



# SETTLEMENT PROFILING TOOL

A SPATIAL ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK FOR SETTLEMENTS  
ACCOMMODATING DISPLACED POPULATIONS

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# ABBREVIATIONS

ABA	Area-Based Approach
CBI	Cash-Based Incentives
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GCR	Global Compact for Refugees
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
HLP	Housing, Land and Property
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Master Plan Approach to Settlement Planning
NWoW	New Way of Working
PoC	Persons of Concern
RBA	Rights-Based Approach
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SIP	Settlement Information Portal
STDM	Social Tenure Domain Model
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

# GLOSSARY

## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. The goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. The 17 goals were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which set out a 15-year plan to achieve the Goals.

## New Urban Agenda (NUA)

The New Urban Agenda is an action-oriented document that mobilizes Member States and other key stakeholders to drive sustainable urban development at the local level. The implementation of the New Urban Agenda contributes to the localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner, and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, including Goal 11 of making cities and all human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

## Humanitarian, Development & Peace Nexus

The concept of the Humanitarian, Development & Peace Nexus focuses on the work needed to coherently address people's vulnerability before, during and after crises. It encourages more integrated processes, and a shift beyond project-based development and humanitarian interventions aiming to support initiatives that meet immediate needs at the same time as ensuring longer-term investment that address systemic causes of conflict and vulnerability. This approach is considered to enable better opportunities to reduce the impact of cyclical or recurrent shocks and stresses, and support the peace that is essential for development to be sustainable.

## Master Plan Approach (MPA)

The Master Plan Approach to settlement planning is UNHCR's guiding framework for the spatial design of humanitarian settlements. It establishes a unique response vision aligned to national, sub-national and local development plans and facilitates efforts to link humanitarian responses with long-term development efforts.

## Sustainability

Sustainable development has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

## Urban

An urban area can be defined by one or more of the following: administrative criteria or political boundaries (e.g., area within the jurisdiction of a municipality), a minimum threshold population size (this varies globally between 2000 and 50,000), population density, economic function or the presence of urban characteristics (e.g., provision of public services, paved streets, electric lighting, sewerage).

## Urbanisation

The increase in the proportion of urban population over time, calculated as the rate of growth of the urban population minus that of the total population. Positive rates of urbanization result when the urban population grows at a faster rate than the total population.

## Settlement

The term settlement is used broadly to describe a community in which people live. The scale and complexity of a settlement can range from a small number of dwellings grouped together to large towns and cities with surrounding urbanized areas. The tool refers to the relevant settlements where refugees or host community populations live, either separately or together. It is important to note that settlements can be either urban or rural, temporary or permanent.

## Settlement Profile

A Settlement profile is a document that provides a succinct but comprehensive overview of all the relevant physical, socio-economic and policy dynamics that affect a particular settlement through a spatial lens. It should provide the reader with a clear overview of the challenges and opportunities facing the development of the settlement and its inhabitants as well as broad recommendations on potential ways forward.

## Macro Scale

The Macro scale in this document, in line with UNHCR's Master Plan Approach refers to considerations in relation to the international, national and sub-national context. Key factors will include; national and policies and plans, patterns of urbanisation, infrastructure networks, trading routes and climate risk considerations. In more traditional urban planning terminology, this can commonly be referred to as transnational, regional, or country scale contexts.

## Meso Scale

The Meso scale in this document, in line with UNCHR's Master Plan Approach refers to considerations in relation to the relevant locality in which the settlement(s) in question exist. This can include considerations on local plans and policies, environmental and land use considerations, economic centres and movement flows, systems of towns and cities, typical infrastructure networks connecting the settlement to nearby towns, cities and adjacent rural areas. In typical urban planning terminology, this can commonly be referred to as district, county, or provincial scale contexts.

## Micro Scale

The Micro scale in this document, in line with UNCHR's Master Plan Approach refers to considerations in relation to the settlement itself. It typically focuses on the social, economic and spatial dynamics that define how the settlement functions. It considers the local community governance systems physical constraints, population density, road/pathway & public space networks, provision of basic infrastructure and services, and access to markets or economic opportunities. In typical urban planning terminology this needs to be considered based on the scale of each settlement in question, but can be referred to as settlement, neighbourhood, or ward scale contexts.

## THE MASTER PLAN APPROACH (MPA) AND THE SETTLEMENT PROFILING TOOL

Typically, shelter and settlement responses in camps evolve gradually over the course of a crisis. Responses begin by meeting the immediate needs of displaced persons, then go on to address a wide range of medium-term requirements, before ultimately focussing on supporting durable solutions. During a phased response, shelter or settlement interventions should support the well-being of displaced persons and broader community development by:

- Supporting populations of concern to obtain the best possible living conditions in a safe location, while taking into consideration the specific needs of certain groups or individuals;
- Linking humanitarian responses to long term recovery by implementing 'forward-looking' and 'solutions-focused' design and development for humanitarian settlements;
- Identifying risks to the sustainable development of settlements and taking proactive steps to strengthen local resilience capacities.

When establishing a new settlement, or considering a significant extension, the Master Plan Approach (MPA) provides a framework for design and development, which facilitates the evolution of camps into sustainable communities, and ultimately promotes their integration into the wider hosting environment. The MPA allows technical teams to plan and design a settlement that aligns with wider contextual considerations. This approach enables more resilient outcomes that can be integrated with a wide range of actors from various sectors (e.g. Humanitarian partners, development actors, relevant national, sub-national and local authorities). The approach aligns with

Settlement profiling is based on the guiding principles of the MPA. It focuses on developing a more comprehensive understanding of a settlement and provides an analytical framework for assessing the settlement conditions in their wider context. Its findings ultimately point the way to longer term planning considerations. The settlement profiling tool is also designed to guide data collection and analysis in a flexible manner, linking key areas of inquiry to the MPA guiding principles as well as aligning with sustainable development principles such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). This also allows the tool to be used as a regular reference guide for field staff, thereby enabling an incremental approach to analysis where field conditions do not permit a single clear profiling process. Furthermore, as the tool directly addresses the questions set out in the MPA, it can also be useful for initiating more comprehensive implementation of the MPA and simultaneously incorporating local and international sustainable development priorities.

## BEFORE PREPARING A SETTLEMENT PROFILE

Formulating a settlement profile with sufficient content to inform technical and policy planning is likely to take 3-5 months of solid work from 2-3 professional staff. Before embarking on this process, it is important to understand if there is a suitable enabling environment for a settlement profile to be carried out effectively.

Consider the following key when deciding whether it is feasible to carry out a profiling process:

- Do you have the appropriate human resources with time availability and technical capacity to carry out a profile?
- What are the viable next steps that could be undertaken after the profile has been completed?

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