

NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

SUB SAHARAN AFRICA REPORT



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FOREWORD



I am very pleased to present the State of National Urban Policies Report in the Arab States, an insightful assessment of urban policies in one of the most urbanized regions of the world. The Arab States account for 56 per cent of the world's urban population. The report is a valuable source of information, and is based on case studies undertaken by UN-Habitat.

The New Urban Agenda, the outcome document of Habitat III, as well as Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, recognize the transformative power of urbanization as an endogenous source of development, prosperity and employment. Within this new framework, the role of national governments in harnessing the opportunities and mitigating risks of urbanization is emphasized, with national urban policies recognized as a primary instrument. The New Urban Agenda emphasizes the leading role of national governments in the definition and implementation of inclusive and effective urban policies .

The report serves as an important tool for policy makers, practitioners and academia, providing insights in a complex region which shares a series of common social and political circumstances: a tradition of political centralization, large populations of youth demanding equal social, political and economic opportunities, extreme vulnerability to climate change, with the potential for food and water insecurity, and the destabilizing effects of political turmoil and conflict. We must not forget that cities of the Arab region are some of the oldest continuously inhabited human settlements in the world; the region continues to remain a source of great relevance when analyzing the development of national urban policies.

The Arab region now finds itself at a particularly turbulent but pivotal time. Policy choices made to manage rapid urbanization will determine the future of cities there, and to a certain extent, the path of national development. Investing in strong, well-developed national urban policies as part of the fundamentals of urbanization – rules and regulations, planning and design and a financing model - guarantees prosperity.

The report is part of a series of five regional reports assessing the state of national urban policies that complement the Global State of National Urban Policies Report, conducted in collaboration between UN-Habitat and the OECD. These studies are timely, as they follow up on Habitat III and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, and accompany the Second International Conference on National Urban Policy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Clos', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Joan Clos

Executive Director, UN-Habitat

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
Purpose of the study.....	1
Key findings	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1 Overview	4
1.2 Aims and objectives	6
1.3 Methodology.....	6
Data collection	6
Research constraints	7
2. REGIONAL NUP APPRAISAL.....	10
2.1 Sub-Regional NUP Appraisal	11
Sub-Saharan Africa	12
West Africa.....	12
Eastern Africa	12
Central Africa	13
Southern Africa	13
3. COUNTRY CASE STUDIES.....	15
3.1 Minor Country Case Studies	16
Benin.....	16
Botswana	16
Burkina Faso	17
Burundi	17
Cameroon	17
Cabo Verde	18
Central African Republic	18
Chad	17
Congo.....	19
Equatorial Guinea	19
Eritrea.....	20
Gabon.....	20
Gambia	20
Guinea	20

SUMMARY	1
Purpose of the study.....	1
Key findings	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1 Overview	4
1.2 Aims and objectives	6
1.3 Methodology.....	6
Data collection	6
Research constraints	7
2. REGIONAL NUP APPRAISAL.....	10
2.1 Sub-Regional NUP Appraisal	11
Sub-Saharan Africa	12
West Africa.....	12
Eastern Africa	12
Central Africa	13
Southern Africa	13
3. COUNTRY CASE STUDIES.....	15
3.1 Minor Country Case Studies	16
Benin.....	16
Botswana	16
Burkina Faso	17
Burundi	17
Cameroon	17
Cabo Verde	18
Central African Republic	18
Chad	17
Congo.....	19
Equatorial Guinea	19
Eritrea.....	20
Gabon.....	20
Gambia	20
Guinea	20

Guinea Bissau	20
Lesotho	21
Liberia	21
Mali.....	21
Mauritius.....	21
Mozambique	22
Namibia.....	22
Niger	22
Sao Tome and Principe.....	22
Senegal	23
Seychelles.....	23
Sierra Leone	23
South Sudan.....	23
Swaziland.....	23
Tanzania	24
Togo.....	24
Uganda	25
Zambia	25
Zimbabwe	26
3.2 Major Case Studies.....	26
Angola	26
DRC	27
Cote D'Ivoire	28
Ethiopia.....	30
Ghana	32
Kenya.....	34
Malawi	35
Nigeria	36
Rwanda.....	37
South Africa	38

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... 69

BIBLIOGRAPHY	74
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预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

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