¹⁴ Report of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2012)



life while reducing negative externalities from the transport sector– and should be promoted in all parts of the globe.

Urban mobility interventions have to extend beyond the technicalities of increasing speed and improving the efficiency of transport systems. Demand-oriented measures (e.g. promoting safe walking and cycling, and reducing the need to travel by compact city planning and mixed land uses) have to be introduced.¹⁵ Accessibility has to be placed at the core of urban mobility – and any assessment should address these concerns to pave way to a progressive NUP.

Considering that the NUP looks at a wider horizon, reference could be made to the impacts of mega infrastructures (e.g. new air or sea ports, highways, industrial plants, public space such as stadium, etc.) and large scale urban investments that may drive urbanization. The potential relationship with connectivity, transit-oriented development, land value capturing and systems of cities could be stressed here. The section should pay particular attention to other issues such as public space (especially percentage of urban areas attributed to streets), urban safety, gender equality, social inclusion, urban quality of life, climate change or energy.

¹⁵ *Planning and design for sustainable urban mobility- Global Report on human settlements (UN-Habitat, 2013)*

For a comprehensive assessment, the following questions could be addressed:

- (a) What is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks governing the transport sector? What vision, plans, policies do exist? Do institutional mechanisms for enhanced coordination in the planning and management of intermodal transport systems exist (e.g. Public Transport Agency)?
- (b) How effective is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks governing the transport sector? For example: Are there effective regulatory and enforcement mechanisms that enhance transport and mobility for the transport users? What strategies are there for stakeholder participation and ensuring transparency? Is traffic management effective and enforced? Are incentives in place to reduce pollution levels through changes in traveling practices, better enforcement, stricter norms or improvements in technology or fuels? Are there incentives in place that reduce car dependency (e.g. high parking fees in CBD)?
- (c) To what level do policy coordination and an integrated planning approach exist? Are there inter-

sectorial governance mechanisms in place, e.g. coordinating transport in relation to land-use, environment, public health? Particularly: Are compact urban development strategies existent to reduce the need for travel? Are regulatory mechanisms in place to promote transit-oriented development (compact, mixed land use within walking distance of high quality rapid transit systems), clean modes of transport or infrastructure design measures that enhance road safety?

- (d) Do sustainable concepts exist that deal with urban freight (green logistics)? E.g. time restrictions, speed limits, cargo load restrictions etc.
- (e) What are the main challenges and opportunities for transport and mobility, and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced?
- (f) What is the modal share of the different transport modes? How do investments in transport balance that share? Are there adequate investments towards Sustainable Urban Transport (e.g. NMT, Mass Rapid Transit) and what innovative mechanisms exist that e.g. tap land as a resource or engage the private sector?

(g) To what extent does transport planning promotes accessibility (particularly also for the marginal segments of the urban population), promotes people-centered measures (e.g. promoting walking and cycling, and reducing the need to travel), is well adapted to future transport demands and meets the demands of users of transport in terms of reliability, safety, affordability etc.?

(h) How does access to transport and mobility differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular country or society? Are there

specific challenges experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?

4.8.4 Drainage

A drainage system designed to avoid damage caused by water and flooding, while also allowing municipal roads to be improved and maintained is an important component of the urban infrastructure. Consideration of the physical

characteristics, topography, catchment areas and the routes of existing drainage layout should be the basis for drainage planning and effective management. Issues related to drainage could focus on topography, flood management, landslides and how these impact on the urban quality. Questions that could be addressed include the following:

(a) What is the existing policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks? Is drainage considered an important urban component in the existing policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks?

(b) What are the main challenges and opportunities concerning drainage (as could be engendered by the topography, drainage development planning, management and maintenance, etc.), and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced?

(c) How drainage and its impact differs according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular country or society? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons



Open sewer in Old Fadama, Ghana © Flickr/Global Communities

The overall goal of urban solid waste management should be to act along the whole waste cycle (**reduce - reuse – recycling – storing**) incorporating all urban population groups in an environmentally and socially satisfactory manner using the most economical means available.

with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?

4.8.5 Urban Waste Management

The removal of domestic and commercial solid waste from the urban areas through an effective and safe system of collection, transportation and disposal is paramount. The overall goal of urban solid waste management should be to act along the whole waste cycle (reduce - reuse – recycling – storing) incorporating all urban population groups in an environmentally and socially satisfactory manner using the

most economical means available. This section deals with issues related to the management of urban waste. Issues of capacity to manage urban waste should be investigated. Opportunities for waste management including recycling, reuse and appropriate landfills should be come to the fore. The following questions can be addressed:

- (a) What is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework governing urban waste management?
- (b) How effective is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework governing urban waste management?
- (c) What are the main challenges and opportunities for urban waste management and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced? Are there adequate investments in urban waste management through innovative mechanisms e.g. recycling, reuse etc.?
- (d) How access to urban waste management differs according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular country or society? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous



Dump site in Dhaka, Bangladesh © Flickr/United Nations

peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?)

4.8.6 Telecommunications and other services

Globally, urban areas have been traditionally the first to have access to telecommunications. However, particularly in the developing world, such access has not been available to all sectors of the population, nor have the benefits of telecommunications for urban development been realized. In a progressively urbanizing world, accelerated investments to improve access and connectivity in urban settings, coupled with making access available to those previously excluded is paramount. Information and communication technologies could assist cities can improve urban planning, development and governance amongst others. Application of information and communication technologies in the sectors of health, education, business, governance, environment etc. supports sustainable development and contributes to urban development. Infrastructure and the delivery of basic services, such as water and electricity, can be improved with the use of information and communication technologies. Telecommunications also play a pivotal

role in a growing knowledge-based economy, and has been the backbone of smart-cities integrating e-governance amongst others.

The following questions can be addressed by the assessment:

- (a) What is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework related telecommunications management?
- (b) How effective is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework for telecommunications?
- (c) What are the main challenges and opportunities for improved telecommunications and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced? Are there adequate investments in telecommunications to improve access to information and communication technologies through innovative mechanisms e.g. recycling, reuse etc.?
- (d) How access to telecommunication services differs according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular country or society? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant

workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?)

4.9 URBAN ECONOMY AND MUNICIPAL FINANCES

A thriving urban economy and healthy municipal finances are mutually reinforcing, in a virtuous cycle where urban growth contributes to public revenues, and strategically invested revenues contribute to urban growth. At the centre of these dynamics, the following principles are to be held for better outcomes regarding the urban economy and finances:

- 1. Social Integration:** The poor and other vulnerable populations should not be alienated from opportunities. For example, they should not be unwillingly displaced by forced evictions or disadvantaged by hostile market forces.
- 2. Inclusive Job Creation:** Economic growth should be broad-based and include youth and women. The creation of productive employment opportunities is essential for achieving poverty reduction and sustainable economic and social development in cities.



Morro do Alemão cable cars, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil © Flickr/Clément Jacquard

3. **Financial Planning:** Sustainable financial management capacity and capability, including the ability to identify, design and appropriately package bankable projects. This should include acquisition of public land and rights of way, provision of infrastructure and basic services, and maintenance of public assets.
3. **Land Value Capture:** Value created by reorganizing spatial layout should be shared by the public –sector, private developers, and citizens, so all reap the full windfall gains associated with public investments.

In order for local governments and cities to be financially successful and sustainable they must also be economically successful.

4.9.1 Municipal Finances

Public revenues, if strategically invested, can support economic growth. Economic growth contributes to public revenues, thus creating a virtuous cycle. However, this is not automatic. Municipalities in developing countries may rarely possess adequate financial resources or even access to funds, or the ability to absorb funds in order to finance urban investments. The technical ability to identify, design and appropriately package bankable projects is limited, and severely restricted in many cases. A lack of financial management capacity and

capability, often manifesting in a lack of revenue records and trained personnel, low rate of taxes and poor collection rates often hamper municipal finances. A range of problems besets the financial management of local governments including budgeting, procurement, accounting, fund management, financial reporting, auditing, and transparency in financial transactions and management. This may be further compounded by the inability to employ effective mechanisms to acquire public land and rights of way, provision of infrastructure and basic services, and maintenance of public assets.

The need for local governments to provide infrastructure and services will be ever increasing. With a majority of urban authorities relying heavily from national transfers, there is an urgent need that these municipal authorities are also able to establish their endogenous financial resources. Empowering cities and urban authorities to increase local revenues and to deploy innovative and endogenous approaches is crucial. Cities need sustainable and predictable flow of resources and the conditions to be able to exploit these resources to the fullest extent policies. When local governments are empowered with better public financial management and autonomy, there is better access to services and increase scope of services. However, this requires that responsibilities are clarified,

and institutions need to be built to deliver services and infrastructure.

Improving the municipal finance may take a range of strategies including increasing the ability to mobilise endogenous resources, putting mechanisms that promote investment, strengthening financial management, increasing the share of national transfers, credit worthiness, improvement in applying IT solutions, improving municipal financial management systems, exploring opportunities to access long term financing.

This section therefore assesses municipalities' ability to mobilise internal and external financial resources to implement their urban programmes. This range from endogenous finance (i.e. value sharing, tax reform, public assets management) to the ability to tap into exogenous finance; Public Private Partnerships, Creditworthiness, Bonds and borrowing from private Banks. The clear financial roles and responsibilities of local authorities in relation to national and regional governments can be clarified. A brief analysis of budget structure of selected municipality will provide a good reality check. Recommendations could derive from the analysis of ability, resources, and capacity of local authorities to mobilise, manage and account for financial resources. Guiding questions may include the

following:

- (a) What are the main sources of revenues? Public sector transfers, local taxes, fees? How those sources of revenues can be expanded?
- (b) What is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework that facilitates planned urban expansion? What are the rules for public acquisition of property, building codes and building permits?
- (c) What is the ability of municipalities to acquire exogenous financial resources, access funds and absorb funds to finance urban investments? What is the range of the financial resources available to municipalities including credit markets?
- (d) Is there an eGovernment system that integrate the financial management of the municipality? Are ICT technologies applied to collect taxes? Are property taxes collections centralized and linked to the central government?
- (e) Do municipalities possess adequate financial management capacity

and capability i.e. budgeting, procurement, accounting, fund management, financial reporting, auditing, and are transparent in financial transactions and management?

4.9.2 Local Economic Development - Job Creation

Cities can be a gateway to local economic development. However, this is not guaranteed. Cities need to exploit density and urban form, and their statutory planning and convening power, investment and public procurement capacity as economic levers to draw on the resources they have in comparative advantage and carry them into economic gains. Cities can support also good regulations and institutions, target interventions to support local value add in economic clustering and partnerships with community and private sector. Cities therefore need to leverage on agglomeration through better urban design and economic clustering, to provide improved livelihoods.

The creation of productive employment opportunities is essential for achieving poverty reduction and sustainable economic and social development in cities. Job creation is the critical part of good economic growth. In many growing cities, the formal economy



Public space in New Delhi, India © Flickr/Loic Pinseel

has not created enough jobs to match labour supply. There is a large number of the working poor, and youth share the burden of unemployment. Endogenous growth in cities has the potential to create the needed mass of jobs to cater for urban populations if adequately fostered.

As cities grapple with not just new jobs, or quantity of new jobs, but quality of jobs including those generated by the informal economy, a range of targeted solutions can be made. Job creation can be supported with education and skills to match labour force demands. These may range from supporting small and medium enterprises to provide substantive number jobs and connecting place of work and place of living, supporting urban rural linkages, better matching of public and private investments and increased investment in housing and infrastructure. The quality of jobs matters and can be measured in terms of decent jobs and livelihoods opportunities created.

The informal sector, as a significant contributor to economic growth (provide jobs), cannot be ignored. Women, the young, and many population who are more vulnerable (social and economic), constitute the majority and are more likely to be in the informal sector. Focusing in the informal sector brings the agenda of inequality and poverty.

There is therefore a need to support the informal sector, including deliberate consideration in spatial planning, and promoting access to finance. Gradual transitioning of the informal sector, providing incentives to formalisation, business support such as training programmes and access to finance etc. can be some of the interventions targeting the informal sector.

This section therefore looks at what interventions can foster economic growth and employment opportunities, particularly for the youth, woman and the other marginalized population groups. Particular attention should be paid to interventions that foster job and employment opportunities, for instance the youth. Opportunities for investment, creativity and innovations could be explored. All relevant (urban) job sectors could be explored with a review of the potential at country level, including in emerging sectors such as ICT, tourism, natural resources management, manufacturing, value-addition in agriculture sector, trade and regional integration. As some cities may also benefit from a Local Economic Development (LED) Strategy to help generate enough jobs to match population growth and to manage economic transformation to high-productivity, this should be explored. LED Strategies can help direct public investments and city extension planning.

Questions to be addressed may include the following:

- (a) What are the productive capabilities of local governments? How they are assessed and competitiveness and potential of those sectors are estimated?
- (b) What are the country and local strongest urban economic drivers, where are they located, and how do they interact spatially? How are the supply chains and value chains of those sectors? How the supply chains and logistics impairs growth?
- (c) What economic sectors are best poised for growth or development? Which economic sectors are flourishing endogenously at small scales? Which sectors are driven by large investors and/or foreign investment?
- (d) What are the main challenges and opportunities for improving the local economic development and employment, and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced?
- (e) Are there targeted and integrated local and national youth employment and entrepreneurship programmes and policies for inclusive, sustainable and innovative job creation?



Mathare slum, Kenya © UN Habitat/Julius Mwelu

- (f) Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?

4.9.3 Land Value Sharing and Revenue Enhancement

The need for models that balance public and private sector investments and provide the equitable distribution of costs and benefits in the urbanization process, including through land value capture, allowing sustainable redevelopment in a relatively poor context are sought

after. Land based financing is an emerging good practise that allows local government to share the value created by public actions. Land value capture can be used as an innovative financing tool for municipalities to capture private values generated by better public spaces to sustain investments in urban basic services and infrastructure.

Property tax and taxes on economic activities are the main sources of local revenue. However, property taxing in developing countries is still very low because of informality, lack of land and property registration, so improvements on property taxation are necessary. This comprises capitalizing on the value of land. Land value gain resulting from readjustment of spatial layout, public space, and deployment of services and

infrastructure can be taxed¹⁶. Public land sales can capture the benefit of public investment, and exercises on property appreciation can fund neighbourhood improvement if innovatively planned¹⁷.

An assessment should look at land-value sharing as means of resource mobilization for urban development. The existence and effectiveness of public land acquisition as means of mobilising resources (land-based financing) could be evaluated. Questions to be addressed may include the following:

- (a) What is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework for recuperation of value created by public sector investments? What is the legal framework for public acquisition of property?
- (b) What are the main challenges and opportunities for land value sharing systems and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced? Do local authorities use land value capture as a tool to capture private values generated by better public spaces to sustain investments in urban areas?
- (c) How do benefits of land sharing differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be

¹⁶ *Urban planning for City leaders (UN-Habitat, 2013)*

¹⁷ *UN-HABITAT (2015) (forthcoming) Toolkit for Land Value Sharing*

rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular country or society? Are there specific issues experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?

4.10 PROPOSAL FOR SYSTEM OF CITIES

Globally, there is a growing gap in levels of socio-economic development disparities occurring between small towns, secondary and primary cities that have significance on the sustainability and growth of these cities. Decentralized growth can be achieved if governments support strengthening the capacity of rural service centres, and small, intermediate and secondary towns to attract populations, increase investments, create jobs and reduce reliance on primary cities. This requires an understanding of the urbanization challenges and opportunities that permeate primary cities, intermediate and secondary cities, small towns and rural service centres. Institutional arrangements should be aligned with

urbanization dynamics and spatial realities to enable effective responses at scale.

4.10.1 The dynamics of main cities including capital city

Main cities are comparatively huge magnets for urban population growth, and of economic growth. They are equally bedevilled by many challenges that exacerbate inequality as the rewards and benefits of growth are not shared equally. In developing countries, many of these cities have not kept pace with the burgeoning urban population in providing required housing, basic services and infrastructure. It is therefore essential to identify key elements that structure urban dynamics in big towns. Managing larger towns may require specific policy directions not only to address the ongoing challenges, but also to mitigate future challenges. Questions may include the following:

- (a) What and how effective is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework for managing and responding to the key issues relating to main cities?
- (b) What are the unique key challenges and opportunities facing main cities and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced?

- (c) How do these challenges and their impact differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular city or country? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)
- (d) What are the key policy options, strategies that can be relevant for the main cities?

4.10.2 Policy options for intermediate cities

A balanced system of cities with strong intermediate cities offers tremendous potential for regional and national economic development. Despite their growing role, countries often ignore the productive role that intermediate secondary cities can play in a balanced national system of cities. As a result, many intermediate and secondary cities are facing numerous development challenges – including creating jobs, attracting investment for needed infrastructure, and diversifying or

revitalizing their economies – with far fewer options than their larger counterparts. The problem will likely get worse as secondary cities, especially in African and Asian countries are expected to grow rapidly in the future. This means large infrastructure and service shortfalls, few opportunities for economic growth, and rising urban poverty. There is need to tap the economic potential of intermediate cities and contribute to lower levels of regional development disparities and higher levels of national productivity.

With a more efficient system of secondary cities, many poor cities and rural regions could increase their economic growth. Small and medium-sized cities can facilitate the localized production, transportation, and transfer of goods and services throughout a country. They can also enable other substantial economic benefits, including: industry agglomeration, localized supply chains and networks, a diverse economic and employment base, and a broad housing mix. Secondary cities to become successful in engaging trade and fostering local economic development, they must learn how to be more competitive. There is no question that the central government has an important role in making this happen. National governments can encourage competition between cities and assist them in enhancing their governance

efficiency and business competitiveness. Decentralization helps as well; the more autonomy secondary cities have, the more competitive, dynamic, and self-sufficient they are likely to be.

For intermediate towns and cities, priority must be placed on the main urban design elements that can reasonably be achieved and that will have the maximum impact on social outcomes and livelihoods. Significant gaps exist between development plans, infrastructure plans and investment particularly in intermediate cities. These gaps could be effectively bridged with stronger emphasis on feasibility as part of plans formulation and pre-implementation. Rights and the protection of people in vulnerable situations must be central to assessments of impact.

Institutional arrangements should be aligned with urbanization dynamics and spatial realities to enable effective responses at scale. As urban footprints often go beyond administrative boundaries, specific attention should be given to metropolitan and regional institutions for land-use planning.

Questions may include the following:

(a) What and how effective is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework for

managing and responding to the key issues relating to intermediate cities?

- (b) What are the unique key challenges and opportunities facing intermediate cities and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced?
- (c) How do these challenges and their impact differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular city or country? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?
- (d) What are the key policy options, strategies that can be relevant for the intermediate cities to help them forge a sustainable development path and be competitive?

4.10.3 Policy options for market towns and other settlements

Like intermediate towns, market towns have the potential to expand and grow organically, or in the other extreme end fail to thrive and collapse if they are not well supported with the bare minimum infrastructure and basic services. Without adequate prediction capabilities and proactive planning interventions, informal settlements may emerge and prevail. While they play a major role linking their hinterlands with market access and services, market towns, villages do not have capacity to provide adequate infrastructure and services. They have not created the necessary conditions for local economic development and are creating few jobs that match the demand. The migration to the main towns and cities, in search of better services, jobs and better livelihoods is often fuelled by the underdevelopment of the small towns and settlements. As future major towns and cities, focusing on the situation of small town and settlements, including villages is therefore important. It is important to assess the critical drivers of their urban forms and patterns, how their attractiveness can be improved. Ultimately, there should be clear policy directions on how to predict and manage the growth of small settlements towards a sustainable urban development path.

Some of the questions that can be answered include the following:

- (a) What and how effective is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework for managing and responding to the key issues relating to smaller towns and other settlements?
- (b) What are the unique key challenges and opportunities facing market towns, villages and other settlements and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced?
- (c) How do these challenges and their impact differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular area, town or country? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?
- (d) What are the key policy options, strategies that can be relevant for market towns, villages and other settlements to help them, earlier on, forge a sustainable development path and be attractive to a majority of dwellers?



Housing in Douala, Cameroon © Flickr/Christine Vaufrey

4.11 OTHER ISSUES OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

Other issues of strategic importance continue to emerge, and demand space in the discourse. Some of these have a cross-cutting dimension and need to be assessed from that viewpoint. The listing here is not exhaustive and depending on the priority in a country the issues may be extended. It is valuable that the assessment does not enforce a sectorial analysis, but seek synergies, connections and integration of all the pertinent issues/areas identified. The assessment can follow almost a similar generic approach for each strategic issue which may include assessing:

- (a) What and how effective is the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework for managing and responding to the particular issue of strategic importance?
- (b) What are the unique key challenges and opportunities in relation to the issue of strategic importance and to what extent are the challenges effectively addressed and opportunities enhanced?
- (c) How do the challenges and their impact differ according to social, cultural, institutional, physical and economic constraints many of which

may be rooted in systemic structural issues inherent in a particular area, town or country? Are there specific burdens experienced by different vulnerable groups; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.)?

- (d) What are the key policy options, strategies that can be relevant for each strategic issue identified?

The following issues of strategic importance and cross-cutting issues have sufficiently gained recognition and are worth mentioning here: Urban-rural linkages, Urban culture and heritage and cross-cutting issues (Social Inclusion, Climate Change and Human Rights).

4.11.1 Urban Governance

Rapid urbanization calls for renewed decision making and effective response to emerging challenges and needs. Good urban governance remains a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable urban development. Only strong and capable leadership, mainly from the public sector will usher in effective governance.

Managing urbanization requires a multi-sectorial and multi-level process, both vertically (between cities, regions and national government) and horizontally (between local governments, sectors and non-state actors). Multi-government governance, both vertical and horizontal, as a policy principle would constitute effective decentralised frameworks, and collaborative relations between different levels of government guide decision making. Institutions, private sector and civil society need to work together in a more efficient way for sustainable urban development.

However, many countries are lagging on the basic requirement of decentralisation, where local governments have the autonomy to drive urban development including the ability to foster adequate resources, while reducing dependence on transfers from central resources. Local governments need to strengthen their capacity to mobilise local resources, and be more productive and diversify local sets of local taxes, and put in place sound budget and financial management practises. Stemming off corruption at the local level should constitute the biggest effort to ensure that resources are spent where they are needed the most, in the most efficient way. Corruption can undermine local government credibility and deepen urban poverty and inequalities.

The new forms of urban government should prioritize the need to allocate adequate competencies to authorities at appropriate levels and match these with resources. There is a need for strong, capable and enabled municipalities with adequate organizational and institutional structures, financing systems and procedures to manage public resources to support sustainable urban development.

Effective governance also conjures territorial approaches; emphasizes metropolitan governance, coordination mechanisms, strong support for middle size cities and stronger rural urban collaborations. An NUP will benefit from a broader territorial perspective on metropolitan regions, including stronger connectivity between cities, towns and rural areas, to promote their distinctive strengths and to encourage mutually beneficial interactions between them in the interests of national prosperity and inclusive growth.

Active citizenship where municipalities engage their stakeholders, transparency and participation and the use of technology for effective public management and to improve accountability are some of the hallmarks of good urban governance. All stakeholders need to be involved for strong leadership, mainly from the local governments. Politically excluded

social groups such as women, youth or minorities must be empowered to participate effectively in local decision-making processes.

4.11.2 Urban-rural linkages

Cities cannot be planned in isolation of their wider regions. Urbanization makes the fortunes of rural and urban areas more interdependent. Rural areas provide natural resources, energy, water and food to cities, which provide markets, financial resources and technical expertise to rural communities. Small towns play a crucial role as intermediary locations. Stronger economic linkages and institutional relationships between places can help to promote balanced and integrated territorial development.

An assessment of Urban-rural linkages as a strategic issue therefore recognizes the positive transformative potential of urbanization and strengthened urban-rural linkages in achieving sustainable development, as well as recognizing the way they connect a broad range of themes, sectors and actors in a territory, inter alia, by contributing to the eradication of poverty, social inclusion, inclusive economic growth, enhancing access to basic urban services, supporting inclusive housing, enhancing job opportunities, productivity, creating and sharing benefits, and creating a safe and healthy living environment, also in

the context of gender equality, youth and people in vulnerable situations.

The need to promote the reduction of disparity along the rural-urban continuum through, inter alia, inclusive public and private investments in infrastructure and services across the rural service centres as well as of small intermediate and secondary towns to strengthen linkages as appropriate, and promote sustainable and balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development is important. To strengthen urban-rural linkages, assessments should clearly articulate opportunities for the NUP to promote distinctive and complementary economic advantages, and also promote mutually-beneficial interactions; connectivity – physical and electronic, cooperation on joint projects, knowledge exchange and sharing expertise, developing human capital, transfer of payments to stimulate development etc.

4.11.3 Urban Culture and heritage

There is a growing interest in placing culture at the core of urban development strategies. This is a new approach aimed at valuing the role of local culture and heritage, and its role to help mitigate urban conflicts through recognition of cultural diversity, and fostering urban

development models based on more dense cities, with a human scale and an integrated territorial approach. Municipal authorities are increasingly investing in culture and giving cultural values a key place in territorial development. The conservation of historic centres has been widely promoted to attract cultural tourism and sustain job creation strategies. The global success of World Heritage cities shows the importance of historic and cultural preservation. Cultural industries and the creative economy also play a growing role in cities' development and transformation processes. This rapidly developing sector, prompted by innovation, contributes increasingly to the development of the local economy and employment. The diversity of cultural expressions is enhanced as a tool for social cohesion, intercommunity dialogue and appropriation of democratic processes.

This new culture-based urban model calls for a renewed governance system. An assessment on this strategic issue should aim to also explore opportunities for including heritage in territorial planning instruments, enhancing culture and heritage to improve urban environment and public space, supporting the contribution of culture to local economy, valorizing cultural values to build social cohesion and mitigate conflicts and improving access to basic services in historic centres.

4.11.4 Urban safety and security

Safety and security in cities is at the intersection of two important and equally complex concepts: that of *'urban development'*, for which a whole range of measures have been drawn out related to urban layout and organisation that impact on how people behave in, and experience safety in cities and human settlements; and *'security'*, that too has a wide array of measures to protect the individual and property and as such a major influencing factor in the way people organise space and place. It is therefore concerned with integrating security and urban development, and is also at the centre to promote social inclusive urbanism that encourages mixed uses and social integration.

Urban safety and security cuts across a number of sectors which relate to sustainable urban development. It cuts across issues of urban planning, transport and mobility, slum upgrading, housing, urban economy, urban legislation etc. and intersects with cross cutting issues; youth, gender and human rights. It has a specific bearing for the vulnerable; youth, women and older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, children, homeless persons, people living with HIV/AIDS, LGBT and minority groups (i.e. as could be engendered by their different



Public space in Medellín, Colombia © Flickr/Daniel Latorre

backgrounds based on ethnicity, culture, religion, class, caste, education etc.).

To strengthen urban security and safety, assessments should clearly articulate opportunities to integrate urban safety and security in the following:

- (a) Strategic and physical planning:** There are pointers that the lack of suitable and planned services planned, accessible to all would have avoided violence in cities.
- (b) Urban public spaces:** These spaces are places where citizens recognize themselves as members of the same city; they are the complementary

spaces to the shrinking private housing spaces; and are spaces with multiples uses (such as commercial, recreational, cultural, working spaces, etc.) or are considered as the symbol of the city.

- (c) Transport:** Safety and security in public transport requires the direct involvement of all stakeholders in the areas designated for the transportation systems.
- (d) Housing:** Social housing policies which have focused on the delivery of houses rather than building connected and inclusive neighbourhoods, have generated important cohorts of youth gangs, drug traffic, delinquents and critical neighbourhoods where crime is rife.
- (e) Slum upgrading:** The inherent vulnerability of Slum areas to crime requires strategies to integrate safety and security in these areas.
- (f) Urban economy:** A weak urban economy is incapable to produce the mass of quality jobs that would also absorb a sizeable number of young people, some who are 'school dropouts' or propelling them to "risk behaviours", including crime.
- (g) Health:** In particular amongst youth, drugs and alcohol leads to are closely related to increased criminal activity in urban areas.

(h) Human rights and Gender:

Women's rights to safety in the city should be upheld, primarily because of the growing incidents of violence in cities.

In this context, planning for social integration should address urban safety, reduction of vulnerability and strengthening of social resilience in an integrated manner.

Cross Cutting issues

4.11.5 Social inclusion (including Youth and gender)

Progressive cities around the world recognize that growth cannot be sustained without being inclusive. Cities need to demonstrate innovative ways to strengthen inclusion. Those already acting on social inclusion are using a range of strategies including social protection programmes, inclusive planning processes and adopting proactive strategies to engage with marginalized groups.

Social inclusion asserts rights to all individuals and groups. It recognizes diversity and promotes equality by giving attention to those whose voice has often not been heard in conventional public policy. It promotes the concept of participatory planning which is not limited to the integration of stakeholders

with more influence, but also the integration of all stakeholders with a particular focus on the needs of women and those who are most vulnerable, including, inter alia, children and youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, the poor, the landless, rural to urban migrants, internally displaced people and indigenous peoples in the plan-making process so to effectively impact their lives. Therefore, inclusion is about promoting growth with equity, where everyone, regardless of their economic means, gender, race, age, ethnicity or religion, is enabled and empowered to fully participate in the social, economic and political opportunities that cities have to offer. Participatory planning and decision-making are at the heart of the 'inclusive norm' and have amongst others, the following benefits:

- (a) reduces inequality and social tension;
- (b) incorporates the knowledge, productivity, social and physical capital of the poor and disadvantaged in city development; and
- (c) increases local ownership of development processes and programmes

Emphasis is placed on gender and youth groups in the planning process to ensure their participation and voices have been heard properly and recommendations are taken in to account in the process.

An assessment on social inclusion should aim to explore opportunities to:

- (a) Mainstream gender and youth across and with each element of the National urban policy, from legislation, urban planning design, housing, infrastructure and basic services amongst others.
- (b) Develop a more inclusive policy that takes into cognizance the different needs, interests and potential differential impacts of the policy, plan or design on men, women and the youth. This extends to other potentially vulnerable groups which may also include the elderly, disabled etc.
- (c) Reduce economic inequality, more if it is closely linked with the exclusion of vulnerable groups; slum dwellers, migrant workers, youth, women and older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups.
- (d) Pro-actively engage organizations, representing slum dwellers, migrant workers, youth, women and older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and minority groups in urban policy and planning
- (e) improve access to urban infrastructure, facilities and services for all vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities

- (f) Assert the importance of agency of the youth and the need to open the space for such agency to thrive to shape the sustainable urban trajectory, youth as primary drivers and a critical resource and asset for solving urban problems and catalytic agents of positive change. This would entail including young people in decision-making of national and local youth strategies, including education, skills development and employment opportunities.

4.11.6 Climate change

Climate change is increasingly an urban issue. Human activities in cities are major contributors to climate change and the source of a considerable portion of Global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, especially CO₂. At the same time, cities concentrate large populations, infrastructures and socio-economic assets which will be affected by climate change and thus climate change adaptation also has an urban focus.

Resilience to climate change recognizes the role of cities in climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as the potential role cities play as centres of innovation, development and application of new technologies and solutions in the effort to curb, halt, reverse and adapt to global climate change. Cities are

increasingly playing a constructive role and set ambitious targets on adaptation and mitigation, and invest more and more in green infrastructure. Cities need enabling legal and financial frameworks for increased climate action including

An assessment of climate change should aim at exploring opportunities to:

- (a) Mainstream climate change across and within each element of the National urban policy, from legislation, urban planning design, housing, infrastructure and basic services amongst others.
- (b) Formulate institutional framework and integrate climate change (CC) adaptation and disaster risk (DR) management into local, regional and national planning and development
- (c) Foster legal and regulatory frameworks towards enabling conditions for climate change sustainability
- (d) Assert urban planning as a key tool for climate change, from fostering compact, integrated and connected cities, taking into account energy efficiency and sustainability and planning for disaster management
- (e) Promote a low carbon economy, and resilience oriented local

economic development supporting green growth to enable local green infrastructure financing.

- (f) Raise awareness and mobilize participation making a broad coalition to share knowledge and solutions for mitigation and adaptation.
- (g) Emphasize the role of cities in local to global efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change;
- (h) Specify the expected climate change effects, based on the available climate change science and other data, on the spatial scale of policies, plans and designs, i.e. CC effects on national urban system, regional and metropolitans scale, on the city as a whole and down to the neighborhood level.
- (i) Include adaptive measures for the expected negative effects of climate change
- (j) Include mitigation measures for reducing the contributing factors, especially GHG emissions, for Climate Change
- (k) Support, where possible, the development, application and scaling of climate friendly and resilience technology, including eco-system based adaptation etc.

4.11.7 Human rights

Promoting an urbanization model that contains mechanisms and procedures which respect, protect and promote human rights is an effective tool with significant benefits for cities. The issues at the core of urbanization require new solutions that bring everyone on-board, youth, and women, older persons, the poor, the landless, slum dwellers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, children, homeless persons, people living with HIV/AIDS etc. as partners and assets, seeking legitimate and inclusive ways to enhance the sustainability and quality of life for all living in cities; ultimately reinforcing the realization of every one's universal claim to basic human rights. Mainstreaming a the Human Rights-Based Approach on policy seeks to ensure that the process of urbanization follows human rights principles and human rights standards.

As assessment regarding human rights should aim at exploring oppor

- (a) Assert and promote, protect and respect human rights (e.g. the right to adequate housing, the right to water and sanitation, the right to food, the right to health, the right to education, the rights of women the rights of children, the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families, Rights to persons with

disabilities, the right to property the right to land etc.) as vantage entry point for the NUP.

- (b) Mainstream human rights in the National urban policy process, by firmly adopting a "Human Rights-Based Approach" which would pay equal attention to both the outcome and process that leads to the policy outcomes.
- (c) Assert and promote a range of rights principles including the following:
 - i. **Participation and non-discrimination:** Promoting that "all", without any form of discrimination, have an opportunity to participate in, and influence, the decision-making process that affect them, in the NUP process.
 - ii. **Transparency:** Ensuring that those affected, and have a stake in National Urban Policy framework actively contribute to the whole process. Further, concerned stakeholders are given the opportunity and encouraged to know not only the basic facts and figures but also the mechanisms and processes behind the NUP processes. Finally the NUP process will ensure that the expected outcomes will not have adverse consequences to the populations, especially the most vulnerable groups such as women, aged.



Pedestrians in Rubavu, Rwanda © Flickr/Axel Drainville

5

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION, STRATEGIES AND ROADMAP

This section should set the direction for designing the NUP process, anchored on the opportunities for ushering a transformative urbanization tailored to the national context and feasibility in terms of available resources, institutional capabilities and the political appetite.

5.1 BRIEF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

The section should reflect on the analysis and provide a few strategic options and scenarios for the NUP including institutional arrangements for the NUP, policy reforms, research and further evidence to be collected in support for the NUP process, opportunities and risks. The analysis may prioritize some areas of strategic importance at national or local level to support the development and implementation of the NUP. While an integrated approach should be the key strategy, it is possible to also indicate the thematic areas that have important intersections with sustainable urban

development and are clearly emerging as a priority to the country.

5.2 STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING NUP

NUP means a sustained technical process of building the legal foundations, institutional capabilities, administrative procedures and financial instruments to pursue this agenda effectively. It requires complex arrangements to coordinate the various actors and agencies involved, including different kinds of partnership. Successful cities cannot be built by governments alone.

This section should identify key strategies that need to be developed and implemented to move the process of developing the NUP. These strategies may include resource mobilization, partnership development, delineating a

path to develop capacity (in particular to ensure that all stakeholders including the vulnerable can participate meaningfully), communication and information strategies, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the process. Coordination should include a proposal for setting up an institutional framework to coordinate the process. A clear participatory planning approach including extensive consultation with all stakeholders, including vulnerable groups and a rigorous iterative drafting process largely underpinned by empirical information should be drawn.

5.3 ROADMAP FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING THE NUP

This section should develop the methodology, a set of activities and timelines that would lead a to an NUP outcome with broad consultation and buy-in from the range of actors. The roadmap will identify critical steps (including initial and final stages), required instruments and tools, interventions, action plan and what needs to be done by when with what resources to achieve the desired results/outcomes. A timeline

in terms of short, medium and long terms results can be proposed here. Selected elements of the roadmap are institutional arrangements (e.g. Steering committees, thematic working groups, champions, technical support groups, drafting committee/team (with annotated outline of the policy) consultations and TORs), workshops, research and knowledge management, capacity development, strategies development and implementation. An estimate of the budget needed along with the role and responsibilities of main actors have to be identified.



Traffic in Mumbai, India © **Thamara Fortes**



6

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

This section should summarize the key messages and desired options for the NUP that has derived from the assessment. Also, next and critical steps should be identified, particularly options for NUP, moving forward.





ANNEXES

This section may include relevant, valuable supporting documents. Where consultations were undertaken, detailed summaries of the findings should be included as far as they point out towards the desired focus, strategy of the policy.



Street in Yaounde, Cameroon © Flickr/Ludwig Tröller



8

WAY FORWARD

The purpose of the framework for Rapid diagnostic is to identify some of the key elements for a policy diagnosis to formulate a NUP while emphasizing an integrated approach that espouses a three pronged approach; Planning and design, Legislation, urban economy and finance. The different context of a country takes precedence in the choice of the elements, including the level of priority that will be accorded to each of them to give the policy

a unique character that directly responds to challenges and opportunities on the ground. This will remain an evolving document and will further draw from the outcomes of the HABITAT III process, which is also underpinned by a relevant National Urban Policy Unit – testimony of the relevance and importance of National Urban Policies in the Post 2015 development agenda, and the New Urban Agenda.



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A National Urban Policy (NUP) is a deliberate government-led process of coordinating and rallying various actors for a common vision that will promote more transformative, productive and inclusive urban development in the long term. Many countries are embarking on NUP development processes as a means to harness the positive role of urbanization in national socio-economic development and to mitigate adverse externalities. NUP provides an overarching coordinating framework for horizontal (multi-sectoral) and vertical institutional collaboration and bring coherence in the national system of cities. Rather than a singular policy instrument, UN-Habitat conceptualizes NUP as an interactive process covering all phases of urban policy making: feasibility, diagnostic, formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

Built on the review of a range of experiences and practices, this publication particularly deals with the diagnostic phase and complements other instruments to support the NUP process. It teases out key elements to consider when undertaking a diagnosis of the urban sector in order to successfully formulate a pragmatic and action-oriented NUP. The *Framework for Rapid Diagnostic* outlines some important questions to inform a participatory and inclusive NUP process and guide urbanization along the principles of compact, connected, integrated and inclusive cities.

The *Framework for Rapid Diagnostic* is a timely publication for urban actors engaged in the development and implementation of Habitat 3 and the Sustainable development Goals, particularly Goal 11 that calls for inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements. The publication will be an excellent tool for government officials, development agencies, research institutions, consultants and civil society organizations supporting national and sub-national governments in the development or review of their urban policies.

HS Number: HS/092/15E

ISBN Number(Series): 978-92-1-133366-4

ISBN Number:(Volume) 978-92-1-132691-8

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