

# MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGIC AND INSTITUTIONAL PLAN 2008–2013

## Focus Area Policy and Strategy Paper Summary

### Focus Area 2: Participatory Planning, Management, and Governance



▲ A waterfront neighbourhood in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

#### In Brief

Simply put, well-managed urbanization brings economic growth, social harmony, and political and scientific progress. However, poorly managed urbanization creates social exclusion, poverty, urban sprawl, and pollution. It also encourages the unsustainable use of land, water, and other natural resources.

UN-HABITAT supports sustainable urbanization by helping to develop inclusive and participatory urban planning and local development practices. Taking poverty, gender, and age into consideration, it promotes improved policy-making and strategy development.

#### Strategy

By encouraging more inclusive urban planning, management, and governance, UN-HABITAT wants strategic change through improved policies, legislation, and strategies; strengthened institutions; and improved capacity of cities to function in a holistic, integrated, and sustainable manner.

UN-HABITAT uses three programme themes to push towards the agency's overall goal of promoting sustainable urbanization:

1. Developing local capacities to deal with climate change
2. Enhancing urban safety and reducing vulnerability
3. Promoting economic development

#### Actions

Policies, tools, and methodologies are being developed for better institutional and organizational development and resource management. Linking the public, private, and civil spheres is central to Focus Area 2, with a focus on finding ways to promote transparency, accountability, and civic engagement.

UN-HABITAT promotes positive urbanization through legislation on political and fiscal decentralization. Capacities at the local level are being improved to spur local economic growth and development. These goals are being met by engaging all partners under the global Sustainable Urban Development Network.

## Our Approach

UN-HABITAT addresses the city as a whole. Focus Area 2 calls for uniting planning, management, and governance and avoiding treating them simply as steps in a development process. It emphasizes the use of equity, the ecology, and the economy as entry points to urban processes.

For sustainable development to happen, planning and governance activities must merge. Citizens should participate, come up with creative options, and make their own ideas work. This means changing basic monitoring and accounting into a day-to-day activity that upholds this vision.

Sustainable urbanization needs institutions that support sound governance and regulatory regimes and efficiently deliver public infrastructure and basic services.

## Expected Accomplishments

UN-HABITAT aims at inclusive urban planning, management, and governance at the national and local levels. Through networking with partners, the accomplishments expected under Focus Area 2 are improved policies, legislation, and strategies; strengthened institutions; and improved implementation of urban planning, management, and governance.

## Getting It Done

Activities focus on strengthening the analytic capacities of public institutions with respect to sustainable urbanization, and strengthening the public information and communication skills of municipal governments.

Additional activities strengthen the linkage between policy and strategy innovation, as well as the capacity of public institutions involved in urban development to formulate and implement plans. Others strengthen the capacity of urban institutions to assess the impact of public policies and programmes and various private initiatives.

UN-HABITAT is strengthening its work in post-conflict and disaster areas and highlighting the needs of smaller cities and towns. It is intensifying work on urban–rural linkages and looking at urbanization from a regional perspective.

## Working Together

UN-HABITAT currently works with a wide range of urban stakeholders and institutions in networks that exchange knowledge and promote capacity building. In each continent, the Sustainable Urban Development Network works with key partners in urban development, involving the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and community-based organizations.



▲ Participatory planning in Nepal.



▲ An initiative by market vendors in Nairobi, Kenya.

## ENHANCED NORMATIVE AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK PRIORITY COUNTRIES

UN-HABITAT's work in the following countries is specifically related to Focus Area 2.

COLOMBIA | ECUADOR | EGYPT | HAITI | INDONESIA  
SENEGAL | SRI LANKA | TANZANIA | UGANDA  
VIETNAM

**For more information or to obtain a copy of the full Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan Focus Area Policy and Strategy Paper, contact us.**

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) P.O. Box 30030, GPO 00100, Nairobi, Kenya • Tel: +254 20 7624266/7 • [infohabitat@unhabitat.org](mailto:infohabitat@unhabitat.org) • [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)  
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