



UN HABITAT



Regional and Technical Cooperation Division

# PAPUA NEW GUINEA: PORT MORESBY URBAN PROFILE



Port Moresby Urban Profile

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HS Number: HS/1259/09E

ISBN Number: 978-92-1-132241-5

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#### Acknowledgements

Design and Layout: Kerstin Sommer and Florence Kuria



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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME  
REGIONAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION DIVISION

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## FOREWORDS



According to research published in UN-HABITAT's<sup>1</sup> 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 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

<sup>1</sup> UN-HABITAT - United Nations Human Settlements Programme



As more and more countries in the Pacific are urbanizing, the cities and town authorities are confronted with the task of meeting the demands of the growing urban population.

These urbanization challenges require comprehensive and sustainable Urban Governance and Management Systems and Strategies. Both national and local urban authorities are unable to cope with the increasing pressures on urban services.

The local urban governments lack financial and management capacities to respond to the proliferation of sub-standard developments and the rising levels of urban poverty among the poor urban communities.

The UNDP has supported UN-HABITAT in this project because it contributes to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Target 11 to reduce urban poverty through effective urban governance. The objective of this Urban Profiling study is to develop urban poverty reduction policies at local levels.

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 Urban Profiling is an assessment of needs and capacity building gaps at the local and national levels. This project is currently being implemented in over 20 countries globally.

In the Pacific region, this project has been piloted in PNG and Port Moresby, Goroka and Kokopo cities have been selected for this study. The Urban Profiling

study uses a well structured approach where priority intervention projects are agreed through consultative processes.

The Urban Profiling methodology consists of three phases: the first phase is an assessment of key urban issues at the local levels, focusing on Governance, Basic Urban Services, Informal Settlements, Gender and HIV/AIDS, and Land.

The second phase involves feasibility studies on priority projects identified in the study and policy development as well as training on settlement upgrading and urban service improvements, local leadership training, and management. The third phase of the project involves implementation of these priority projects.

The Urban Profiles will provide a framework for National, Local and Urban Actors, as well as Donors and External Support Agencies.

**Dr. Jacquie Badcock**  
UN Resident Coordinator  
United Nations - PNG



Though Papua New Guinea is one of the least urbanized countries in the world, there is a growing and irreversible trend of urban migration.

According to the 1990 census only 15% of the population was

resident in urban areas. Nevertheless, at 4.3% annual growth, the urban population is increasing at almost double the national average. At this rate, by the year 2020, 27% of the country's population will be living in cities and towns.

This urbanization trend is not seen as a potential stimulator of growth, but as the cause of problems such as expansion of spontaneous informal settlements, incidents of high unemployment rates, alienated and delinquent youth, violent crimes and drugs, and alcohol abuse. This unfortunate trend is the result of uncontrolled rural-urban migration caused by weak governance. National policies regarding balanced rural and urban development, urbanization, local economic investments and development, social development, poverty reduction, basic services, and social amenities or crime prevention have not been fully implemented.

Port Moresby is the national capital and the seat of the government. Like many other cities and towns in Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby is confronted with issues directly related with rapid urbanization and the National Capital District Commission lacks resources to manage this increasing urban growth and the problems associated with it. The intervention by the United Nations, for which I commend the UNDP and UN-HABITAT, is timely as the local governments are beginning to assume more responsibilities.

The Urban Profiling study will no doubt improve Port Moresby current performances and its efforts in responding to urban poverty through improved service provision, particularly improved water supply, sanitation and provision of essential infrastructure services.

The Urban Profiling Study has already high-lighted the city's institutional capacity gaps which I hope donor partners can support.

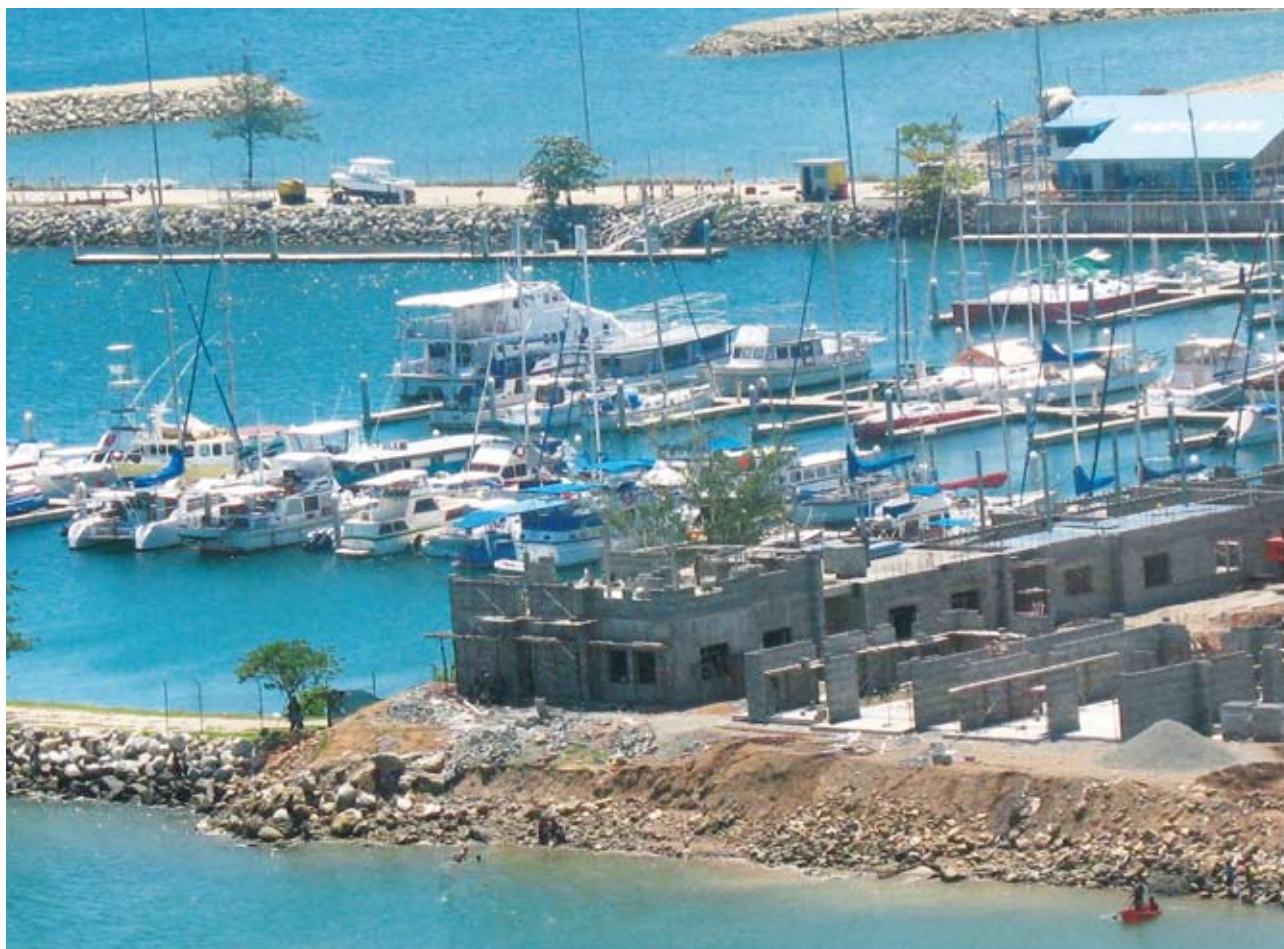
The National Capital District Commission has already embarked on developing its urban development strategies in an attempt to address the current urbanization challenges; I would welcome a further intervention from UNDP and UN-HABITAT to support our endeavours.

**Honorable Powes Pakop, MP**

Governor

National Capital District Commission

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



### INTRODUCTION

The Urban Profiling is an accelerated and action-oriented urban assessment of needs and capacity-building at the city level. It is currently being implemented in over 20 countries in Africa and the Arab States. Urban Profiling uses a structured approach where priority interventions

### BACKGROUND

Port Moresby is the capital city of PNG and is the main administrative, commercial and education centre of the country. It has a population of a little over 400,000 with an average density of 16 persons per hectare. It developed based on its historical and strategic

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