



# **PLANNING URBAN SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH SUDAN**

BASIC CONCEPTS

**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

# **PLANNING URBAN SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH SUDAN**

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## Foreword

Today, more people than ever live in urban areas. The United Nations puts the tipping point in 2007 when, for the first time, half of the world's population was living in urban areas. City dwellers need to be housed and provided with places to access livelihoods and recreation. One of the most important elements of organizing human settlements is spatial planning, the main purpose of which is to help achieve sustainable development.

People's lives and the places in which they live can be better if they are well planned, but they will certainly be worse if human settlements are left to grow spontaneously.

The natural and historic environment – landscapes, buildings, towns and villages – can be better cherished if land uses around them are properly planned.

In order to fulfil its purpose of helping achieve settlements that respect the natural topography, planning must not simply be about scrutiny. It must also be a creative exercise to find ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live.

The purpose of this manual is to assist planners, engineers and surveyors to design new neighbourhood layouts and to upgrade

existing ones. It sets out clearly what could make a proposed plan or development fit an existing neighbourhood and sets out guidelines for new development.

This document comes at an ideal time when South Sudan's urban professionals are eager to learn techniques to create places where people can live, work and play while ensuring the integrity of the environment.

I am thankful to the teams that developed this document and reserve special thanks to UN-Habitat, my senior staff in the Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning and the field staff from the various ministries concerned for their collaborative efforts in making this vital document a success.

**The Honourable Jemma Nunu Kumba**  
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Juba, South Sudan  
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# 1 Introduction

## Overview

Urbanization is not a modern phenomenon but has occurred since about 5000 B.C. Human settlements were usually born along rivers, where people had access to water and transport and were close to their sources of livelihood. These settlements grew and eventually became towns.

Today, more and more people in South Sudan are living in fast urbanizing areas. In South Sudan, for census purposes, only people who live in towns and cities (former regional and county capitals) are considered to be the urban population. At present, this represents approximately 22 per cent of the country's total population. Studies show that the rapid urbanization process observed in South Sudan has been determined by massive rural-

which was developed after intensive fieldwork by UN-Habitat and Norwegian Capacity (NORCAP) in different states of South Sudan to get feedback from end users. The manual includes simplified illustrations targeting South Sudanese planners and land surveyors who are involved in settlement planning. The text and images included here are intended to stimulate the imagination, increase understanding of the planning process, and to serve as a guide for designing new urban layouts and upgrading existing ones.

## Problem statement

Until today, urban planning in South Sudan has consisted mainly of rudimentary subdivision layouts usually intended to demarcate plots to be allocated by local authorities. No rigour is applied in

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