URBAN PLANNING MANUAL FOR SOMALILAND







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HS number: HS/130/10E ISBN: 978-92-1-132246-0

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United Nations Human Settlements Programme publications can be obtained from UN-HABITAT Regional and Information Offices or directly from:

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Printing: UNON, Publishing Services Section, Nairobi, ISO 14001:2004-certified

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44

48

54

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Figure 17: Location of Services

Berbera, and Sheikh

Figure 18: Hargeisa Market Plans

FOREWORD				
PREFACE				
INTRODUCTION				
What are Plans?				
Types of Plans				
PLAN-MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION STEPS				
Step 1: Why Do We Plan?				
Step 2: Where Are We Now?				
Step 3: Where Do We Want to Go?				
Step 4: How Do We Plan?				
Step 5: How Do We Get It Done?				
Step 6: How Do We Control Activities?				
ANNEXES				
REFERENCES	64			
LIST OF FIGURES				
Figure 1: Possible Strategic Development Plan for Hargeisa				
Figure 2: Sheikh Omar Neighbourhood in Hargeisa – New Town Development Scheme				
Figure 3: Burao Population Statistics by Age and Sex; Burao Education Statistics				
Figure 4: Berbera Port Imports and Exports				
Figure 5: Natural Features of Hargeisa				
Figure 6: Urban Morphology				
Figure 7: Spatial Analysis of Hargeisa, with Urban Services and IDP/Returnee Settlements (on the Periphery, with No Access to Services)				
Figure 8: Land Use/Functional Layout Sample from Berbera				
Figure 9: Berbera Waterfront Planning Map				
Figure 10: Land Use Development Potential for Hargeisa				
Figure 11: Concept of a Compact City				
Figure 12: Concept of Balanced Development				
Figure 13: Key Planning Guidelines				
Figure 14: Potential Road System in Hargeisa				
Figure 15: Hargeisa Commercial Centres and Transport				
Figure 16: Section of a Water Supply System Map for Sheikh				

Figure 19: Proposed Planning Process for Strategic Urban Planning in Hargeisa,

FOREWORD

UN-HABITAT has been working in the Somali region for over 25 years, starting with support for nomadic settlements in the 1980s. In Somaliland, the engagement of UN-HABITAT in post-conflict activities started in the early 1990s, focusing on human capacity building and development of institutions. UN-HABITAT established an office in Somaliland and brought in the relevant expertise. Technical assistance projects in sectors such as water supply, land administration, stimulating the local economy, urban planning, etc. were implemented with hands-on training in the major towns of Somaliland.

The Somali Urban Sector Profile Study (2002) covered seven towns in Somaliland, and improving urban governance and urban management was its key recommendation. This study became the model for Rapid Urban Sector Profiling for Sustainability (RUSPS), which has been implemented in more than 20 countries around the world. Upon the recommendation of the urban sector profile, the Support for Priority Areas in the Urban Sector Programme was formulated. The programme provided legal support for urban laws, developed geo-databases, and initiated rapid urban spatial analysis in major towns.

Under the Urban Development Programme for the Somali Region (SUDP) 2005–2008, UN-HABITAT assisted the urban development of Somaliland by applying contemporary approaches to urban management: city consultations, participatory planning, and strategic planning. The preparation of four publications entitled *First Steps towards Strategic Urban Planning*, which focused on four towns (Hargeisa, Berbera, Sheikh, and Burao), was one of the major urban planning outputs. These "first steps" included spatial analysis, the development of vision through city consultations, the formulation of action plans, and community-driven development and recovery.

Currently, through the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery for Somalia, UN-HABITAT is actively engaged in institutional reform in the urban sectors of Somaliland. Support for land and property management, the establishment of legal and institutional frameworks for urban planning, and improvement of basic services and infrastructure are the main focus areas of the joint programme in contributing to the spatial development of Somaliland.

With internally displaced people, returnees, and migrants from rural areas, most urban areas in Somaliland have been growing rapidly. Unfortunately, urban expansion in Somaliland has not been guided by urban development



plans. Numerous informal settlements, urban sprawl, inefficient land use, and lack of access to urban services are observed in most of the urban areas these days. In addition to natural population growth, the number of internally displaced persons, returnees, and migrants is anticipated to further increase due to the relative stability in Somaliland compared to other areas in the Somali region. Therefore, the role of urban planning to guide the sustainable development of urban areas (with urban planners at both national and local levels) is gaining more significance in Somaliland.

Initial efforts to prepare this urban planning manual were made under the Urban Development Programme for the Somali Region, and additional inputs to respond to the specific local context have been made under the joint programme. This manual aims to cover all the steps of an urban planning process, describing each step in a brief and concise manner. A series of training courses based on real-life plan formulation will be prepared as a next step. I sincerely hope that this manual will provide the necessary technical support for Somaliland, contributing to an improved living environment for its citizens, and that the urban planners of Somaliland can guide the development and improvement of its urban areas.

Anna Tibaijuka O Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

PREFACE

The Somali region has been ravaged by civil war and unrest for many years. The existing urban centres were destroyed and records disappeared. At present, rapid growth is translating into the haphazard development of urban centres. Some settlements are prone to natural hazards or those caused by humans; most will be confronted with high administrative costs when attempting to provide infrastructure and services to a scattered population. The weak institutional set-up and poorly equipped municipalities (poor human resources, technical know-how, equipment, and financial resources) hamper orderly development and efficient resource utilization in the urban centres.

Improving planning capacity is therefore very crucial for all urban centres in Somaliland. The necessary tools to enable this change have to be developed without further delay. This manual is meant to avail an operational planning tool that responds to the following situational requirements:

- The need to establish a robust urban planning culture, given that approaches are changing and new trends have to be introduced.
- The need to develop a tool that deals with the particularities of the context war-torn urban centres, an inherent nomadic culture, weak institutional capacities, etc.
- The need to develop an easily accessible and simplified planning tool that can be understood by technical experts at the local level.
- The need to present a concise version comprised of the basic minimum information for immediate use, which would be developed gradually with time (i.e. a living document).

WHO IT IS FOR

The manual is intended to serve mainly Somaliland professionals and technicians engaged in urban development activities. It will also be a useful tool for decision makers, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and communities involved directly or indirectly in the planning process (undertaking planning, approval, or implementation tasks).

HOW IT IS STRUCTURED

The manual focuses on "plans and the plan-making process", defining what plans are and outlining the basic procedural steps one ought to follow. The annexes are meant to complement the analysis section in the planmaking section, providing basic data collection formats and basic mapping tips for undertaking a study. They also elaborate on the participatory process and the techniques to be used.

The manual is based on UN-HABITAT's engagement in the region under the Urban Development Programme for the Somali region (SUDP), which aimed at broad-based capacity development that combined different components: good local governance, strategic projects, rapid spatial analyses of towns, and municipal finance.

The manual relates heavily to these different components and the planning work in progress under the SUDP programme, especially:

- The Sheikh Omar neighbourhood planning exercise being developed in Hargeisa an activity that was meant as an on-the-job planning and capacity-building process and that informed the manual with regard to some of the contextual guidelines.
- The land management discussion forum, where the current legal framework (Urban Land Management Law No. 17) and the actual administrative procedures related to land are discussed and debated.

All of these activities are works in progress, and extensive local efforts are needed to refine them into very contextual tools and prepare the ground for a good planning approach. The Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport, as the lead ministry on urban planning issues, is the major responsible body in this regard. The ministry partnered with UN-HABITAT on this manual and has provided its full support. It should be noted that similar manuals and tools will need to be assessed regularly and updated to match the dynamics of the urban environment. This manual was reviewed by the Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport and the Somaliland Municipality Association.

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, HOUSING, AND TRANSPORT

The Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport is Somaliland's lead ministry on urban planning issues. It partnered with UN-HABITAT on this manual and has fully reviewed and endorsed it. The ministry provided the following message:

Since the self-declaration of independence in 1991, the Somaliland government has maintained social and political stability despite the lack of recognition by the international community. With the support of the government, the towns of Somaliland have achieved considerable improvement in their economical development and the strengthening of their institutions.

Despite the rapid growth of urban areas in Somaliland, urban plans unfortunately have not yet been prepared for any towns. Due to the lack of guidance and control in land management and urban development, many towns in Somaliland are now experiencing urban sprawl, informal developments, land use conflicts, and limited accessibility to services and basic needs.

The Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport was established in 1991 after the declaration of independence. The National Charter of 1994 mandated the ministry with the overall responsibility for developing the infrastructure of Somaliland. This includes formulating policy and regulations on public infrastructure and urban management, providing technical assistance to national and local governments, supervising the construction of public buildings and infrastructure, and so on.

The Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport has been working closely with UN-HABITAT in the areas of land law and policy, urban planning, and urban regulatory frameworks, especially since 2008. With the assistance of UN-HABITAT, the ministry has worked to establish the Land and Urban Management Institute, which is endorsed by Law No. 17/2001 and is currently being implemented under the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery for Somalia. It is expected that the institute will take the lead in urban land management, but also in the coordination between national and local agencies in this respect.

This urban planning manual was prepared through active and dynamic dialogue between UN-HABITAT and the Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Transport and includes technical,

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