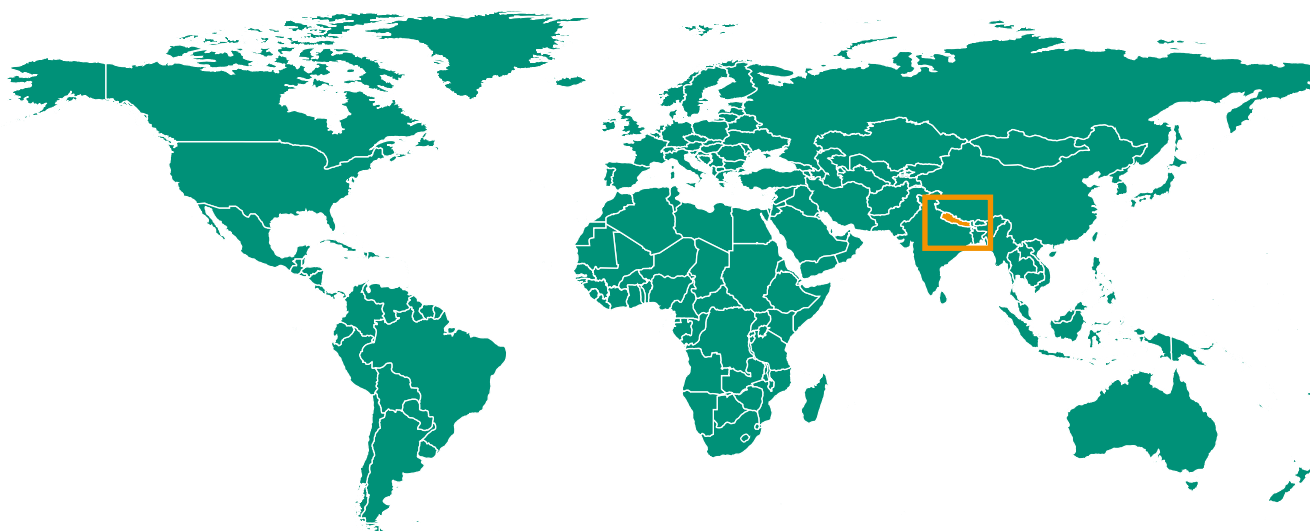


COUNTRY  
PROGRAMME  
DOCUMENT  
2008 - 2009

**NEPAL**





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Nairobi, Kenya

Fax: + (254 20) 762 4266/7

E-mail: [UN-HABITAT@UN-HABITAT.org](mailto:UN-HABITAT@UN-HABITAT.org)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>MINISTER</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>SITUATION ANALYSIS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>National urban policy context</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Focus area 1:</b> Advocacy, monitoring and partnerships	7
Vulnerability reduction	7
Capacity development	7
<b>Focus area 2:</b> Participatory urban planning, management and governance	8
Urban planning management	8
Urban governance and institutions	8
Slum Upgrading and Prevention	8
<b>Focus area 3:</b> Pro-poor land and housing	9
Land for housing	9
Shelter and basic services	9
<b>Focus area 4:</b> Environmentally sound basic urban infrastructure and services	10
Urban water and sanitation situation	10
<b>Urban sector capacity development needs</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>RECENT AND ON-GOING WORK</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>UN-HABITAT</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Partners</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>National development goals and priorities</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>UN-HABITAT's proposed strategy for the sector</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Key principles</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Information</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>ACRONYMS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>24</b>

## FOREWORDS

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In April 2007, the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT approved our 2008-2013 Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan. This plan intends to promote the alignment of UN-HABITAT normative and operational activities at country level.

The UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents (HCPD) are tangible components of this Plan as well as a genuine endeavour of UN-HABITAT to better coordinate normative and operational activities in a consultative and inclusive process involving UN-HABITAT's in-country focal points, UN-HABITAT Programme Managers, national governments, UN country teams, sister-UN agencies, development partners and all divisions of our Agency. The UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents are strategic tools meant as a guide for all UN-HABITAT activities over a two-year period. A major dimension of the UN-HABITAT Country Programme Document is to advocate UN-HABITAT's mandate and address the urban challenges facing the world's developing countries.

The UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents identify national urban development goals and priorities including shelter, urban governance, access to basic services and credit. Important cross-cutting issues such as the environment, gender, responses to disasters, and vulnerability reduction are also addressed. The UN-HABITAT Country

Programme Documents focus on UN-HABITAT country programming. They serve as a work plan for UN-HABITAT Programme Managers and a reference tool for national and local actors involved in sustainable urban development. According to the Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Action Plan adopted by the UN-HABITAT Committee of Permanent Representatives on 6 December 2007, twenty UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents were completed during 2008, including the One-UN Pilot countries where UN-HABITAT is active.

In line with the United Nations reform process, UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents seek to strengthen the role of the United Nations and to demonstrate our commitment. I wish to thank our UN-HABITAT Programme Managers for their input and dedication and for putting together these documents under guidance of the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division and with support from all branches and programmes of the Agency.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Anna K. Tibaijuka'.

Anna K. Tibaijuka  
Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

## MINISTER



Nepal is passing through a period of unprecedented political transition. After the end of the decade long conflict, the country has successfully held the election of Constituent Assembly followed by the process of drafting a new constitution that ensures peace and institutionalization of the concept of federal democratic

republic. The present government has a historical responsibility of drafting a new constitution which reflects the true aspiration of the people. Similarly, rehabilitation of the people displaced by the conflict, reconstruction of damaged infrastructure and the delivery of peace dividend to the affected people are equally important responsibilities of the present government.

Ministry of Physical Planning and Works is committed to the attainment of Millennium Development Goals, particularly Target Nos. 10 and 11 which are related to human settlement sector. The National Shelter Policy of 1996 is being reviewed in the context of new political developments and the changing priorities of the external development partners. Furthermore, steps have been taken to draft new legislations to encourage the involvement of private sector and civil society in housing and human settlement development.

The Country Programme Document of Nepal identifies the priority issues in human settlement sector and suggests intervention to be made by the Government and UN HABITAT. Detailed discussions were held between the representatives of UN HABITAT and the Ministry for mainstreaming the contents of the document with the broader framework of current policies and programmes of the Government.

I firmly believe that this document will guide the UNHABITAT as well as the stakeholders involved in housing and human settlement sector in Nepal for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). I consider it as an important milestone in the long standing relationship between Nepal and UN HABITAT. I thank concerned officials of UN HABITAT and my ministry for their hard work during the preparation of this document.

Honourable Bijaya Kumar Gachhadar,  
Minister of Physical Planning and Works

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

### NATIONAL URBAN POLICY CONTEXT

Nepal is surrounded by two countries: India in the south and the Tibet region of China in the North. Compared to several countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Nepal has low urbanisation. According to 2001 data, the urban population totalled 15% and is expected to reach 18% by 2015. The urban population is mainly concentrated in 58 municipalities. Internal migration has been increasing due to deficiencies in basic social and physical infrastructure and a lack of economic opportunities in the rural areas. The 10 year long conflict has contributed to the rise in the urban population migrating from the rural areas to the cities. Correspondingly, some major cities and towns of Nepal including Kathmandu Valley, have experienced higher population growth than the national growth rate of 3.5 %.

Due to inadequate policies and programmatic responses to rapid urbanisation, urban growth has been haphazard resulting in specific problems. There have been problems in access to almost all basic urban

services such as drinking water, sanitation and solid waste management, pollution, traffic congestion, transportation, and fuel supply, and crime and violence situation has significantly deteriorated. In addition, other associated problems have been encroachment of land along rivers, forest and public land, decrease in arable land, haphazard urbanisation or emergence and expansion of informal settlements (slums and squatters).

The problems associated with the rapid rise in the urban population can be solved only with the joint efforts of particular institutions in Nepal and with bilateral agencies, multilateral agencies and United Nations agencies. In this context, UN-HABITAT's initiative, together with that of Asian Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) is quite important: (a) to raise the profile of the urban development sector among government agencies, bilateral agencies, multilateral agencies and United Nations agencies, (b) to cope with the challenges of rapid urbanisation to make a difference in the lives of people living in urban areas in general and that of the poor living in slums and squatters in particular.

Owing to recent positive political developments, that led to the promulgation of the Interim Constitution and the formation of the multi-party interim government, which brought the promise of sustained peace to Nepal, there are emerging signs of a strong policy change towards low-income housing and urban development. Similarly, election to the Constitutional Assembly is expected to be held in April 2008, to be followed by the drafting of the new Constitution, parliamentary election and local government elections over the next two to three years. In this context, the Three Year Interim Plan 2007-2010 of the Government of Nepal is a welcome step and provides a timely opportunity to UN-HABITAT to support the human settlements development sector in Nepal.

This UN-HABITAT Country Programme Document has been developed in the context of a historically significant political transition that is taking place in Nepal at present. The UN-HABITAT Country Programme Document attempts to address key urban development challenges and priorities facing the thematic areas of land and housing, shelter and basic services, capacity development and urban governance through the focus of the Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (2008 -2013) of UN-HABITAT.

The permanent ceasefire between the Maoist Party and the government promises to end one of the worst political crises that Nepal has ever experienced. The possibility of sustained peace in the country

#### STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

##### Urbanisation (2008)

- Total population: 28.7 m
- Urban population: 4.9 m (17.2%)

##### Annual Population growth rates (2005-2010)

- National: 1.9 percent
- Urban: 4.8 percent

##### Population major cities (2008)

- Kathmandu : 938 000

*Source: UN DESA*

##### Slum indicators (UN-HABITAT)

- Slum to urban population: 60.7%
- % urban population with access to:**
- Improved water: 90.1%
- Piped water: 50.5%
- Improved sanitation: 79.0%
- Sufficient living area: 74.5%
- Durable housing: 71.8%

*Source: UN-HABITAT, 2006*





has brought forth new hope for development while bringing in its wake daunting challenges of reform and development. The armed conflict that started in 1996 took its toll on people's lives exposing many deep-seated political geographic, economic, social, gender-related and ethnic inequities within Nepalese society. The greatest challenge facing Nepal is in delivering a peace dividend to those who were the victims of these injustices and correcting the inequities on the ground that have divided Nepal and prevented its social and economic development over the past 10 years.

## FOCUS AREA 1: ADVOCACY, MONITORING AND PARTNERSHIPS

### VULNERABILITY REDUCTION

Although no disaggregated data is available, it is highly likely that Nepal's Dalits, disadvantaged Janajatis, and other marginalised and economically poor sections of the population suffer more from natural disasters because they have fewer resources, less knowledge and less influence to withstand the negative effects of disaster compared to better off people (Common Country Assessment 2007, United Nations Country Team Nepal)

It will be clear from the percentage of households living in under-served settlements (92.4%) in urban areas, the vulnerability they are exposed to in terms of health hygiene and possible natural and manmade disasters. Common Country Assessment for Nepal, 2007, clearly states that "it is very important that development gains and people's livelihoods are protected from natural hazards of floods, landslides and earthquakes, which have potential to set Nepal development back by years. Common Country Assessment has identified various future priorities and recommended planning actions for the reduction of vulnerability. UN-HABITAT will be able to contribute in helping its government counterpart to materialise those actions based on its experience elsewhere.

### CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

If housing and urban development has to be effective in Nepal, one of critical issues that need to be addressed is the capacity building of responsible Ministries, Departments, local authorities, non-governmental organisations and Community-based Organisations. In this context relevant outcomes highlighted by United Nations Development Assistance Framework are (a) Local Government and line agencies more effectively mobilise and manage resources and deliver services and (b) Line ministries and the Ministry of Local Development have structures, policies and

programmes that support decentralised, quality service delivery that is pro-poor and inclusive. Therefore, the objectives related to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework that UN-HABITAT needs to contribute include: (a) to build capacity of the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works, the Ministry of Land Development, Department of Urban Development and Building Construction, Department Water Supply and Swearage (DWSS) water utilities, local government Municipality of Association of Nepal and non-governmental organisations to effectively mobilise resources and manage/facilitate urban projects, and (b) Facilitate the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works, the Ministry of Land Development and Department of Urban Development and Building Construction, DWSS to delegate authorities to local government and non-governmental organisations to deliver quality services that are pro-poor and inclusive.

## FOCUS AREA 2: PARTICIPATORY URBAN PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

### URBAN PLANNING MANAGEMENT

The national policy, programmes and documents that are directly related to Urban Planning and Management include:

- (a) National Urban Policy 2007
- (b) Three year Interim Plan of the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction on Housing and Urban Sector (2007-2010)
- (c) Vision Paper on “New Physical Infrastructure Foundation of the New Nepal 2007-2027”

The Local Self-Governance Act established of 1999 provides the necessary legal framework for municipalities to prepare and implement periodic plans, as mentioned earlier. However, the department concerned i.e. Department of Urban Development and Building Construction and municipalities have limited technical and financial capacity to do so, and therefore, only a limited number of municipalities can prepare a period plan. To let many more municipalities prepare periodic plans, technical and limited financial support is required.

### URBAN GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONS

The Local Self-Governance Act established in 1999 provides a good legal framework for local self-governance. However, it was not fully utilised due to the weak structure of District Development Committees, Village Development Committees and Nagar Palikas. The terms of elected bodies were not renewed in July 2002 after their term expired. Therefore, after July 2002, local government functions have been carried out by government appointed local development officers (Common Country Assessment Nepal 2007).

A caveat to improving service delivery is that it may take a while for local government bodies that play a major role in service delivery to work effectively again. Newly elected bodies are still a few years away. Therefore, alternative means of supporting improved service delivery need to be explored (Common Country Assessment Nepal 2007). Common Country Assessment Nepal 2007 recommends strengthening of democratic and inclusive governance by:

- Making non-governmental organisations more efficient and democratic

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