

THE GLOBAL
URBAN ECONOMIC
DIALOGUE SERIES

UNLEASHING THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF AGGLOMERATION IN AFRICAN CITIES



UN  HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

UNLEASHING THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF AGGLOMERATION IN AFRICAN CITIES

United Nations Human Settlements Programme
Nairobi 2013

UN  HABITAT

The Global Urban Economic Dialogue Series

Unleashing the Economic Potential of Agglomeration in African Cities

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FOREWORD



America and the Caribbean.

We live in a new urban era with most of humanity now living in towns and cities.

Global poverty is moving into cities, mostly in developing countries, in a process we call the *urbanisation of poverty*.

The world's slums are growing and growing as are the global urban populations. Indeed, this is one of the greatest challenges we face in the new millennium.

The persistent problems of poverty and slums are in large part due to weak urban economies. Urban economic development is fundamental to UN-HABITAT's mandate. Cities act as engines of national economic development. Strong urban

economies are essential for poverty reduction and the provision of adequate housing, infrastructure, education, health, safety, and basic services.

The *Global Urban Economic Dialogue* series presented here is a platform for all sectors of the society to address urban economic development and particularly its contribution to addressing housing issues. This work carries many new ideas, solutions and innovative best practices from some of the world's leading urban thinkers and practitioners from international organisations, national governments, local authorities, the private sector, and civil society.

This series also gives us an interesting insight and deeper understanding of the wide range of urban economic development and human settlements development issues. It will serve UN member States well in their quest for better policies and strategies to address increasing global challenges in these areas

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Clos', with a long, sweeping underline.

Joan Clos

Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Executive Director, UN-Habitat

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