

NATIONAL URBAN POLICY PACIFIC REGION REPORT



NATIONAL URBAN POLICY: Pacific Region Report

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CLGF	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FSPI	Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific International
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSUP	Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme
PUA	Pacific Urban Agenda
PUF	Pacific Urban Forum
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOPAC	Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (now officially known as the SPC Technical Division)
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a growing consensus in the international community about the impact of the transformative power of urbanization. The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, containing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), consolidates our vision of urbanization as a tool, and an engine, for development, as reflected in SDG Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The New Urban Agenda, the outcome document of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development held in Quito, Ecuador, 2016, identifies National Urban Policies as one of its key pillars, recognizing them as “drivers of change”.

Urbanization brings changes in the dynamics of the spatial distribution of people and the distribution, flows of goods and services and use of resources and of land. With rapid urbanization come both challenges and opportunities. UN-Habitat promotes the development of National Urban Policies as urbanization is a complex phenomenon and affects an entire country or national territory. A National Urban Policy is an essential tool through which governments can facilitate and guide positive urbanization patterns to support productivity, competitiveness, and prosperity in cities. A National Urban Policy should be able to create the conditions

The Pacific Region is very diverse with regard to urbanization. The Region includes countries with urbanization rates below 20 percent (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands) as well as countries where more people live in cities and towns than in rural villages or outer islands (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau). There are large cities (Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea) and growing urban metropolitan areas (Greater Suva, Fiji); whilst some of the smallest capitals in area and population in the world, both in terms of population and area, can be found in the region (for example Funafuti in Tuvalu). Urban growth rates are as varied; with shrinking urban areas in some countries, and very rapid urban growth in others are documented in this publication. Yet, since 2004, Pacific Island countries have been organizing the Pacific Urban Forum to collectively discuss challenges and opportunities of urbanization despite these differences in urbanization dynamics and patterns. As a result of these dialogues, several countries have developed National Urban Policies (or National Urbanization Policies), have established national offices to manage urbanization and minimise development impacts, and have included urbanization in their national development frameworks.

In order to further support Pacific Island countries in

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