Republic of Kenya

UN@HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

URBAN PLANNING FOR CITY LEADERS

A HANDBOOK FOR KENYA

URBAN PLANNING FOR CITY LEADERS

A HANDBOOK FOR KENYA

UN⊕HABITAT

Republic of Kenya

Urban Planning for City Leaders: A Handbook for Kenya
UN-Habitat Support to Sustainable Urban Development in Kenya

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF BOXES, FIGURES & TABLES

LIST OF BOXES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

FOREWORD

Unplanned developments, informal settlements, uncoordinated and unplanned land use and infrastructure development, large infrastructure and housing deficits are among the greatest challenges that Kenya's cities and towns face today. Despite the prevailing challenges, the country's population is increasingly urbanizing. The United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018) currently projects Kenya's urban population as 27 per cent of the total population. This is equivalent to 13,772,000 people living in urban settlements of varying sizes. The country's urban population is expected to reach half (50 per cent) of the total population in the year 2050. Given that Kenya is awaiting its largest share of urbanization to unfold, it is an opportunity to guide a sustainable urban transition. This will require urban management institutions with sufficient capacity to plan, implement, govern and manage this transition.

The year 2030 is the target for states to realize the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. This is the same year that Kenya has planned to achieve its Vision 2030 for socio-economic development. Sustainable urban development will be at the core of realizing both. In line with this, is the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, which aims to readdress the way cities and human settlements are planned, financed, developed, governed and managed, recognizing sustainable urban and territorial development as essential to the achievement of sustainable development and prosperity for all.

Urban planning is one of the tools that can help governments: national, sub-national and local, to realize sustainable cities and human settlements. To do so, governments must have sufficient capacity to facilitate efficient urban planning. Such capacity is required at different levels of government and among the various actors, including leaders.

This handbook, drawing from UN-Habitat's Urban Planning for City Leaders handbook, has been designed to empower Kenya's leaders with planning knowledge. Leaders play a critical role in urban planning and are involved in decision-making processes that have significant implications for urban development outcomes. Yet too often, urban planning processes are hindered by communication challenges, including at times, disconnect between leaders and technical officers.

This handbook, therefore, offers practical advice and insights into how leaders can actively participate in urban planning and development processes in Kenya. By leaders gaining a better understanding of planning, they can make well-informed decisions and develop better engagement with planning processes, including having good communication with planners, communities and other stakeholders in the urban sector.

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif
United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director

FOREWORD

Kenya is rapidly urbanizing, with urban centres anticipated to play a critical role in the socio-economic transformation of the country. However, there are several obstacles to deal with including infrastructure and housing deficits, ineffective urban planning, weak urban economies, inadequate institutional capacities, and urban governance challenges.

Being an emerging middle-income economy, attaining sustainable urban development is not only important for the realization of Kenya's Vision 2030, but it is also a vital undertaking towards the attainment of the Global Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda.

For the country to harness the urban potential and achieve sustainable urban development, both national and county governments must work together in addressing the challenges facing cities and towns. Unplanned urban development has been a major constraint to sustainable urban development. To address this, several interventions are required including the need to strengthen urban planning capacity at different levels.

In the coming years, urban centres in Kenya are required to invest immensely in infrastructure and housing. To build right, urban planning is a vital tool for facilitating effective coordination of investments. Effective urban planning will enable urban authorities make well-informed decisions whose resultant investments are resource-effective and that go a long way in advancing inclusive well-being, strengthening economies and preparing cities and towns for future growth, among other benefits.

This handbook has been prepared, in collaboration with UN-Habitat, as an urban planning knowledge tool for leaders in the country. Across the counties, it is noted that growing secondary cities, medium-sized and small towns face additional challenges, especially the absence of established urban management institutions and urban development plans. As leaders in the counties embark on building the necessary institutions which include urban boards and committees, they are also expected to actively participate in urban development planning. This active participation requires a good understanding