



UN HABITAT



FIJI: LAUTOKA CITY URBAN PROFILE



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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

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FOREWORD



According to research published in UN-Habitat's flagship report, *The State of the World's Cities 2010-2011*, developing regions including Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, will have more people living in urban than rural areas by the year 2030. With half the world's population already living in

urban areas, the challenges we face in the battle against urban poverty, our quest for cities without slums, for cities where women feel safer, for inclusive cities with power, water and sanitation, and affordable transport, for better planned cities, and for cleaner, greener cities is daunting.

But as this series shows, there are many interesting solutions and best practices to which we can turn. After all, the figures tell us that during the decade 2000-2010, a total of 227 million people in developing countries moved out of slum conditions. In other words, governments, cities and partner institutions have collectively exceeded the slum target of the Millennium Development Goals twice over, and ten years ahead of the agreed 2020 deadline.

Asia and the Pacific stood at the forefront of successful efforts to reach the slum target, with all governments in the region improving the lives of an estimated 172 million slum dwellers between 2000-2010.

In sub-Saharan Africa though, the total proportion of the urban population living in slums has decreased by only 5 per cent (or 17 million people). Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, and Rwanda were the most successful countries in the sub-region, reducing the proportions of slum dwellers by over one-fifth in the last decade.

Some 13 per cent of the progress made towards the global slum target occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean, where an estimated 30 million people have moved out of slum conditions since the year 2000.

Yet, UN-Habitat estimates confirm that the progress made on the slum target has not been sufficient to counter the demographic expansion in informal settlements in the developing world. In this sense, efforts to reduce the numbers of slum dwellers are neither satisfactory nor adequate.

As part of our drive to address this crisis, UN-Habitat is working with the European Commission and the Brussels-based Secretariat of the African, Caribbean

and Pacific Group to support sustainable urban development. Given the urgent and diverse needs, we found it necessary to develop a tool for rapid assessment and strategic planning to guide immediate, mid- and long-term interventions. And here we have it in the form of this series of publications.

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is based on the policy dialogue between UN-Habitat, the African, Caribbean and Pacific Secretariat and the European Commission which dates back to the year 2002. When the three parties met at UN-Habitat headquarters in June 2009, more than 200 delegates from over 50 countries approved a resounding call on the international community to pay greater attention to these urbanization matters, and to extend the slum upgrading programme to all countries in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group.

It is worth recalling here how grateful we are that the European Commission's 9th European Development Fund for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries provided EUR 4 million (USD 5.7 million at June 2011 rates) to enable UN-Habitat to conduct the programme which now serves 59 cities in 23 African countries, and more than 20 cities in six Pacific, and four Caribbean countries.

Indeed, since its inception in 2008, the slum upgrading programme has achieved the confidence of partners at city and country level in Africa, the Caribbean and in the Pacific. It is making a major contribution aimed at helping in urban poverty reduction efforts, as each report in this series shows."

I wish to express my gratitude to the European Commission and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Secretariat for their commitment to this slum upgrading programme. I have every confidence that the results outlined in this profile, and others, will serve to guide the development of responses for capacity building and investments in the urban sector.

Further, I would like to thank each Country Team for their continued support to this process which is essential for the successful implementation of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.

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

Dr. Joan Clos

Executive Director, UN-Habitat

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Lautoka is confronting a range of challenges relating to urban poverty, environmental risk, infrastructure and land management, amongst others. In order to effectively engage these challenges, and seek solutions to them, this urban profile documents and analyses six key components of Lautoka's urban context: urban governance and finance, urban planning and management, land development and administration, urban infrastructure and services, urban housing and shelter, and climate change and disaster risk reduction.

Urban profiling consists of a set of actions to assess urban needs and capacity issues at the city level. It employs a participatory approach where priorities are agreed on through consultative processes. Urban profiling is currently being implemented in over 20 countries in Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Urban profiling in Fiji includes an overall national urban profile and urban profiles of three urban areas, namely the Greater Suva Urban Area, Lautoka City and Nadi Town. Each profile will be published separately.

BACKGROUND

Lautoka City lies on the west coast of Fiji's main island Viti Levu and is the country's second largest city covering a land area of 1,600 hectares. In 2011, Lautoka City had approximately 44,500 people or 10 per cent of the country's total urban population. An estimated 20,000 people live in informal settlements on the city periphery, many of whom make use of municipal urban services.

The sugar cane production industry, historically vital to the national economy, is centred in Lautoka. The city contains the country's largest sugar mill as well as a number of pinechip yards which have played an important role in the city's economic development. However, the sugar industry has been in decline for the past 15 years. Freight and cargo handling through the Lautoka Port generates major revenue, and increasingly the city is investigating sports tourism as a promising sector.

URBAN GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

Lautoka City is governed by the Lautoka City Council (LCC) and headed by a Special Administrator, appointed by the central government, and managed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Both posts answer to the Ministry of Local Government, Urban Development, Housing and Environment. The performance of the

Special Administrator is evaluated often, and the position has clear objectives such as improving rates collection and shifting from cash to accrual accounting in council operations. Nevertheless, overlap between the CEO and the Special Administrator posts is leading to confusion requiring in ministry level intervention.

The LCC is actively pursuing and achieving high levels of rates collection, meaning increased revenues for the council. However, there is a lack of capacity for financial management - current accounting practices need to be improved and technically able staff need to be recruited.

URBAN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Regulation and control of land development takes place within LCC's Lautoka Town Planning Scheme, developed in 1990. In addition, Lautoka has developed its own sub-division bylaws which assist in guiding and regulating development. Given limited land supply and anticipated boundary extensions, Lautoka has re-zoned the peri-urban areas of the city.

Despite LCC's commitment to planned and regulated development, enforcement of plans and associated policy is weak. In part this is because the LCC's planning unit is understaffed, impeding implementation of plans. As a result, the council relies heavily on the Department of Town and Country Planning in matters related to urban planning and management.

LAND DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

There are three categories of land ownership in Lautoka: state land which is managed by the Department of Lands and Survey, iTaukei (indigenous Fijian) lands managed by the iTaukei Lands Trust Board, and individually-held private land. Administration and management is framed by relevant national acts. Due to slow growth in physical development over the past 20 years, the city has yet to reach its full potential as an urban area. As a result, LCC is seeking to optimize the utilization of state and iTaukei lands.

Informal settlements occupy a notable amount of land within the city, due to informal land development brought about through misunderstanding of policy and poor regulation. Formal agencies suffer from insufficient personnel and capacity, and as a result informal land development continues.

URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

The responsibility for the provision of infrastructure and basic services in Lautoka is shared between local and central governments. The latter provides water supply and sewerage services, roads, power and telecommunications. The LCC manages drainage systems, waste, street lighting, sports and community facilities. ITaukei villages are not permitted to access municipal urban services.

Water supply is intermittent and water sharing programmes are in place. The water supply system requires considerable upgrading, in particular new sources of water must be identified. 90 per cent of the city is connected to reticulated sewerage. Telecommunications and roads are generally adequate.

URBAN HOUSING AND SHELTER

Housing development in Lautoka includes formal detached dwellings, multi-unit apartments and informal housing mainly grouped along the major roads and riverbanks. Informal settlements, some of which are very well-organized, accommodate an estimated 20,000 residents. Many are vulnerable to floods due to the absence of urban services, and poor drainage. In general, housing in Lautoka is cheaper than in Nadi, resulting in workers in Nadi living in Lautoka.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Lautoka's central business district is located on the coast and is exposed to climate-related hazards including floods, cyclones, storm surges and sea incursion. Being a coastal city, projected mean sea level rise as a result of global climate change is a considerable concern.

Recognizing this, the LCC has initiated a series of measures designed to improve drainage and solid waste management in order to reduce flood risk. Informal settlements located in coastal areas are especially prone to climate-related hazards especially cyclones and storms. Mangrove reforestation should also be considered as a viable option for managing flood and cyclone risk in Lautoka.

INTRODUCTION



Rubbish dump in Vunato, Lautoka
© SCOPE

Rapid Urban Sector Profiling for Sustainability is an action-oriented assessment of urban conditions which focuses on priorities, capacity gaps, and existing institutional responses to key themes at the local and national levels. The purpose of the assessment is to develop urban poverty reduction policies at local, national and regional levels through an assessment of needs and response mechanisms, and as a contribution to the wider-ranging implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

METHODOLOGY

Urban profiling consists of three phases:

- i. Phase One involves a rapid participatory urban profiling at national and local levels, focusing on land and land administration, governance, informal settlements, urban health, infrastructure and services, gender, environment, disaster management, economy, urban-rural linkages and proposed interventions

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