



# UGANDA NATIONAL 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*, all developing regions, including the African, Caribbean and Pacific states, 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 to 2010, a total of 227 million people in the 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 and 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's 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 (ACP) 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 ACP 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 ACP Group.

It is worth recalling here how grateful we are that the European Commission's 9th European Development Fund for ACP 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 ACP 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 horizontal line underneath.

**Dr. Joan Clos**

Executive Director, UN-HABITAT





Uganda is experiencing rapid urbanization like most developing countries. It is happening in the face of increasing unemployment, growing informal sector, global economic crisis, climate change, and acute scarcity of resources for urban local authorities. The level of urbanization

in 2002 was 12.3 percent with an urban growth rate of 5.2 percent, it is projected to increase to 50 percent by 2050. This has been attributed to increasing rural urban migration, search for better livelihood, population increase, and creation of new administrative units.

The remarkable economic growth over the last decade as well as political stability have led to the expansion of existing urban centres and growth of hundreds of Town Boards and small trading centres in the countryside, particularly along highways and major road junctions. This high urban growth is not matched by corresponding increase in the provision of the necessary basic urban services such as housing, clean and safe drinking water, roads, electricity, and sanitary facilities. This has resulted in the mushrooming of slums

It is against this background that the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development in partnership with UN-Habitat launched the National Urban Sector Profiling.

The Municipalities of Mbale, Mbarara, and Kitgum were chosen as sample towns to pilot the formulation of the Urban Sector Profiles, addressing the following nine thematic areas: Disaster Risk, Safety, Environment and Climate Change, Governance, Slums and Shelter, Land, Basic Urban Services (BUS), Local Economic Development (LED), and Gender and HIV/AIDS.

I would like to thank UN-Habitat, the European Commission and the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) Secretariat for funding this project, the technical staff of the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development for coordinating the activities, Makerere University for their technical input, and the Municipalities of Mbale, Mbarara and Kitgum whose participation was very critical for the success of this project.

At the national level, the Government is aware of the challenges posed by rapid urbanization in Uganda and is in the process of formulating a national urban policy which will guide the urbanization process and enhance the management of urban growth. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development is aware of the role of stakeholders in the management of the urban sector. It is for this reason that the Ministry has established the National Urban Forum as a platform for dialogue and participation of stakeholders in influencing policy and legal reforms.

The Government recognizes the need for improving the living conditions of the urban poor living in slums. Working in partnership with Slum Dwellers International with support from Cities Alliance, the Ministry is coordinating efforts to transform the settlements of the urban poor in Uganda. Under this programme, slum dwellers have been mobilized into Slum Dwellers Savings Federation, trained and sensitized about their rights, responsibilities and obligations, and facilitated to partner with land owners, private investors and the public sector to undertake slum redevelopment schemes through a land sharing approach. I am very optimistic that we have the resolve, will and the commitment to realize cities without slums in the near future.

For God and My Country.

**Daudi Migereko, MP**

Minister of Lands Housing and Urban Development

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

UN-HABITAT's Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) is an urban assessment of needs and capacity building gaps for various urban centres. It is currently being implemented in over 20 Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Countries. The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme uses a structural approach to the assessment of urban needs and response mechanisms at town and national level in Uganda.

The overriding aim of the study is to contribute to the ongoing efforts of countries in the region in poverty reduction at city, country and regional level. The national urban profiling is expected to provide critical inputs and benefits to the implementing partners, enabling the management of sustainable cities with adequate shelter, basic urban services, good governance, land, environment and climate change, urban safety, urban disaster risks, and gender and HIV/AIDS, cognizant of World Habitat Day theme of "Better City, Better Life".

## GOVERNANCE

The Government of Uganda has since independence initiated a series of reforms, among them decentralization of governance structures initiated in 1997. The most notable and significant administrative reform undertaken by the government is decentralization, whose main objective is to devolve state power and facilitate social transformation and modernization of the country under Uganda's Decentralization Policy.

It embraces three unique features: de-centralization which has transferred powers and responsibilities to lower administrative units, delegation which allows the transfer of powers to lower administrative units that are granted some relative discretion to appoint their own officials and carry out delegated functions and devolution which has transferred power to lower administrative units.

Decentralization reforms at the administrative, political, financial, and service delivery levels have not only proved to be deliberate policy shifts focusing on responsibility for development of local authorities, but also an instrument at improving local democracy from international development commitments, to which Uganda is party and clearly pronounced in the MDG's whose targets are interfaced with Uganda's shared vision, sector priorities and plans.

## SLUMS

Uganda slums are characterized by poverty and poor living conditions with substandard housing, overcrowding and limited access to urban services. Slum residents are largely tenants living in single rooms.

Uganda has approximately 6 million households living in 4.5 million housing units with a backlog of about 1.6 million units of which 0.12 million are in urban areas. According to the 2002 Population and Housing Census, substandard housing conditions are prevalent with over 70 percent of housing units built of temporary building materials, of these 27 percent were in urban areas. (Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development). Although there have been various responses in terms of policy and programs to address the needs of people in slum areas, many slum residents feel forgotten and neglected. Strategic urban planning coupled with local economic strategies and environmental planning, is essential for reducing spatial and economic inequalities in urban areas. To comprehensively address urban poverty, all the complementary issues and needs of slum residents must be considered in the planning process.

## GENDER AND HIV/AIDS

In Uganda, there is an encouraging and favourable environment promoting gender equality in the nation, since the government instituted policies to promote women issues. There are a number of women organizations active in promoting gender-related issues and the overall development of Ugandan women. This is partly the legacy of the struggle for independence which saw the active participation of women on all fronts.

The consultations that have been carried out show that there is a link between HIV/AIDS and housing instability. The data that is available shows that people who reside in urban areas and in particular in slum areas have a significantly higher risk of HIV infection than the rural residents. The survey found out that people living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) are vulnerable to issues of housing instability. The rapidly increasing urbanization associated with poverty, rapidly changing lifestyles, and lack of effective programmes targeting high risk and vulnerable urban populations are some of the major challenges facing urban settings.

In general terms, HIV/AIDS prevalence is relatively high in Uganda. Available data shows that people who reside in urban areas have a significantly higher risk of HIV infection than people who reside in the rural areas (Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development).

On average about eight out of 100 Ugandan women are infected with HIV compared to five out of 100 Ugandan men. Among young men and women aged 15 to 24 years, for every one man, four women are infected with HIV, (Tigawalana 2010).

As a response mechanism, there are many government programs such as the AIDS control Program, Uganda AIDS commission, The AIDS Support Organization Program, and the National Policy on Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in Uganda, which are actively being used to fight HIV/AIDS.

## ENVIRONMENT

Rapid urbanization puts pressure on the urban environment. The increasing number of unplanned informal settlements, increasing poverty levels, polluting industries, poor solid waste management and poor sanitation negatively affects the urban environment.

The urban poor suffer more from environmental degradation as they are highly dependent on the environment for their survival. To cope with the negative environmental impacts of urbanization, it is important that the Government of Uganda comes up with measures to build capacity to protect the urban environment.

## INTRODUCTION

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) is an assessment of needs and capacity building gaps at the city, municipality and council levels. It is currently being implemented in 30 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme uses a structured approach where priority interventions are agreed upon through consultative processes. It focuses on priority needs, gaps, institutional setup, resource mobilization, and performance and accountability. The study aims at urban poverty reduction policy development at local, national and regional levels through an assessment of needs and response mechanisms as a contribution to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. It is based on analysis of existing data and on a series of interviews with all relevant urban actors, local communities and institutions, civil society, private sector, development partners, academia, and others. Through the consultative process, the priorities are agreed upon and developed in to priority projects aimed at reducing urban poverty, capacity building, checking performance and accountability, and general improvement of slum areas. The study will provide a framework for innovations for central and local

Information is collected through interviews and discussions with institutions and key informants to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the national and local urban context. The findings are presented and refined during a national consultative workshop and consensus is reached for priority interventions.

Phase Two (II); builds on priorities identified through the workshops and develops detailed capacity building and investment projects.

Phase Three (III); implements the projects developed during the earlier phases with an emphasis on priority areas which have been chosen.

## URBAN PROFILING IN UGANDA

The national consultation was conceived as a partnership platform which included Kampala City Council, municipalities, Town Councils and other major stakeholders, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, the Ministry of Local Government, and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development among others. The aim was to have a body integrating a wide range of urban actors.

## UGANDA IN DATA

Uganda is a landlocked country, lying astride the equator in East Central Africa occupying 241,551 square kilometres, 18 percent of which is composed of inland waters and permanent wetlands. It is closely linked by economic and colonial history to Kenya in the east and Tanzania in the south. To the North and West lie the Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) respectively and further Southwest lies Rwanda.

The constitution of the republic of Uganda provides the overall legal basis for government to plan and implement government programs for the country. The challenge of

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