



Laying the Foundations for Transformative Urban Interventions in Emerging Economies

*The Value of the Strategic Development Phase
in the Global Future Cities Programme*



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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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This report has been prepared by UN-Habitat's Urban Lab. The Lab is UN-Habitat's multidisciplinary facility supporting cities and Member States with innovative methodologies and multi-stakeholder processes. The Lab aims to achieve sustainable urbanization through integrated and transformative urban interventions that contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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Foreword

UN-Habitat's Urban Lab as a strategic partner for the UK Global Future Cities Programme has over a six-month period developed the definition of 30 transformative urban interventions in 10 Countries aiming to spur development, in particular driving prosperity and alleviating poverty. Urban Planning, Resilience, Transport and Data management are at the core of this programme.

UN-Habitat conceptualized the notion of urban prosperity as being composed of the following: productivity; infrastructure; quality of life; equity and inclusion; environmental sustainability, and governance and legislation¹. Transformative urban interventions are direly needed to address these issues and change cities' business as usual approach.

To transform the urban systems and to have the greatest possible impact through urban interventions you need commitment of local stakeholders and integration of many different disciplines from the onset. UN-Habitat's Urban Lab took the role of a neutral broker and dynamic knowledge manager in the Strategic Development Phase of the Future Cities Programme to create stakeholder commitment and to define and refine urban interventions for implementation in a later stage.

The UK Future Cities Programme understood the importance of this role and the relevance of a Strategic Development Phase. Usually, large urban programmes derive from a complex mix of needs, strategy, political agendas and local, national and international forces that are at play in a city. Too often interventions under such programmes come to a full stop before implementation because of this complexity. A Strategic Development Phase such as undertaken in the Future Cities Programme can contribute to a better understanding and definition of what that projects entails and what needs to be in place to maximise its impact in the short, medium and long-term.

Such a process should be considered an important risk mitigation tool. In this sense, we took the effort to organize our thoughts and share which tools and processes we have developed and embarked during the Strategic Development Phase upon to reduce risks and maximise impact of urban interventions contributing to delivering on the SDGs. Similarly, our key findings on the topics of urban planning, transport, resilience and data, have also been captured in a separate document/publication. Collectively, the two documents will hopefully be of interest and use for the implementation of the Future Cities Programme, but also for others who have or will initiate similar interventions.

Rogier van den Berg

Head, Urban Lab, UN-Habitat

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CCR	City Context Report
GFCP	Global Future Cities Programme
IGC	International Growth Centre
NUA	New Urban Agenda
SAF	Strategic Area Framework
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SDP	Strategic Development Phase
ToR	Terms of Reference
UK FCO	United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office
UKBEAG	United Kingdom Built Environment Advisory Group
UN	United Nations
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme

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