



COUNTY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR KENYA

Existing Planning Model, Gaps and
Opportunities for Engagement



UN HABITAT COUNTY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR KENYA
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Kakamega bus station, Kakamega County © Flickr/Nao Iizuka

Executive Summary

The purpose of the planning exercise for the counties is aimed at bolstering poverty reduction efforts, supporting the implementation requirements on regional development planning, promote equitable resource extraction and distribution, promote environmental conservation and overall, balanced regional growth and development.

This document discusses the existing legislation relating to Urban and Regional Planning in Kenya with a view to highlighting the opportunities and gaps that can be harnessed in respect to international, regional, national and county planning legal and regulatory framework, and planning processes. It aims at providing a nexus for engagement with the County governments of Kenya, to advance sustainable urban and rural settlements and promote the utilization of urban-rural linkages for eventual sustainable county development. The review of the current planning legal and policy framework examines various local and international policies, laws and regulations that affect planning at the national and county level. The outputs include an outline of viable entry points for collaboration with county governments in Kenya to develop integrated and sustainable county and urban development plans.

This includes proposing a framework for planning, the levels of possible engagement, and the tools to use in approaching planning the costs associated with the portfolio. This seeks to expound on the roles UN Habitat and its partners intend to put into place to advance the regional planning agenda through the counties and the terms of engagement.

The First Section explores the historical and current planning practices in Kenya, the planning challenges and viable solutions to the problems. The Second Section examines international, national, regional and local policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that guide planning at various levels; together with requisite planning authorities in the two levels (national and county). The Third Section outlines the role of participation in county planning and the types of plans that are required by law to support development processes in the counties. The Fourth Section identifies the opportunities and gaps and proposes possible areas of corroboration to enhance the planning processes at the national, regional and county level; so as to ultimately promote the planning agenda in Kenya.



Thika super-highway, Nairobi County © UN-Habitat

SECTION 1

1.0 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF REGIONAL PLANNING IN KENYA

1.1 Introduction

County planning exercise aims amongst other to bolster poverty reduction efforts, support the implementation requirements on regional development planning, promote equitable resource distribution, promote environmental conservation and overall, promote balanced regional and national growth and development.

To achieve such aim, it is important to develop a coherent framework for planning, strategies for various levels of engagement, and the tools to use for developing and implementing planning. This seeks to expound on the roles UN Habitat and its partners intend to put into place to advance the regional planning agenda through the counties and the terms of engagement.

This document examines existing legislation relating to Urban and Regional Planning in Kenya with a view to highlighting how UN-Habitat can assist in supporting Counties based on international, regional, national and county planning legal and regulatory framework, and planning processes. It aims at providing a nexus for engagement with the County governments to advance sustainable urban and rural linkages for a sustainable county development. This document examines various policies, laws and regulations concerning planning at the national and county level and the role UN-Habitat can and should play to support county governments.

1.2 Planning Practice in Kenya

Formal Planning practice in Kenya spans to the pre-independence period when the colonial government began to address planning to streamline its development objectives in Kenya Colony. The 1926 Mombasa Municipal Council Plan was the first formally prepared, the 1948 Nairobi Master Plan; prepared after Britain's Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, the Swynnerton Plan of 1954¹; which was a national policy that sought to intensify agricultural production and formalize the land ownership system from community land to individual land parcels and the Mombasa Municipal Council Master Plan of 1962². After independence, the Kenyan Government published a policy paper; Sessional Paper Number 10: African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya; which sought to correct development imbalances due to colonial development policies³. Subsequent national development plans and government policy decentralized development planning to the regions (provinces), districts and local authorities.

In 1978, a human settlement strategy was developed to guide urban and rural development; with an aim of realizing coherence in human settlements using service and growth center strategies. Selected growth centers were selected to stimulate the development of the hinterland and reduce rural-urban migration to primate cities like Nairobi and Mombasa.

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