

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA
ANNUAL REPORT 2020





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HS Number: HS/006/21E

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Acknowledgements

Published by UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Africa (ROAf)

Cover Photo: Nakuru Deputy Governor demonstrating to community how to wash hands ©UN-Habitat

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List of Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CityRap	City Resilience Action Planning
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EDF	European Development Bank
EIB	European Investment Bank
HUWSUP	Horgesia Urban Water Supply Upgrading Project
IDPs	Internally Displaced Peoples
ISUD	Intergrated Sustainable Urban Development Plan
JPLG	Joint Programme on Local Governance
KCMAGIS	Kisumu Covid-19 Multi Agency Group on Informal Settlements
LGA	Local Government Area
NIP	National Indicative Programme
NHP	National Housing Policy
NTSA	National Transport and Safety Authority
NUPs	National Urban Policies
PALPOC	Post Cyclone Reconstruction Programme
PSUP	Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme
PPHPZ	Peoples's Process on Housing and Poverty in Zambia
PMT	Project Management Teams
PWDS	People Living With Disabilities
RCs	Resident Coordinator
RRS	Regional Representation Strategy
SADC	South African Development Community
SIC	Cameroon Real Estate Corporation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SSBs	Soil Stabilized Bricks

Foreword

Africa is undergoing rapid urbanization that will result in almost 1.33 billion people living in cities by 2050, compared to 470 million at present. Around 2030, Africa's collective population will become 50 percent urban. This calls for innovation and new business model in addressing issues of urbanization and issues of pandemics such as COVID 19 which countries were navigating in the year under review.

2020 marked the year when the Regional Office for African developed it Regional Representation Strategy (RRS) for 2020-2023 in line with UN-Habitat's overall strategic Plan which reinforces UN-Habitat's role as the global centre of excellence on sustainable urban development. UN-Habitat continued to offer solutions that help seize the opportunities presented by urbanization at the same time providing transformational change for the benefit of millions of people to ensure that no one and no place is left behind.

In addition to implementing the priorities in the RRS, the Regional Office took into consideration the UN-Habitat COVID-19 Response and Recovery Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa, which focused on slums and informal settlements. It also built on partnerships with diverse United Nations Agencies, contributing to the United Nations Reform as well as with other bilateral and multilateral partners at the country level. This provided the Regional Office for Africa added value to on-going initiatives.

In 2020 UN-Habitat paid attention to durable solutions through restructuring of the urban planning portfolio to include a holistic approach to the urban crisis such as flooding, and drought caused by climate change. Most recently, pandemics such as COVID 19 revealed the high vulnerability of Africa to the effects of shocks and their limited capacity to mitigate and recover from

the associated impacts. Through various tools, advisory services, capacity development and technical support, UN-Habitat continued to work with governments to address challenges including poverty and inequality; informal settlements; urban food and water insecurity; climate change and disaster risk reduction. Priority areas of support at national and local levels provided in 2020 included housing and slum upgrading, urban basic services, land management, urban economy, urban and regional planning, policy development, disaster risk reduction and recovery, post-conflict reconstruction and durable solutions for displaced and affected communities.

This report highlights UN-Habitat's work with member states and other Habitat Agenda partners in responding national priorities through national development plan and contributing to the sustainable development goals (particularly SDG 11), the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) and Africa vision 2063. UN-Habitat established new partnerships and embarked on new collaborations with relevant global, regional, sub-regional and national partners.

We acknowledge the support from development partners, UN sister agencies and our implementing partners. Additionally, we are grateful for the continuous support received from member states in the delivery of these interventions even amid the COVID 19 pandemic. Looking forward to continued support in the years to come.



Oumar Sylla

Regional Director

Regional Office for Africa



As the world is rapidly urbanizing and all settlements; Africa is urbanizing fastest.

Introduction



Rapid urbanisation in Africa can represent opportunities for economic transformation and reduction of inequalities. At the same time, there are increased challenges facing cities and human settlements, including planning, climate change, insecurity, migration by internal displacement, as well as demographic pressure especially in secondary cities and settlements affected by crisis.

In 2020, the emergency responses to the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the need for a new business model for planning African cities, especially in the context of rural-urban migration. Increased urban population is a strong demographic asset for the continent's prospective transformation and full potential may be reached once cities are properly planned and adequately serviced. However, advancing the urban agenda in Africa will depend on each country's context and circumstances.

2020 saw the Regional Office for Africa implement activities in line with the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and the Regional Representation Strategy (RRS). Both strategies reinforce UN-Habitat's role as a global centre of excellence on sustainable urban development and offer solutions presented by urbanization. Further, these strategies aim to bring about transformational change for the benefit of millions of people and ensure that no one and no place is left behind.

UN-Habitat continued to work with governments to address urbanization challenges which include poverty and inequality; informal settlements; food and water insecurity; climate change; and disaster risk reduction. In 2020, the priority areas of support at national and local levels included housing and slum upgrading, basic urban services, land management, urban economy,

urban and regional planning, policy development, disaster risk reduction and recovery, post-conflict reconstruction and durable solutions for displaced and affected communities.

However, several activities had to be redirected towards supporting emergency actions related to the COVID-19 pandemic in line with the UN-Habitat COVID-19 Response and Recovery Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa. The Recovery Strategy focused on slums and informal settlements and built on partnerships with diverse United Nations agencies as well as bilateral and multilateral partners at the country and regional levels. Strategic partners included government, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, research institutions, community-based organizations, and youth and women's groups.

Working with UN agencies at the country level also facilitated UN-Habitat's contribution towards UN reforms; for example, regular meetings at regional levels as well as in the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and country specific United Nations Strategic Frameworks provided more insights and guidance for the development and implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) at the country level.

This aspect of the UN reform has enabled UN-Habitat to provide an urban perspective in programming at the country level as well as an opportunity to get closer to Resident Coordinator's (RCs) to further elucidate UN-Habitat's mandate and comparative advantage on urban issues. Working through this mechanism, has improved the programme's cooperation with other UN agencies and engagement with government ministries, and increased UN-Habitat's unique

role in championing urban related issues. UN-Habitat has been involved in the development of the CCA and UNSDCF in countries including Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo-Brazzaville, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

During the year under review the active portfolio of projects in Africa spread across twenty-four (24) countries. The Atlas developed during the year highlights in detail the activities and programmes undertaken in various countries and is available on the UN-Habitat website.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, implementation continued to focus on four sub programmes as outlined in the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023 namely a) Reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban-rural continuum; b) Enhanced shared prosperity of cities and regions; c) Strengthened climate action and improved urban environments; and d) Effective urban crisis prevention and response. Since UN-Habitat also aims to redress chronic issues of discrimination and marginalization at a structural level, the following elements of the social inclusion dimension of the Strategic Plan were applied across the sub programmes. These include issues of human rights and gender with specific considerations for children, youth, older people and persons living with disabilities.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- a) partnerships with diverse United Nations Agencies, as well as bilateral and multilateral partners at the country and regional levels, were forged to continue implementing the strategic plan and repurposed activities to address challenges brought about by the pandemic;
- b) support for the development of socio-economic recovery plans and adaptation of National Urban Policies given the new context;
- c) establishment of participatory data collection systems in informal settlements to identify gaps and facilitate coordination of interventions among various actors (community, local, national);

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