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Regional and Technical Cooperation Division

THE GAMBIA: BRIKAMA URBAN PROFILE

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THE GAMBIA: BRIKAMA URBAN PROFILE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA AND THE ARAB STATES

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FOREWORDS

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 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 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.

Dr. Joan Clos
Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

The overall goal of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is to positively contribute to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and by extension to urban poverty alleviation. To this end, the urban profiling exercise in Brikama attracted the participation of all potential actors and stakeholders in the development process of the town. Additionally, the approach involved urban residents in helping to define their most pressing needs in tackling sustainable urban development.

The urban profiling is based on the analysis of existing data and a series of interviews with all relevant urban stakeholders. These include local communities, civil society organizations, the private sector, and development partners within the town. The Brikama City Consultation resulted in a collective agreement on priorities and their development into proposed capacity-building and other projects that are all aimed at reducing poverty within the town of Brikama.

Brikama town is cosmopolitan and many economic activities take place in the town. Having many inhabitants, it also serves as the urban center for surrounding communities. Majority of the poor are women and gender disparities in access to livelihood skills and economic resources are among the fundamental causes of poverty in Brikama. With the coming of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme, there is hope that these challenges will be addressed.

Additionally, the Local Government Act of 2002 has also been established to lay a solid foundation for actual decentralization of not only transfer of power and authority, but where necessary, to lay a framework to regulate a decentralized standard of rural development. It is therefore important to note that our vision is to improve economic growth and the living standards of the people.

Finally I want to thank the UN-HABITAT and all those who in one way or the other contributed to the success of the urban profiling exercise in Brikama.

Alh. Lamin Sanneh
Governor

BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

The urban profiling in Brikama consists of an accelerated, action-oriented assessment of urban conditions, focusing on priority needs, capacity gaps, and existing institutional responses at the local and national level. The purpose of the study is to develop urban poverty reduction policies at local, national and regional levels, through an assessment of needs and response mechanisms, and as a contribution to the wider-ranging implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The study is based on analysis of existing data and a series of interviews with all relevant urban stakeholders, including local communities and institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners, academics, and others. The consultation typically results in a collective agreement on priorities and their development into proposed capacity-building and other projects that are all aimed at urban poverty reduction. Urban Profiling is being implemented in over 20 African and Arab countries, offering an opportunity for comparative regional analysis. Once completed, this series of studies will provide a framework for central and local authorities and urban actors, as well as donors and external support agencies.

METHODOLOGY

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme consists of three phases:

Phase one consists of the rapid profiling of urban conditions at national and local levels. The capital city, a medium-sized city, and a small town are selected and studied to provide a representative sample in each country. Information is collected through standard interviews and discussions with institutions and key informants, in order to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the national and local urban set-ups. The findings are presented and refined during city and national consultation workshops and consensus is reached regarding priority interventions. National and city reports synthesize the information collected and outlined ways forward to reduce urban poverty through holistic approaches.

Phase two builds on the priorities identified through pre-feasibility studies and develops detailed capacity-building and capital investment projects.

Phase three implements the projects developed during the two earlier phases, with an emphasis on skills development, institutional strengthening and replication.

This report presents the outcomes of Urban Profiling Phase One at the national level in Brikama.

URBAN PROFILING IN THE GAMBIA

In The Gambia, the urban profiling focuses on Banjul, the capital city, Kanifing Municipal Council (KMC) and Brikama town in the western region. Through desk reviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and institutional questionnaires, the profiling exercise targets municipalities, government departments, private institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the academia within the selected cities.

A Focus Group Discussion was held in each of the 29 wards within the three municipalities/regions covered in the profiling exercise. In each ward, the session brought 20 participants discussing urban poverty issues. Discussions were guided by a team of moderators comprising of a facilitator, secretary and observer.

The purpose of the various data collection mechanisms was to obtain information on people's perception regarding the causes, effects and possible solutions to urban poverty. This brought together a cross section of youth, adults, men, and women for interactive discussions at each stage of the assessment. The discussions allowed interaction among all participants which encouraged them to give out detailed opinions on the gains and issues hindering urban poverty eradication.

REPORT STRUCTURE

This report consists of:

1. a general background of the urban sector in Brikama, based on the findings of the national assessment report, a desk study, interviews, and a consultation held in Brikama in 2005. The background includes data on administration, urban planning, the economy, the informal sector, the private sector, urban poverty, infrastructure, water, sanitation, public transport, street lighting, energy, health, and education;

2. a synthesis of seven main thematic areas - governance, slums, gender and HIV/AIDS, environment, local economic development, basic urban services, and urban safety and urban disaster management - in terms of the institutional set-up, regulatory framework, resource mobilisation, and performance (this second section also highlights agreed priorities and includes a list of identified projects); and

3. a SWOT analysis and an outline of priority project proposals for each theme. The proposals includes beneficiaries, partners, estimated costs, objectives, activities, and outputs.

DEMOGRAPHY OF BRIKAMA

According to the Atlas of the 2003 Population and housing Census, the population of The Gambia in the year 2003 was 1,360,681. Reports clearly showed that between 1993 and 2003 census the national population grew by 31 percent from 1,038,145 to 1,360,681. (Population and housing census, 2003, p.11)

Brikama's population in 2003 was 389,594 which accounts for 29 percent of the population covering a land area of 1,764km² followed by Kanifing Municipal Council at 24 percent within 76km² land area (same reference as above).

Brikama Local Government Area is the most populous local government area in the country. Between 1993 and 2003, growth in population by 66 percent made Brikama the fastest growing Local Government Area, surpassing Kanifing.

At the district level, Kombo north had the fastest growing population with a 106 percent increase between 1993 and 2003, which is high, driven by the rapid expansion of settlements along the recently constructed Kombo coastal road and the establishment of the Brusibi housing estate. (Source of data: Population and Housing census 2003, Page 11.)

Mortality rates in The Gambia are one of the highest in the sub region despite the great achievements made at the national level. With a nation wide coverage of maternal health services, the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) has over the years declined significantly from 1,050 to 730 per 100,000 live births between 1990 and 2001 (DOSH) and further reduced to 556 per 100,000 live births in 2006. The improvement in maternal mortality ratio over the years can be attributed to the impact of public health interventions that were put in place by government. Through these measures, significant reductions have been achieved in the burden of maternal morbidity due to anemia and malaria. It is important to note that anemia is one of the leading causes of maternal deaths in The Gambia. In addition, improved access to reproductive health services, appropriate case management and timely referrals have also contributed to the reduction of maternal deaths.

(Source: Fertility Determinants and Contraceptive Prevalence Survey, 1990, Census, 1993; Maternal, Peri-nata, Neonatal, Infant Mortality and Contraceptive Prevalence Survey, 2001; Census, 2003; Multiple Indicator Cluster Study III, 2006; Fistula Study, 2006 and HMIS Report, 2008 – MDG Status Report 2009 pp.37; 1993 and 2003 Census and Maternal, Peri-nata, Infant Mortality and Contraceptive Prevalence Survey, 2001).

TABLE 1: POPULATION BY SEX, NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA 2003

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	DIVISION / MUNICIPALITY	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS
Banjul	Banjul City Council	18,906	15,922	34,828	6,744
Kanifing	Kanifing Municipal Council	164,054	158,536	322,410	49,564
Brikama	Western Region	197,566	195,421	392,978	45,396