

IMPLEMENTING
THE NEW
URBAN AGENDA

Implementation of the New Urban Agenda in the Sub- Saharan Africa

A review in preparation for the second Quadrennial report
(2022)

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This report documents the progress made in the implementation New Urban Agenda in Sub-Saharan Africa] between 2018 and 2021. The Report is based on desk review and analysis of a wide range of data sources including the Voluntary Local Reviews for cities in the region and national reports on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

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Acronyms

AAPS	Association of African Planning Schools
ACFTA	African Continental Free Trade area
ADPs	Annual Development Plans
AfDB	African Development Bank
AHP	Affordable Housing Programme
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARTIN	African Regional Transport Infrastructure Network
AURI	African Urban Research Initiative
C40	Cities Climate Leadership Group
C-Safe	Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CCAP	Coastal City Adaptation Project
CCRS	Climate Change Response Strategy
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CfP	Catalyst for Peace
CIDPs	County Integrated Development Plans
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst/German Academic Exchange Service
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DST	Department of Science and Technology
DSTI	Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation
DUAT	Registration and legalization of land use rights
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMA	Environmental Management Authority
ENO	Espace Numérique Ouvert
EP	Employment Policy
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESDP	Economic and Social Development plan
FCTA	Federal Capital Territory Administration
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FT-SL	Fambul Tok Sierra Leone
G2C	Government to Citizen
GAMA	Greater Accra Metropolitan Area
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Geographic Positioning Systems
GNI	Gross National Income
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLMC	High-Level Ministerial Committee
ICC	Implementation Coordination Committee

ICLEI	Local Governments for Sustainability
ICT	Information, Communications and Technology
IDC	Inclusive District Committees
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
INRM	Integrated Natural Resource Management
IPAM	Institute of Public Administration and Management
IPU	International Union of Parliamentarians
IT	Information Technology
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme
KNCHR	Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
LAVIMS	Land Administration Valuation and Information Management System
LEAP	Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability & Professionalism
LED	Local Economic Development
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
LVRs	Local Voluntary Reports
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MESRI	Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation
MGI	Mckinsey Global Institute
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro-Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
MSNA	Multi-Sector Needs Assessments
MTPs	Medium Term Plans
NCFD	National Council for the Disabled
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NEP	National Employment Programme
NPA	National Plan of Action
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NUPs	National Urban Policies
NYA	National Youth Authority
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PCD	Municipal Development Plans
PM	Particulate Matter
PNDES	National Economic and Social Development Plan
PRD	Regional Development Plan
PPP	Percentage of Population
PPP	People's Planning Process
PPP	Public private partnerships
PWLD	Persons living with Disabilities
Q1	Quatre 1
Q2	Quatre 2
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REIPPP	Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Program
SAMOA	Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action
SARCh	South African Research Chairs Initiative
SCAPP	National Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDI	Slum Dwellers International



SNDD	National Sustainable Development Strategy
SEZ	Special Economic Zones
SME	Small Medium Enterprise
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STI	Science Technology and Innovation
TEVET	Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocation and Training
UBSUP	Up-scaling Basic Sanitation for the Urban Poor programme
UCLGA	United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
UPR	Universal Periodic Reviews
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPSA	United Nations Public Service Awards
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollars
UVS	Virtual University of Senegal
VFM	Victoria Falls Municipality
VLRs	Voluntary Local Reviews
VNR	Voluntary National Report
VUP	Vision 2020 Umurenge Program
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Program national strategy for sustainable development
WHO	World Health Organisation
YEA	Youth Employment Agency
ZIMPARK	Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority
ZTBI	Zanzibar Technology and Business Incubator

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Executive Summary

Key findings

1. Many African countries are not on track to halve multidimensional poverty by 2030, or meet the targets of multiple related SDGs. COVID-19 has also negatively impacted income inequalities in cities. The growing number of economic migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees is exacerbating poverty and social exclusion.
2. Youth unemployment and under-employment remain high across sub-Saharan Africa, with higher incidence in urban areas. Almost 16million young Africans are without jobs.
3. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of adequate housing and access to basic services, slum upgrading and improved sanitation. Urban housing deficits continue to expand, with many countries focusing on legislation and new build medium income housing driven by private sector investments. With affordable/social housing and slum upgrading receiving less attention, slums continue to expand along with the vulnerabilities that come with precarious housing.
4. Several African countries are severely vulnerable to climate change. Rapid urbanization accentuates disaster risks – with drought and flooding triggering conflict and food insecurity. Action to implement climate policies and action plans are hindered by limited investments.
5. There are significant financing gaps towards achieving the New Urban Agenda and SDGs in Africa. The African infrastructure-financing gap is estimated at between USD 130 and USD 170 billion per year. COVID-19 adds a new layer of vulnerability to pre-existing macro-economic and financial challenges.
6. Some countries have embarked on urban extension interventions and the development of new cities to stem the tide of uncoordinated peri-urban development. However, there are concerns of elite capture and socio-spatial segregation, the lack of context between the ambitions of these projects and the lived realities of the citizens who need housing and basic services, and what these portend for African sustainable urban futures.
7. There is urgent need for public sector capacity development in the area of coordination of systemic approaches to development planning, strengthening institutional accountability relationships, the capacities of local government administration, intergovernmental systems and members of Parliament.
8. Across Africa, while there has been growth in the mobile phone sales, internet use and number of technology hubs. Digital inclusion is still urban based – and impeded by lack of infrastructure and cost of access. Therefore, countries are unable to effectively leverage on the potentials of technology for bridging learning, governance and information gaps.
9. While technology and the social media have been leveraged extensively to cope with the COVID-19 crisis through health messaging and telemedicine, internet shutdowns have also become recurrent – limiting civic spaces and social inclusion, and slowing down progress on the ease of doing business.



Key Messages

1. There is need for increased decentralized data collection across all sectors and across rural and urban geographic scales in order to provide the evidence base for contextualized development policies and programmes
2. Solutions for urban poverty mitigation must take into consideration the lived experiences of specific vulnerable groups, highlighting opportunities for leveraging community agency.
3. Targeted training, skills development and entrepreneurship initiatives are required for enhancing economic opportunities of youth and vulnerable groups. Pathways to formalisation of informal businesses and strengthening Micro-Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSME) through legal stability, protection of intellectual property, fair and transparent tax codes, simplified licensing and permits, and clear regulations remain essential.
4. Major investments in green economy, climate-related development and local governance systems are required. However, projects emanating from these investments must address multi-sectoral issues and prioritise people-centred solutions.
5. The adoption and implementation of a rights based and systems approach to urban policy and pre-emptive land use planning and conservation strategies are required to mitigate negative consequences of urbanisation on biodiversity and ecosystems.
6. Multi-level governance cooperation (including international and diasporic) is required to ensure development is multi-scalar and leaves no one behind. Implementation of NUA/SDGs must be embedded into operational capacities of national and sub-national governments.
7. Given the strategic role of cities in the implementation of the SDGs and NUA, cities need to build endogenous capacities within local and regional governments for institution-building, policy analysis and development management.
8. Enhancing the economic competitiveness of secondary cities is critical to mitigating the negative consequences of uncoordinated urbanisation in emerging urban frontiers
9. African cities must effectively leverage the opportunity that technology presents for social inclusion, economic prosperity and access to the global economy. Leaning on crowdsourced data, big data, internet of things and new technologies present a paradigm shift to unlock new perspectives and opportunities for local and national governments, and allow cities to ensure that the evidence base for producing urban solutions are accurate, relevant and reliable.



Introduction

1.1. New Urban Agenda – Background Overview

The New Urban Agenda (NUA) is envisioned as an accelerator and implementation framework for the Sustainable Development Goals at the urban scale. Since 2016 when it was launched, 167 countries have endorsed it, including many from Africa. In this decade of action, direct interventions towards the achievements of the transformative commitments become more urgent. The first Quadrennial report¹ recommends a systems approach to reporting NUA implementation progress, based on integrated knowledge production and reporting of multi-sectoral data, policy, implementation, and stakeholder engagement. This aligns directly with Agenda 2063 which advocates for multidimensional responses to Africa's challenges.

1.2 Sustainable Urbanization in Sub-Saharan Africa – Matters Arising

Since 2018, many occurrences have resulted in considerable changes (positive and otherwise) across scale on the African continent. Ranging from localized dimensions of climate change and the COVID19 pandemic, to the signing of the African Continental Free Trade area (ACFTA) agreement and implementation of regional economic agreements, numerous government regime changes as well as violent conflicts and insurgencies, these changes have cumulatively triggered mass migration of people especially youth across cities and countries, in addition to increasing socio-economic inequalities and associated vulnerabilities in many towns and cities.

More recently, focus has been on the COVID-19 pandemic which has highlighted systemic weaknesses and rolled back progress on the SDGs, especially those related to poverty and health². For example, while economic growth was projected as 4.0 per cent in West Africa for 2019 - 2020, the magnitude of socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an estimated contraction of -2.0 percent, 6 per cent points below the projected growth rate³. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the neglect and/or abandonment of other pressing issues such as education where gradual progress was being made.

Sustainable urbanization is dependent on how cities are planned, governed and managed. With many African country policies and programmes prioritizing physical infrastructure, post conflict reconstruction/rehabilitation, resilience, and climate change adaptation, as well as economic diversification and the provision of basic services, what remains to be seen is how well these priorities are impacting quality of life at the human scale – especially in urban areas.

¹ <https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2018/05/The-Quadrennial-Report-UN-Habitat-Strategy-15-Feb-2018-1.pdf>

² https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/06/covid-19_in_african_cities_impacts_responses_and_policies2.pdf

³ <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/west-africa-economic-outlook-2020-coping-covid-19-pandemic>



1.3 Methodology

This report presents an overview of national and city-level progress towards achieving the SDGs and NUA in Sub-Saharan Africa in the period 2018 - 2020.

Through a series of literature reviews, policy assessments and analysis of reports from various national and UN Agencies, the report highlight both successful and failed attempts at accelerating sustainable urban development, outlines lessons learnt and potential opportunities, and recommends approaches for mitigating negative consequences and amplifying the impact of positive ones.

2. Progress made in the three transformative commitments of the NUA

2.1. Social inclusion and ending poverty

According to the World Bank⁴, the largest proportion of the world's extreme poor are in Africa. Those at highest risks include children and youth as well as senior citizens, people with disabilities, minorities, and single-parent households. While many African countries are experiencing the urbanisation of poverty, across countries like Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Zambia, Liberia, and Malawi, poverty is still overwhelmingly concentrated in rural areas.

Table 1: Poverty Trend in Sub-Saharan Africa

Poverty Indicators	2017	2018
Poverty gap at \$1.90 a day (2011 PPP) (per cent)	15.6	15.2
Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.90 a day (2011 PPP) (per cent)	41.2	40.4
Poverty gap at \$3.20 a day (2011 PPP) (per cent)	31.9	31.3
Poverty headcount ratio at \$3.20 a day (2011 PPP) (per cent)	67.3	66.7
Poverty gap at \$5.20 a day (2011 PPP) (per cent)	51.4	51
Poverty headcount ratio at \$5.20 a day (2011 PPP) (per cent)	86.2	86.1

Source: The World Bank, 2021

By 2020, sub-Saharan Africa also accounted for the highest percentage of those living in multidimensional poverty (experiencing multiple deprivations such as poor health, lack of education, inadequate living standards, disempowerment, poor quality of work, the threat of violence, and living in areas that are environmentally hazardous, among others.). About 71.9 percent (466million) people in rural areas and 25.2 percent (92 million people) in urban areas are affected⁵. Many African countries are also not on track to halve multi-dimensional poverty⁶ by 2030, and meet the targets of multiple related SDGs (as illustrated in Figure 1)⁷.

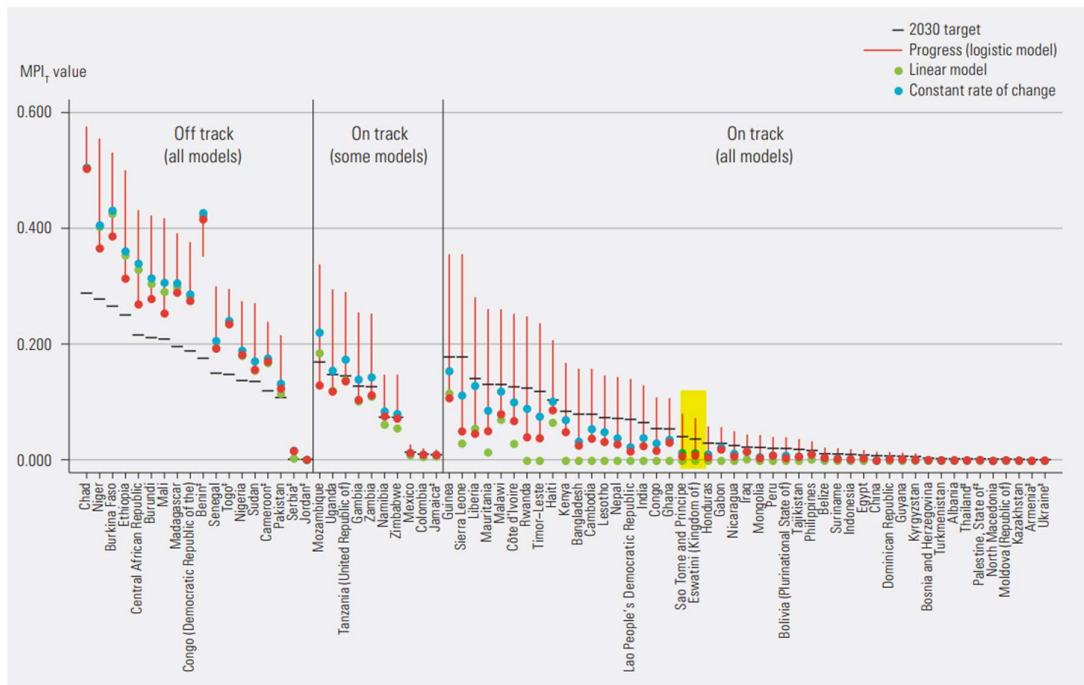
⁴ World Bank (2020) Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report: Reversal of Fortune <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/34496/9781464816024.pdf>

⁵ UNDP (2020) Global Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2020-MPI>

⁶ Multidimensional Poverty Index addresses SDG1 and other SDGs related to health, education, housing and livelihoods

⁷ Alkire, S., R. Nogales, N.N. Quinn and N. Suppa. 2020. "On Track or Not? Projecting the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index." OPHI Research in Progress 58a. Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

Figure 1: Assessment of Countries on Track to Halve Multidimensional poverty by 2030



¹ indicates that the underlying change is not significant at $p < .05$.
 Note: The top of the red line is the projected starting MPI, value in 2015, the dots are the projected MPI, value in 2030 and the black line is the MPI, value that would reflect multidimensional poverty being halved between 2015 and 2030. If all three dots are below the black line, a country is on track regardless of model.
 Source: Alkire, Nogales and others 2020.

Ending Poverty for All: Targeted Interventions

Several measures have been taken by various countries towards poverty reduction and stemming intergenerational poverty and socio-economic inequalities. Cash transfers and social protection programmes are quite common in Ghana, Nigeria, Burundi, Malawi and Zambia – and are often funded through international development grants and loans⁸


Ghana is currently implementing several social protection programs that have helped improve social protection spending. The Ghana National Social Protection Policy launched in 2016 and the accompanying Cash Transfer program (a) had reached 213,044 beneficiary households by April 2018⁹. Similarly, more than 20 per cent of the Zambian population are registered to receive social cash transfers and in 2020 alone, the Zambia’s Social cash transfer programme reached over 370,000 households living in extreme poverty¹⁰. The integrated nature of the response, coupled with enhanced coordination, has contributed to the reduction in the multidimensional poverty index of Zambia from 50 percent in 2016 to 44 percent in 2019¹¹.

⁸ <https://nassp.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Realizing-the-Full-Potential-of-Social-Safety-Nets-in-Africa.pdf>

⁹ LEAP Programme Ghana. Historical background of the LEAP Programme.

¹⁰ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2021/05/27/in-zambia-regular-social-cash-transfers-play-a-direct-role-in-reducing-poverty>

¹¹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26305VNR_2020_Zambia_Report.pdf



The Democratic Republic of Congo also provides free health care for vulnerable groups and through the Lisungi Safety nets programme has been able to support thousands of vulnerably households with quarterly cash transfers. As at 2019, 3,455 households and 2,794 elderly people had been reached¹².

Nigeria has also implemented a range of social investment programmes to provide social safety nets for the extreme poor, welfare for the unemployed, and job creation and skills enhancement (as illustrated in Box 1). Rwanda has registered consistent inclusive growth, averaging 8 percent annually since 2000, leading to millions being lifted out of poverty. Due to economic growth, the poverty rate fell from 8.9 percent in 2007 to 2.9 per cent in 2018.

Box 1: Nigeria N-Power Programme

N-Power is a National Social Investment Programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria aimed at job creation and social development. It was launched in 2016 to help young Nigerians (aged 18 – 35 years) acquire and develop life-long skills to become solution providers in their communities, and economic players in the domestic and global markets. It is a two-year paid programme, in which beneficiaries are engaged across six categories: N-Teach and N-Health are specifically for graduate while any one can apply to N-Agro, N-Build, N-Creative and N-Tech. 350,000 applications were received for Batch A and 200,000 beneficiaries were onboarded. Applications for Batch B were 2.5million and 300,000 were successfully onboarded, while over six million youth applied for the ongoing Batch C for which one million have been selected across the 774 local governments of the country.

According to the Federal Ministry of Social Development and Humanitarian affairs, as at 2020, about 109,823 beneficiaries of the N-Power programme now have their own small businesses, representing about 22per cent of the 500,000 Nigerians that have benefited from the programme since its inception¹³

Source: Implementation of the SDGs: A National Voluntary Review, 2017, p23

Migration and Indigenous People

Poverty and social exclusion are exacerbated by the growing number of economic migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees across Africa. Both voluntary (in search of economic opportunities) and forced (due to conflict/insecurity/ climate change) migrations are prevalent across Africa (as illustrated in Table 2). A survey from Afrobarometer conducted in 35 African countries in 2018 suggests that on average, one third of respondents “have considered emigrating”, especially the young and educated, with most of them planning to move to another African country. Only 20 per cent of respondents said they would like to migrate to Europe.

¹² <https://www.gtai.de/resource/blob/45240/863dfa39bd2dcb317600713abe65a7b0/pro201903135001-data.pdf>

¹³ <https://fmic.gov.ng/109823-n-power-beneficiaries-are-now-business-owners-sadiya-umar-farouq/>

Table 2: International Migrants and Refugees (2019)

International Migrants and Refugees	Sub-Saharan Africa	Eastern Africa	Central Africa	Southern Africa	Western Africa
International migrant stock: Both sexes (number)	23,573,485	7,908,176	3,785,279	4,481,651	7,398,379
International migrant stock: Both sexes (per cent total population)	2.21	1.82	2.17	6.72	1.89
International migrant stock: Male (per cent total Population)	2.32	1.84	2.30	7.59	1.99
International migrant stock: Female (per cent total Population)	2.09	1.80	2.04	5.88	1.78

Source: United Nations Population Division (2019) New York, International migrant stock: The 2019 Revision

According to the 2020 African Migration report¹⁴ Africa hosted 7.3 million refugees (including asylum seekers) or 25 per cent of the global refugee population (28.7 million) in 2019. The 2020 global forced displacement rate was stipulated at 82.4 million, with 76.1 per cent of the displacement happening in Sub-Saharan Africa¹⁵ and the majority of these incidents occurring in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Chad, Ethiopia and Nigeria.

Migration data is sparse, even though the African Union action plan 2018–2027 recognizes that this is “key to mainstreaming migration into policy and planning frameworks and development initiatives, and essential for developing, effective, evidence-based migration policies”¹⁶. Many migrants face challenges of marginalization, social integration and adaptation, and discrimination. Sub-optimal conditions of humanitarian camps¹⁷ is forcing many IDPs to migrate to urban areas in search of a better life. Given the integration challenges

¹⁴ <https://publications.iom.int/books/africa-migration-report-challenging-narrative>

¹⁵ <https://www.unhcr.org/flagship-reports/globaltrends/>

¹⁶ <https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/35956-doc-au-mpfa-executive-summary-eng.pdf>

¹⁷ ¹⁷ <https://www.iom.int/news/thousands-migrants-west-and-central-africa-risk-critical-funding-humanitarian-interventions-comes-end>



they encounter in these places, internal displacement has created a in subset among urban poor vulnerable populations in big African cities¹⁸.

Some countries have taken pro-active measures to mitigate the challenges associated with migration, including the development of social integration policies, creation of effective monitoring and tracking systems, inclusion of migration issues in national development plans (Mauritius, Burkina Faso, Chad, Lesotho). Seychelles has taken actions to protect the rights of migrant workers, while Burkina Faso has adopted a National Plan of Action against Statelessness and issued 37,250 birth certificates and 15,000 nationality certificates to people at risk of statelessness in several countries. Uganda also supports more than 1.4 million refugees through a globally acclaimed programme model, while Rwanda is currently piloting a comprehensive refugees' response framework for their socio-economic inclusion.

The Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Burundi, Zambia, Ghana, and South Africa officially recognize the rights of indigenous people in official state communication and have taken action towards achieving SDG 1,10, 15 and 16. Kenya recognizes the high rate of multidimensional poverty and exclusion from essential socio-economic opportunities among the Turkana and Samburu indigenous communities. The Republic of the Congo is implementing targeted programmes for indigenous peoples living in poverty. Similarly, the Democratic Republic of the Congo created a national support fund for the development of indigenous peoples, recognizing the need for multi-stakeholder partnerships and including indigenous peoples at the forefront of project implementation. In Burundi and South Africa, indigenous peoples are engaged in conservation and biodiversity programmes, with the 2020 Burundi national plans specifically noting the vital role of indigenous peoples in protecting the environment, and managing ecosystems.

Reducing Inequality


Africa is home to 10 of the 20 most unequal countries in the world¹⁹. In fact, three African billionaires have more wealth than 650 million poor Africans - 50 per cent of the population of the continent²⁰. SDG 10 commits countries to reducing inequality within and among countries. While income inequalities are reported to have stagnated or gotten worse since 2016 (Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Gambia, Niger, and Uganda), COVID-19 has significantly exacerbated the impact especially in cities²¹

¹⁸ Roberts and Lawson (2021) Leveraging Social Capital in the Urban integration process: Focus on Internally Displaced Persons in selected Nigerian Cities. Paper presented at International Conference of African Research Network on Urbanisation and Habitable Cities.

¹⁹ <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2017-march-2018/closing-africapercentE2per cent80per cent99s-wealth-gap>

²⁰ <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/africas-three-richest-men-have-more-wealth-poorest-650-million-people-across>

²¹ <https://unhabitat.org/covid-19-in-africa-cities-impacts-responses-and-policies>



Reducing inequality is a major challenge in countries like Cameroon where the Gini coefficient rose from 39 per cent in 2007 to an estimated 46.2 per cent in 2018²². South Africa is the most unequal country in the world with a gini coefficient of 63 per cent²³.

Recognising inequality as a crosscutting issue, several African countries address SDG 10 in the context of other goals - especially Goals 1 (poverty) and 8 (decent jobs). While Seychelles addresses socio-economic inequality robustly, some other countries pay fleeting attention. Some reviews highlighted inequality in the context of gender (Gambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and others), the young (Uganda), elderly (Seychelles), physical and mental disabilities (Niger and Seychelles) and rural-urban disparities (Gambia and Niger).

The Ugandan Government mandates gender-and equity-responsive budgetting through the 2015 Public Finance Management Act, while also increasing funding for social assistance grants for the elderly and livelihood grants for young people. Similarly, Mozambique continues to prioritise the provision of essential social services for 22 per cent (608 thousand families) of the most vulnerable population living below the poverty line and to create more jobs for young people (2 million in 2019).

In Tanzania, efforts to reduce inequalities include implementing a strong, productive social safety net programme, increased access to mobile telephony and rural electrification in order to promote financial inclusion for both urban and rural poor. Malawi specifically targets child poverty in rural areas through the UNICEF/Government of Malawi Country Programme of Cooperation which aims to support national efforts to progressively realize the rights of children and women through improved child survival, development, protection and participation.

In Sierra Leone, there is targeted funding of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education for girls and in 2018, the "Hands Off Our Girls" campaign was launched to end child marriage and reduce teenage pregnancy. This is similar to the 2017 Spotlight Initiative in Malawi which focuses on improving the architecture for gender equality and violence prevention. In Tanzania, local government authorities allocate 10 percent of their revenues to youth and women's empowerment.

Access to Affordable Housing and Slum Upgrading Programmes

Rapid population growth and urbanization rates across many African countries has resulted in higher demand for housing - an estimated 51million housing unit deficit²⁴ (as illustrated in Figure 2). The housing deficit is primarily urban as typified in the case of Cote D'Ivoire where 200,000 of the 600,000 national deficits is in the capital city – Abidjan. Housing infrastructure is a vital part of the urban economy. Investments in housing have been shown to have direct

²² <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?locations=CM>

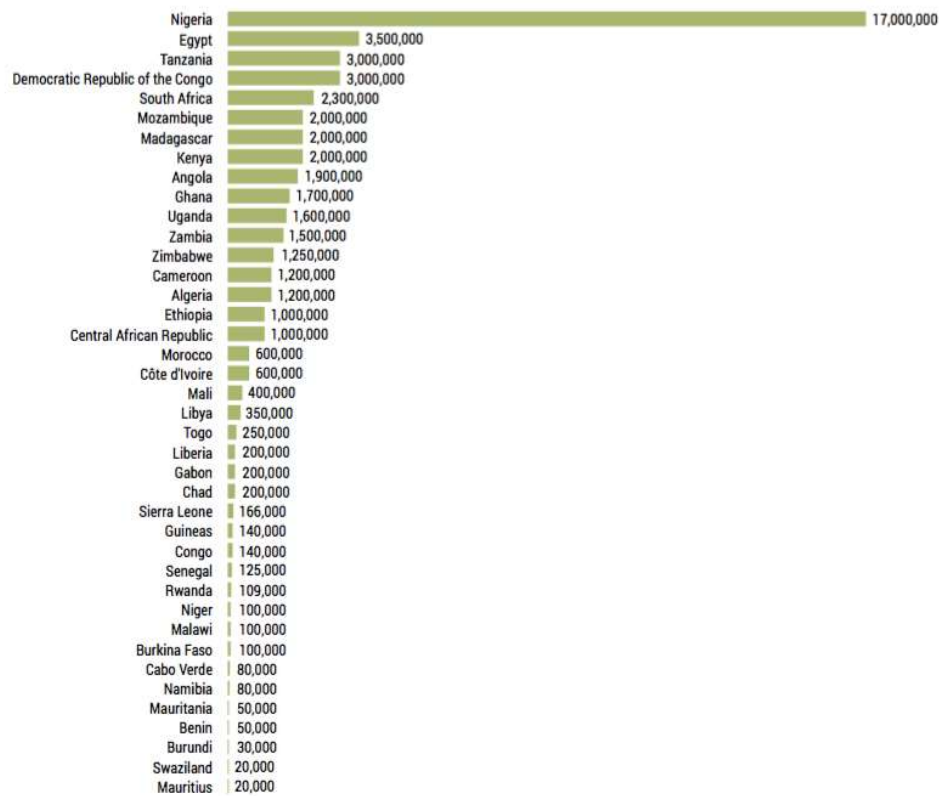
²³ https://www.saps.gov.za/services/april_to_march2018_19_presentation.pdf#page=118

²⁴ Bah E.M., Faye I., Geh Z.F. (2018) The Housing Sector in Africa: Setting the Scene. In: Housing Market Dynamics in Africa. Palgrave Macmillan, London. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59792-2_1

positive effects on employment, income generation, savings, labour productivity and regional development. Several countries are making strides in addressing affordable housing shortages for low- and middle-income groups in urban areas, for example, Kenya's Affordable Housing Programme which aims to provide 500,000 EDGE-certified homes in a bid to address the country's two-million-unit housing deficit²⁵.

However, most people are unable to access or afford formal financing²⁶ that allows them to build or buy a home, hence many urban residents settle in slums and informal communities within city core and peripheral areas²⁷

Figure 2: Housing Deficit, Africa, 2020



Source: UNHABITAT. World Cities Report, 2020

Close to a quarter of the world's urban population living in slum like conditions are resident in Sub-Saharan Africa (as illustrated in Figure 3). In fact, 2019 estimates show that about 47 per cent of Africa's urban population (257 million people) live in slums or informal settlements (as illustrated in Figure 3)²⁸, and are vulnerable to social, infrastructural and environmental challenges as well as attendant socio-economic inequalities. With COVID-19 pandemic

²⁵ World Cities Report 2020: The Value of Sustainable Urbanization. <https://www.habitat.org/our-work/terwilliger-center-innovation-in-shelter/shelter-solutions-for-people-in-sub-saharan-africa>

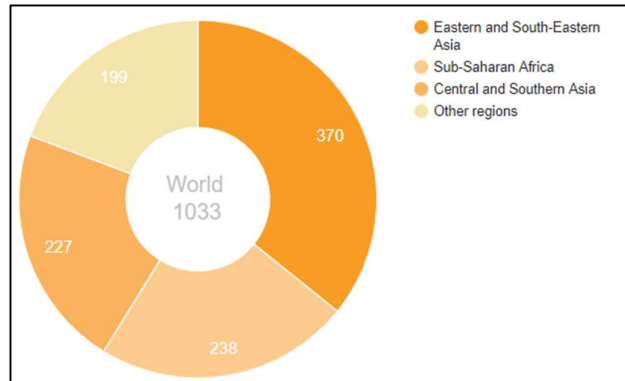
²⁶ Bah E.M., Faye I., Geh Z.F. (2018) The Construction Cost Conundrum in Africa. In: Housing Market Dynamics in Africa. Palgrave Macmillan, London. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59792-2_5

²⁷ <https://borgenproject.org/sub-saharan-african-slums/>

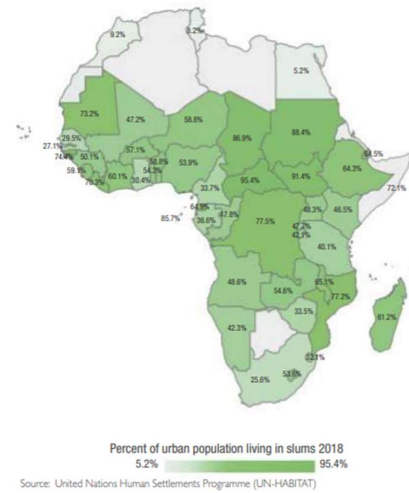
²⁸ <https://unhabitat.org/covid-19-in-africa-cities-impacts-responses-and-policies>

highlighting the importance of adequate housing and access to basic services, housing and slum upgrading become especially critical.

Figure 3: Urban Population Living in Slums or Informal Settlements, 2018 (Millions of People)



Source: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>



While housing challenges are multi-dimensional, increase in urban slum conditions has resulted in various institutional approaches to housing provision and slum upgrading. Between 2019 and 2020, land and housing related policies and legislations were adopted in Angola, Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania, and Zambia among others

Emphasis in many countries has been on addressing the housing deficit through legislation, new build medium income housing driven by private sector investments, with affordable/social housing and slum upgrading receiving less attention. There has been only marginal improvement in living conditions across many African cities, largely due to the complexities of housing finance and land delivery systems, poor urban planning bureaucracy and poor organization of the construction sectors in most African countries.

Most regions have produced less than 10 per cent of required housing units, and these are often out of the reach of those who need it most²⁹. Some recent projects include the signing of an MOU to provide four million unit in Angola, and another one between UNHABITAT and TAF-Global to provide a million affordable housing units across Africa³⁰ 540 affordable housing units were produced in Togo in 2018, and new cities being championed across the continent such as the Kilamba Kiaksi in Angola have contributed 200,000 new units. Housing conditions across the continent also improved by 11 percent between 2000 and 2015 with

²⁹ Centre for Affordable Housing Finance (2021). Housing Finance in Africa Yearbook: 12th Edition – 2021. <https://housingfinanceafrica.org/resources/yearbook/>

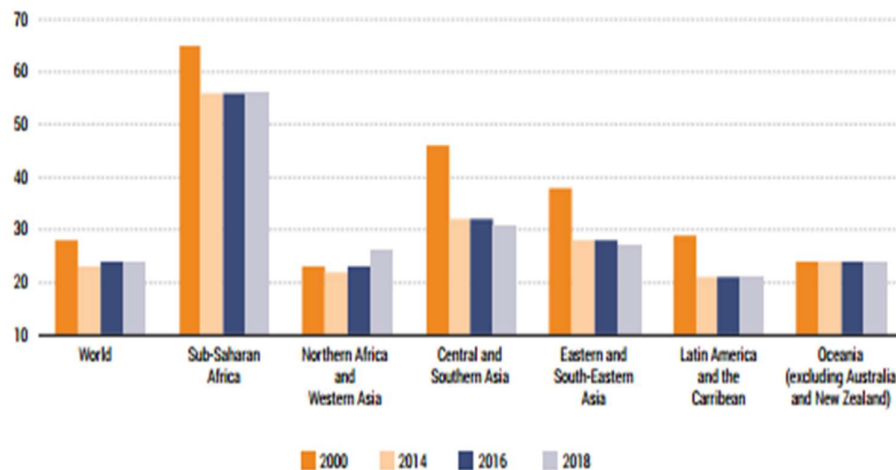
³⁰ <https://africabusinesscommunities.com/news/un-habitat-partners-with-taf-africa-global-to-promote-affordable-housing-in-africa/>

improvement twice as likely to occur in the wealthiest households and 80 per cent more likely among more educated households³¹

Slums are a ubiquitous urban phenomenon in Africa, due largely to the urbanisation of poverty. Factors responsible for this include insufficient levels of local economic development and weak institutional and regulatory frameworks for sustainable urban development. As the urban housing deficit continues to widen, it becomes challenging to fill the gap, and as a result, long-term difficulties like affordability and housing poverty become more entrenched. In fact, growing number of homeless populations can be seen in many African capital cities.

Nevertheless, some positive developments were reported in the period under review, as the number of slum dwellers has reduced compared to 2000 figures (as illustrated in Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentage of Urban Slum populations




Source: UN-Habitat, Global Indicators Database 2020.

Progress towards slum reduction was recorded in Benin where the proportion of urban population living in slums, illegal settlements and inadequate housing reduced moderately. Zambia has formulated a National Urbanization Policy to address the proliferation of informal settlements. Liberia has committed to piloting sustainable cities in five selected cities, emphasizing urban renewal actions including housing and waste management. Nigeria under the UNHABITAT supported Future Cities Programme is also in the process of developing Urban Renewal Guidelines for Lagos.

Countries highlighted the growing importance of deepening urban development and planning in secondary cities to ensure that economic growth and sustainable development were more equitably accessed by residents outside of capitals and improved connectivity among them. In Mali, the national urban policy, formulated in 2016, works in synergy with the National Urban

³¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/mar/28/housing-in-sub-saharan-africa-improves-but-millions-of-people-live-in-slums>



Development and Housing Policy and the Urban Master Plans of the urban centres to improve the population's living conditions. In Niger, the 2017-2021 Economic and Social Development plan prioritised housing and quality of life, while in Nigeria, apart from the review of the National Urban Policy, some sub-national units also developed urban policies specially to tackle pervasive informality.

Box 2: Zambia Slum Upgrading Programme

Slum upgrading programmes in Zambia are multi-faceted, including institutional reforms, new build housing, *in situ* upgrading, and improving land tenure security.

In 2019 Zambia revised the National Housing Policy and developed an Implementation Plan to facilitate sustainable, decent and affordable housing for all. The policy embraces participatory housing development initiatives such as housing cooperatives and public-private partnerships to promote innovations, enhance resilience and lower construction costs. The country also launched the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme III, after the successes of phases I and II, with support from UN-Habitat, in line with the Government's effort in upgrading unplanned settlements through participatory processes.

In the period 2017 to 2019, a total of 3,152 low and medium-cost houses were constructed, and 46 squatter settlements upgraded in urban and peri-urban areas. While the national development target of new housing was not met, that of upgrading was far exceeded.

By 2019, Zambia had progressed in formalising informal settlements by issuing occupancy licences in urban and peri-urban areas. A total of 298 informal settlements were formalised and 52,049 households issued occupancy licences, in excess of the 2021 national target of formalising 15 informal settlements and issuing 10,000 occupancy licences, respectively. The Government is also implementing the Systematic Land Titling Project to improve the security of tenure by issuing title deeds in peri-urban areas that were previously excluded, with a target of 5.2 million titles by 2022.

Source: **Zambia Voluntary National Report (2020, pp59-60)**

Access to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation

SDG 6 highlights access to safe water and sanitation. The COVID-19 pandemic makes this more critical. In the period under review, many countries focused on improving access to essential sanitation services and improving accessibility, quality and availability of water resources. Critical challenges to progress include the climate change, insufficient infrastructure and investments, and the persistent tensions between 'Water as an economic good vs Water as a Social good'. Across the continent, issues of water scarcity, deteriorating water quality and unequal access to safe water are prevalent – with consequent increase in water related illnesses such as cholera, typhoid fever etc.

The COVID-19 pandemic also amplified the weaknesses in existing WASH systems, and was an opportunity to raise awareness and commit state resources to improve access to water and sanitation services (Comoros, Nigeria). Marginal progress in WASH sector was made as several countries reported improvements in access to safe drinking water services both in rural and urban areas³² (as illustrated in Table 3). There were also marked improvements in essential sanitation services (as illustrated in Figure 5) and increased handwashing facilities

³² <https://washdata.org/data/household#!/dashboard/new>

and practices at the household levels – due largely to the targeted interventions occasioned by the pandemic.

In Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic displaced populations were far less likely to have basic water and sanitation services than the rest of the population. The JMP³³ estimates 47 per cent of the population of Burkina Faso had basic drinking water services by 2020, but coverage among displaced populations was just 30 per cent. Displaced populations in the Central African Republic were only half as likely to use basic sanitation services (8 per cent) as the overall population (14 per cent), but while they were more likely to use unimproved facilities (66 per cent vs 45 per cent), they were less likely to practice open defecation due to cultural norms. Niger has 10 per cent of households with a household toilet/latrine and 54 per cent of households with access to soap. Cameroon has 41 per cent of households with a household toilet/latrine and 53 per cent of households with access to soap. Chad has 80 per cent of households with a household toilet/latrine and 67 per cent of households with access to soap.

Table 3: Access to Clean Water and Sanitation in Sub-Saharan Africa

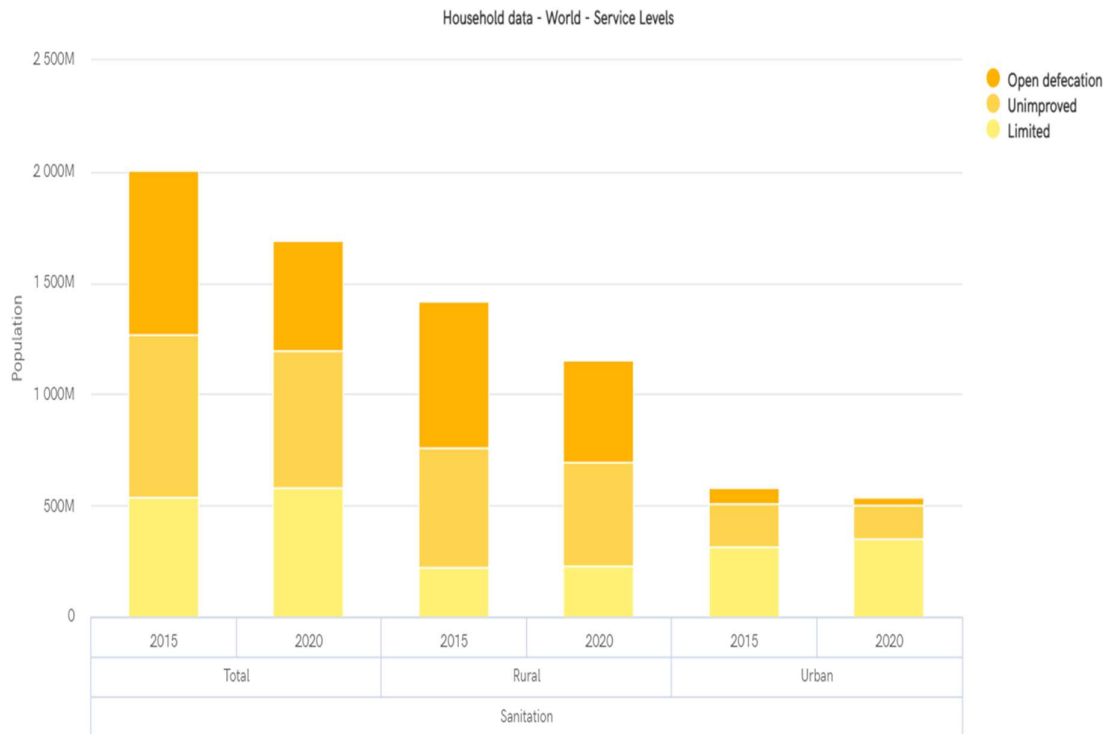
Water and Sanitation	2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
People using safely managed drinking water services	12.55	53.35	13.03	53.41	13.50	53.46	13.79	53.48
People using at least basic drinking water services	46.48	84.74	47.41	85.34	48.32	85.90	49.08	86.39
People with basic hand washing facilities including soap and water,	17.60	37.61	17.77	37.79	17.84	37.79	17.81	37.45

Source: The World Bank, 2021

Some countries achieved a significant decrease in open defecation practices (Liberia, Nigeria), and sectoral development as well as increased connections to water and sanitation networks in rural and urban areas [Kenya, Niger Uganda]

³³ <https://washdata.org/>

Figure 5: Population Lacking Basic Sanitation – Africa



Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint monitoring programme.
<https://washdata.org/data/household#!/dashboard/new>


The Ghana Community Led Total Sanitation programme based on a collaborative framework resulted in elimination of open defecation in 212 communities³⁴. In Mali, which is facing challenges of creeping desertification, 1348 manually operated water wells were rehabilitated and 1401 new ones were drilled. In 2016, access rate to clean water was estimated at 65.3 per cent in rural areas and 70.6 per cent in urban areas, while access to improved sanitation was 27 per cent in 2016. Togo’s strategy centred on water resource preservation, with 52 per cent of the population having access to safe water and only 7 per cent having access to improved sanitation as at 2017.

In Kenya, the proportion of households with access to safe drinking water increased from 72.6 per cent in 2016 to 73.3 percent in 2019. The increase was attributed to the construction and expansion of water supply schemes in urban and rural areas by both national and county governments. The proportion of households with improved sanitation services also rose significantly from 65.7 per cent in 2016 to 82.5 percent in 2019.

2.2. Inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all

The New Urban Agenda explicitly commits to developing vibrant, sustainable and inclusive urban economies; increasing economic productivity and sustainable livelihood opportunities

³⁴ <https://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/country/ghana>



for all; as well as promoting an enabling business environment, technological upgrading, research and innovation. Since these commitments were made, sub-Saharan African countries have made efforts to implement the vision through a multi-level stakeholder system by designing and launching local programs, interventions, initiatives and policies that advance sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all in the region. Only 38 Sub-Saharan African countries have reported progress in the implementation of the NUA in this transformative commitment area between 2018 and 2021

Economic Performance and Outlook

While some countries reported on increasing economic growth between 2018 and 2021 (Mozambique, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania), many others were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (as illustrated in Figure 6), with economic and employment indicators for several sectors being negative^{35,36,37}. With economies bouncing back, current annual growth rate in Sub-Saharan Africa is 3.6 per cent³⁸ compared to -2.015 in 2020, 2.57 in 2019 and 2.78 in 2018³⁹. The contraction triggered by the COVID-19 forced the African countries to seize the opportunity to foster structural and macro-economic reforms, and some countries have embarked on difficult but necessary structural reforms, such as the unification of exchange rates in Sudan, fuel subsidy reform in Nigeria, and the opening of the telecommunications sector to the private sector in Ethiopia⁴⁰.

³⁵https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/210732018_VNRs_Synthesis_compilation_11118_F_S_BB_Format_FINAL_cover.pdf

³⁶ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/252302019_VNR_Synthesis_Report_DESA.pdf

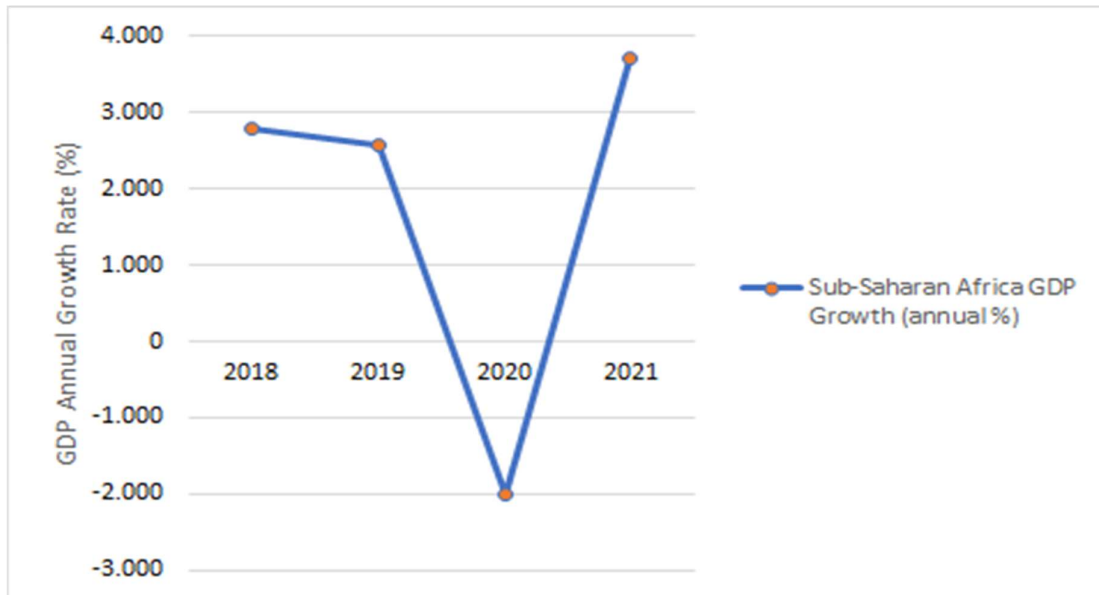
³⁷ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27027VNR_Synthesis_Report_2020.pdf

³⁸ <https://data.imf.org/?sk=5778f645-51fb-4f37-a775-b8fec66bc69b>

³⁹ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?end=2020&locations=ZG&start=1961&view=chart>

⁴⁰ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/10/06/sub-saharan-africa-exits-recession-in-2021-but-recovery-still-vulnerable>

Figure 6: Sub-Saharan Africa GDP Growth (annual per cent) (2018–2021)



Source: IMF Data- Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa (2021) and World Bank (2020) World Development Indicators

The tourism sector is a major income earner for many African countries, especially The Gambia, The east African Safari belt and cities like Cape Town and Accra. As such, several countries have adopted policies and plans to increase the contribution of the tourism sector to Gross Domestic Product (Burundi, Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, Lesotho)⁴¹.

With the global tourism and hospitality service industry being negatively impacted due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, African tourist destinations were compelled to re-strategize by focusing more on attracting local customers and revising product offerings for the global audience. Particularly impacted was the Gambia where the tourism sector was forced to shut down completely due to the pandemic⁴². Tourism in the Gambia is the largest foreign exchange earner in the country and accounts for 12 to 16 per cent of the country's GDP – supporting over 42,000 direct jobs and 40,000 jobs indirectly⁴³

With climate change being another threat to the growing African tourism sector, many countries (Benin, Burundi, Kenya, Madagascar, Seychelles, Tanzania, Mauritius)^{44,45,46}, began channeling efforts to promote eco-tourism as a way to drive green economic growth. Other measures taken toward green economic growth include increasing the share of renewable energy (Chad, Sierra Leone)⁴⁷, reducing emissions (Kenya, South Africa, Gambia, Ghana,

41 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23777Lesotho_VNR_Report_2019_Final.pdf

42 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/263072020GambiaVNR.pdf>

43 [file:///C:/Users/tolaw/Downloads/Socio-Economic-Impact-COVID-19-Tourism-Gambia-Policy-Brief-2per cent20-UNDP-Gambia-April-2020per cent20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/tolaw/Downloads/Socio-Economic-Impact-COVID-19-Tourism-Gambia-Policy-Brief-2per cent20-UNDP-Gambia-April-2020per cent20(1).pdf)

44 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279572021_VNR_Report_Madagascar.pdf

45 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26382VNR_2020_Seychelles_Report.pdf

46 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23462Mauritius_VNR_Report_2019.pdf

47 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/252302019_VNR_Synthesis_Report_DESA.pdf

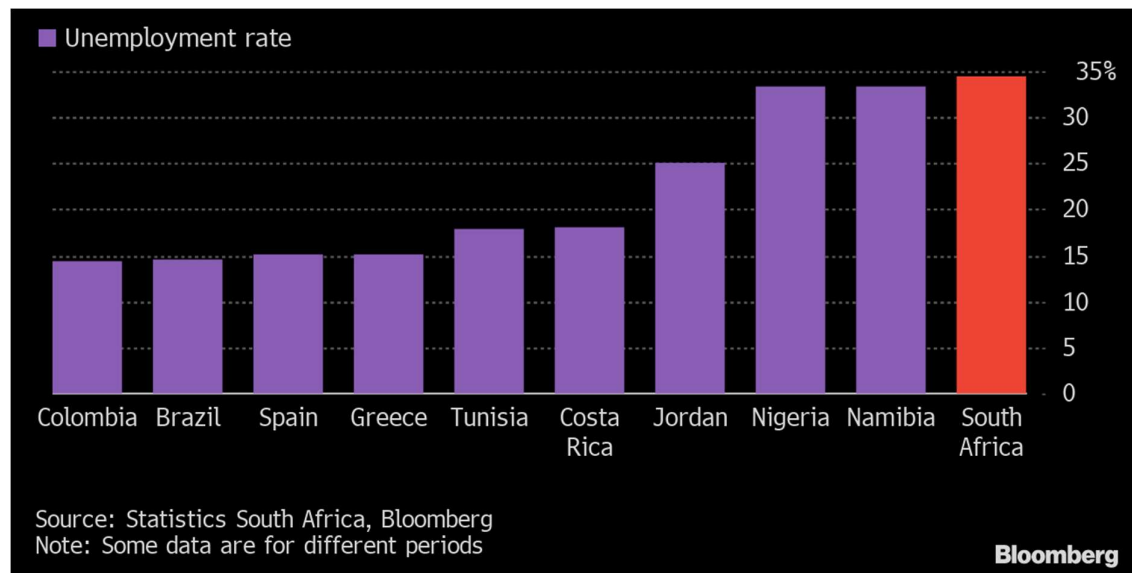
Angola,⁴⁸ and creating green jobs (Zambia⁴⁹, Zimbabwe⁵⁰). In Côte d'Ivoire, a flagship programme was launched to support and empower women in shea production to obtain organic certification, enabling the creation of ethical green jobs for women in agriculture⁵¹.

Many countries are diversifying and restructuring their national economies, in order to reduce dependency on certain sectors and protect their economies from external shocks (Mauritius, Lesotho, Republic of the Congo, Mauritania, Rwanda⁵²). Republic of the Congo and Nigeria are heavily dependent on the oil sector for economic growth are vulnerable to external shocks, such as international oil price fluctuations and the transitions from fossil fuel use. As such, they are promoting foreign direct investments through various means including championing the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) for industrial development^{53, 54}

Productive Employment for all

Many countries across Africa have reported consistent high rates of unemployment. For example, South Africa has the highest unemployment rate in the world with 34.4 per cent as at Q1 2021 (as illustrated in Figure 7). The unemployment rate in Africa's most industrialized economy has been above 20 per cent since 2000⁵⁵

Figure 7: Global Unemployment Rates (2021)



Source: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-24/south-african-unemployment-rate-rises-to-highest-in-the-world>

⁴⁸ <https://hsfnotes.com/africa/2021/09/20/africas-journey-to-cop26-the-state-of-play-on-the-continents-road-to-meeting-its-climate-obligations/>

⁴⁹ https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/projects/africa/WCMS_209922/lang--en/index.htm

⁵⁰ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279562021_VNR_Report_Zimbabwe.pdf

⁵¹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23327COTE_dIVOIRE_Draft_Rapport_VNR_CIV.pdf

⁵² https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23432Rwanda_VNR_Document_Final.pdf

⁵³ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26296VNR_2020_DRC_Report_French.pdf

⁵⁴ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/795251468196751971/pdf/103442-WP-An-Overview-of-Six-Economic-Zones-in-Nigeria-Challenges-and-Opportunities-PUBLIC.pdf>

⁵⁵ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-24/south-african-unemployment-rate-rises-to-highest-in-the-world>

In many countries, under-employment is also an issue. For example, in Nigeria, out of the **economically** active or working age population (15 – 64 years of age) of 116,871,186 in Q2, 2020, those in some forms of employment were 70.89 million, of which 35.57million were in full-time employment (at least 40 hours a week) and 22.96million were in part-time employment or underemployment) and 12.36 million worked less than 20hours a week (as illustrated in Table 4)⁵⁶. Nigeria’s unemployment rate stood at 27.1per cent by the second quarter of 2020, exceeding the rate of 2000 (13.1per cent) and 2010 (21.1per cent)⁵⁷. The rate of unemployment among the youth population (15 – 34) was 35.4per cent.

Table 4: Labour Force Statistics in Nigeria (Q2, 2020)

Age	15 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64
Labour force population	16,709,724	23,328,460	20,124,531	13,089,047	7,040,132
Total unemployed	6,819,539	7,167,429	4,097,416	2,242,945	1,437,289
Fully employed	4,795,090	9,983,631	10,280,499	7,150,903	3,375,152
Under-employed (20 – 39hrs weekly)	5,095,095	6,177,400	5,746,617	3,695,200	2,227,691
Unemployed (1 – 19hours weekly)	3,098,741	3,236,752	2,932,106	1,839,550	1,288,216

Source: https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/pdfuploads/Q2_2020_Unemployment_Report.pdf

While significant gaps occur in employment of people living with disabilities, Republic of the Congo has set a quota on the percentage of employees who must be persons with disabilities⁵⁸. Eswatini launched Capacity strengthening programmes for teachers in braille and sign language⁵⁹.

A major threat to the economic growth of Africa is gender inequality. In Africa, 70 per cent of women are excluded financially, even though they account for more than 50 per cent of the continent’s combined population⁶⁰. It is easier for men to get jobs than it is for women, even if they have equivalent skills and experience⁶¹. On MGI’s Gender Parity Score - a measure of progress toward equality - Africa scored 0.58 in 2019, indicating high gender inequality across the fifteen GPS indicators of gender equality in work and society⁶²

Youth unemployment is the ticking time bomb across sub-Saharan Africa. Almost 16 million young Africans are currently facing unemployment, with a generally higher incidence in urban areas⁶³. High youth unemployment is an imminent threat to national stability as failure to secure decent livelihoods triggers restiveness with dire socio-economic and political

⁵⁶ Source: https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/pdfuploads/Q2_2020_Unemployment_Report.pdf

⁵⁷ National Bureau of Statistics (2010). National Manpower Stock and Employment Generation Survey: Household and Micro Enterprise (Informal Sector).

⁵⁸ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26296VNR_2020_DRC_Report_French.pdf


⁵⁹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24651Eswatini_VNR_Final_Report.pdf

⁶⁰ <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/the-power-of-parity-advancing-womens-equality-in-africa>

⁶¹ Igbohor, K. (2017) Africa’s jobless youth cast a shadow over economic growth. Africa Renewal: Special Edition on Youth. <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/special-edition-youth-2017/africas-jobless-youth-cast-shadow-over-economic-growth>

⁶² <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality>

⁶³ Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2019) Africa’s Youth: Jobs or Migration? 2019 Mo Ibrahim Forum Report https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/sites/default/files/2020-05/2019-forum-report_0.pdf



consequences⁶⁴, such as the protests witnessed in cities such as Lagos, Khartoum, Dakar, Kampala, and Ouagadougou.

Contributing to youth unemployment is the high proportion of young people “not in education, employment or training” (NEET) in countries like Lesotho, Mauritius, and Uganda. A few countries linked the high proportion of young people not being involved in education, employment or training as possibly being due to a mismatch between the education offered by institutions in a given location, as well as the opportunities available in the local job market (Lesotho and Mauritius). Therefore, training and targeted entrepreneurship initiatives have been developed for youth, women and PLWD. Malawi’s “Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocation and Training (TEVET)” programme⁶⁵ and the Nigerian Npower programme specifically targets youth employment in key sectors (as illustrated in Box 1).

The Liberian SME microfinance loans has provided over 125 entrepreneurs (80 per cent female) and local service providers with start-up opportunities⁶⁶. In 2015, Mauritius launched a Back-to-Work programme, an initiative that targeted female workers, aged 35 and above, who had lost their means of livelihoods or had left their jobs for whatever reason. This programme has been instrumental in reducing female unemployment from 11.2 percent in 2016 to 10.1 percent in 2018. As at December 2018, of the 3,967 eligible registered women, 1,058 had gotten job placements, with 54 per cent of them transiting to permanent employment on completion of the one-year internships.

The Ghanaian government also established a national development blueprint: “Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for All, 2017-2024”, with flagship programmes in the construction, agriculture and digital technology sectors, as well as a ‘One District, One factory’ programme to kickstart decentralized industrialization across the country⁶⁷. Youth focused interventions include the restructuring of the (YEA) and the National Youth Authority (NYA) to focus on promoting youth empowerment and young people’s participation in socio-economic development.

Developing the Digital Economy

With global attention on the fourth industrial revolution, African countries are also leveraging the use of artificial intelligence, digitalization, and ICT (Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda) to enhance economic productivity. Building the capacity of their populations was a top priority in Sub-Saharan Africa, with the voluntary national reviews of Tanzania, Eswatini⁶⁸, Angola⁶⁹ and

⁶⁴ (Moller, H (1968). Youth as a force in the modern world. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 10(1) : 238–260; Choucri, N (1974). *Population dynamics and international violence: Propositions, insights and evidence*. Lexington: Lexington


⁶⁵ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26317MalawiVNRReport.pdf>

⁶⁶ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26287VNR_2020_Liberia_Report.pdf

⁶⁷ <http://www.mop.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Coordinated-Programme-Of-Economic-And-Social-Development-Policies.pdf>

⁶⁸ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24651Eswatini_VNR_Final_Report.pdf

⁶⁹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/286012021_VNR_Report_Angola.pdf



others describing training and education programmes to help equip people for 21st-century jobs, especially in technology-related fields.

At the individual level, mobile phones have helped provide access to many services. For example, mobile banking options in Busia County, Kenya, have contributed to increasing financial inclusion as up to 2million hitherto unbanked adults now have bank accounts⁷⁰, while tele-medicine services have been deployed in Lagos, Nigeria to respond to COVID-19 cases that were mild or located in remote areas⁷¹

Since 2016, countries such as Mauritius and Nigeria have adopted national digital agendas, roadmaps and programmes to adapt to the changing market. Some goals outlined by these plans included exploring new technologies such as blockchain and Artificial Intelligence, developing e-commerce and moving toward branchless banking. Benefits that were highlighted included cost efficiency, more convenient transactions, job creation, higher productivity of workers and increased international competitiveness.

Nigeria recently launched the e-naira⁷² However, critics point to glaring lack of required infrastructure to make it seamless and accessible to all who may need it⁷³. Internet penetration in Nigeria is less than 50 per cent⁷⁴. However, young Nigerians have successfully leveraged Gig platforms and social media in cities like Lagos to provide services in the local transport, retail and service sectors⁷⁵. In Southern Africa, Victoria Falls Municipality (VFM), Zimbabwe⁷⁶ has moved towards bridging the digital gap through the provision of the internet in public spaces. In 2019, the Municipality, through a private sector partnership, installed solar powered smart bus stops and bins. The bus stops provide public access to free internet as well as charging ports for mobile phones, and the smart bins offer internet hot-spots and charging ports for mobile phones thus encouraging a smart city while fostering innovation.

The Tanzanian Government launched the Zanzibar Technology and Business Incubator (ZTBI), an initiative with the aim to nurture and nourish Zanzibar youth into relatively mature, independent, healthy and wealth creating sustainable entrepreneurs⁷⁷. ZTBI has accomplished this through conducting effective training programmes focused on developing Mind-Set Change, Business Model and Business Plan writing skills including Marketing, Packaging, Labelling, Branding and Effective Record Keeping. ZTBI runs a scaled incubator programme that supports youth to run startups businesses and scale up sustainable enterprises in Agribusiness, ICT and Tourism

⁷⁰ https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2021/06/busia_county_2019_en.pdf

⁷¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7307993/>

⁷² <https://enaira.gov.ng/>

⁷³ <https://theconversation.com/nigerias-digital-currency-what-the-enaira-is-for-and-why-its-not-perfect-171323>

⁷⁴ <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-nigeria>

⁷⁵ <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315178387-10/smart-smart-city-lagos-taibat-lawanson-olamide-udoma-ejorh>

⁷⁶ https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2021/06/victoria_falls_2020_en.pdf

⁷⁷ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23429VNR_Report_Tanzania_2019_FINAL.pdf

Box 3: South Africa *Intsimbi* Future Production Technologies Initiative

The Department of Trade and Industry under its Industrial Policy Action plan⁷⁸ launched the *Intsimbi* Future Production Technologies Initiative programme (“the Intsimbi programme”) in 2018. It is a system solution for technical and vocational skills development as well as the development of enterprise competitiveness for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The programme includes training in robotics, mechatronics, industrial maintenance, specialized tooling, coded welding and digital technical skills, etc. The strategic aim of Intsimbi programme is to prepare the industrial skills base for participation in a highly automated production environment while addressing critical skills shortages.

The *Intsimbi* model has succeeded in creating highly innovative industry-driven solutions that can sustainably be expanded to position South Africa’s advanced manufacturing sector and to train talented young people for a future in advanced manufacturing.

Source: South Africa Voluntary National Review, 2019, p81

Strengthening the Informal Economy

According to International Labour Organization, informal employment represents 86 and 92 percent of men and women’s total employment respectively in Sub-Saharan Africa (ILO, 2018c)⁷⁹. Informal workers make up a significant proportion of the labour forces of Benin, Chad, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique, Niger, Seychelles, and Uganda. Given the high youth population and high rate of population increase, this will remain a challenge for the near future.

Severe decent work deficits are associated with the informal economy and have a negative impact on inclusive and sustainable development, hence the transition to formality has occupied an important space on the policy agenda of the region. While not all workers are poor within the informal economy, most are living in poverty earning low and irregular incomes without any social or labour protections. They are often unable to benefit from work related safety nets as well as protection from exploitation and injury and other workers’ rights enshrined in labour laws, while challenges such as unstable incomes and lack of access to bank credits and job security are common. Organisations such as Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising⁸⁰ and the Federation of Informal Workers Organisation of Nigeria⁸¹ support informal workers organisations through advocacy, training and activism.

Efforts towards formalising the informal economy include providing subsidies and financing programmes for the agricultural sector, as well as business registration concessions. In 2020, the Nigerian government waived charges for 250,000 business name registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission⁸², while the Cameroonian Government created the Municipal


⁷⁸ https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201805/industrial-policy-action-plan.pdf

⁷⁹ International Labour Organisation (2018) *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture* (Third Edition). Geneva: ILO.

⁸⁰ <https://www.wiego.org/>

⁸¹ <https://www.facebook.com/FIWONNIG/>

⁸² <https://www.cac.gov.ng/free-250000-fg-cac-business-names-registration-for-msmes/>



Offices of Crafts in 2014 to allow business promoters register free of charge for the first three months of the year and begin the process of transiting from the informal sector to the craft sector⁸³. The Government of the Republic of Namibia, the country's workers' and employers' organisations, and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) have signed a Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for the period 2018-2023. Likewise, Sierra Leone now has a comprehensive Decent Work Country Programme in place which has led to the development of the Labour Market Information System and the National HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy.

Support Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises

Several countries (Namibia, Mozambique, Ghana, Zimbabwe) discussed the importance of creating an enabling environment for business, through legal stability, protection of intellectual property, a fair and transparent tax code, simplified licensing and permits, and clear regulations. The surest pathway to formalization of informal businesses is the platform of Micro-Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSME). MSMEs have been identified as a crucial driver for economic growth, job creation and livelihoods, especially for women and youth⁸⁴. Recognizing the importance of the private sector to drive growth, several countries have also developed programmes targeting competition, innovation, financial services and improvement of the business environment of MSMEs such as the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development 2018 to 2023⁸⁵ in Liberia and the 2018 World Bank supported MSME Access to Finance project of Cabo Verde⁸⁶

Representing the majority of business entities, MSMEs reportedly face challenges, including skill deficiency and lack of access to credit and markets. Some city level interventions include the Victoria Falls municipality SME incubators which are helping existing MSMEs and fostering new ones⁸⁷ in the vegetable markets and curio markets which target mostly tourists. About 2 million tourists visit Victoria Falls each year, hence small businesses are being empowered to cater to the market. In 2015, the Lake Zone Rice Project, an initiative between Anglo-Ashanti Gold, smallholder farming communities and local governments was launched in Tanzania. The initiative helped to scale up rice production in the region while improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, providing access to loans and collateral through access to storage facilities provided within the project.

Elimination of Child Labour

Child labour is a common phenomenon in many urban poor communities. It sabotages efforts for improving school enrolment rates and skill upgrades required for exiting poverty. Countries that acknowledge this challenge include (Cabo Verde⁸⁸, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Zambia⁸⁹). There are 10.5 out of school children in Nigeria – the highest in the world⁹⁰. Therefore, the

⁸³https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24180CAMEROON_Rapport_VNR_0507_2019.pdf

⁸⁴ <https://www.nepad.org/news/empowering-msmes-build-back-better-africas-economy-post-covid-19>

⁸⁵ <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2021/010/article-A001-en.xml>


⁸⁶ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/235831592420927105/text/Disclosable-Restructuring-Paper-Access-to-Finance-for-Micro-Small-and-Medium-Sized-Enterprises-Project-P163015.txt>

⁸⁷ https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2021/06/victoria_falls_2020_en.pdf

⁸⁸ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/282392021_VNR_Report_Cabo_Verde.pdf

⁸⁹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26304VNR_2020_Zambia_Report.pdf

⁹⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/education>



federal government instituted the Nigeria Home Grown School Feeding Strategic Plan 2016-2020⁹¹. While nine million children have benefited since 2016⁹² when the programme was started, there is insufficient data to measure how successful the programme is in reducing child labour and increasing school completion rates. This is especially so since the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns significantly reversed enrolment and learning gains in many countries⁹³. The elimination of child labor has been institutionalized in some countries through laws, policies, strategic roadmaps and national plans of action. Sierra Leone's Decent Work Country Programme⁹⁴ has facilitated the domestication of International Conventions on the Elimination of Child Labour, hence the country was able to reduce the child labour rates from 44.4 per cent in 2013 to 29.3 per cent in 2017 and significantly reduce the number of street children and child hawkers in Freetown.

Domestic Resources and Financing

Countries are undertaking reforms to strengthen domestic resource mobilization and improve domestic capacity for revenue collection (Benin, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Rwanda, Seychelles, Zambia). Most reforms focus on the expansion of the tax base, including tax rate increases, prevention of tax evasion, the introduction of new tax measures and management of tax exemptions, strengthening audit and enhancing efficiency of tax administrations (Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Mali, Rwanda, Senegal), tax enforcement (Guinea, Sierra Leone), a new resource mobilization strategy (Togo), and promotion of modern means of payment (Burkina Faso). Additionally, some countries mentioned developing a results-based budgeting mechanism as a reform aimed at greater control over public spending.

Beyond tax measures, fiscal and administrative reforms can enhance resource mobilization (the Gambia, Liberia). This includes implementing digital information systems for public financial management and improving dialogue between public enterprises and financial control and supervision entities. Evidence from Niger shows that citizen ownership and co-responsibility were essential in the implementation of the SDGs as citizens were willing to pay local taxes when resources were allocated to projects that aimed to overcome needs that had been jointly identified and incorporated into development plans⁹⁵. Countries also underlined the importance of fiscal policy planning to extend the horizon for fiscal policymaking and improve public financial management. Seychelles put in place a Medium-Term Revenue Strategy to increase the efficiency of government spending and enhance the governance of public enterprises.

⁹¹ <https://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC169078/>

⁹² <https://guardian.ng/news/9m-pupils-benefit-from-fgs-home-grown-school-feeding-programme-per-centE2per-cent80per-cent95-minister/>

⁹³ <https://mastercardfdn.org/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-secondary-education-in-africa/>

⁹⁴ http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/Africa/sierra-leone/WCMS_IPEC_CON_TXT_SLE_POL_EN/lang--en/index.htm

⁹⁵ UN Habitat. ROADMAP for localizing the SDGs: Implementation and monitoring at sub-national level, p33



2.3. Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development

Cities and human settlements face unprecedented threats from unsustainable consumption and production patterns, loss of biodiversity, pressure on ecosystems, pollution, natural and human-made disasters, and climate change and its related risks, undermining the efforts to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions and to achieve sustainable development.

Climate Change mitigation and Adaptation

Africa is the most vulnerable continent to climate change impacts under all climate scenarios above 1.5 degrees celsius. Seven of the 10 countries that are most vulnerable to climate change are in Africa⁹⁶. Despite having contributed the least to global warming and having the lowest emissions (4 per cent of global emissions), Africa faces exponential collateral damage, posing systemic risks to its economies, infrastructure investments, water and food systems, public health, agriculture, and livelihoods, threatening to undo its modest development gains and slip into higher levels of extreme poverty⁹⁷. Devastating cyclones affected 3 million people in Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe in the spring of 2018⁹⁸, and many cities suffer from the impact of floods and extreme weather events.

GDP exposure in African nations vulnerable to extreme climate patterns is projected to grow from \$895 billion in 2018 to about \$1.4 trillion in 2023—nearly half of the continent’s GDP (as illustrated in Figure 8)⁹⁹. Africa will need investments of over \$3 trillion in mitigation and adaptation by 2030 in order to implement its NDCs¹⁰⁰, and unfortunately remains largely excluded from global financing or climate change. Between 2016 and 2019, only around \$73 billion was received by Africa as climate-related development finance¹⁰¹.

⁹⁶ <https://www.afdb.org/en/cop25/climate-change-africa>

⁹⁷ *ibid*

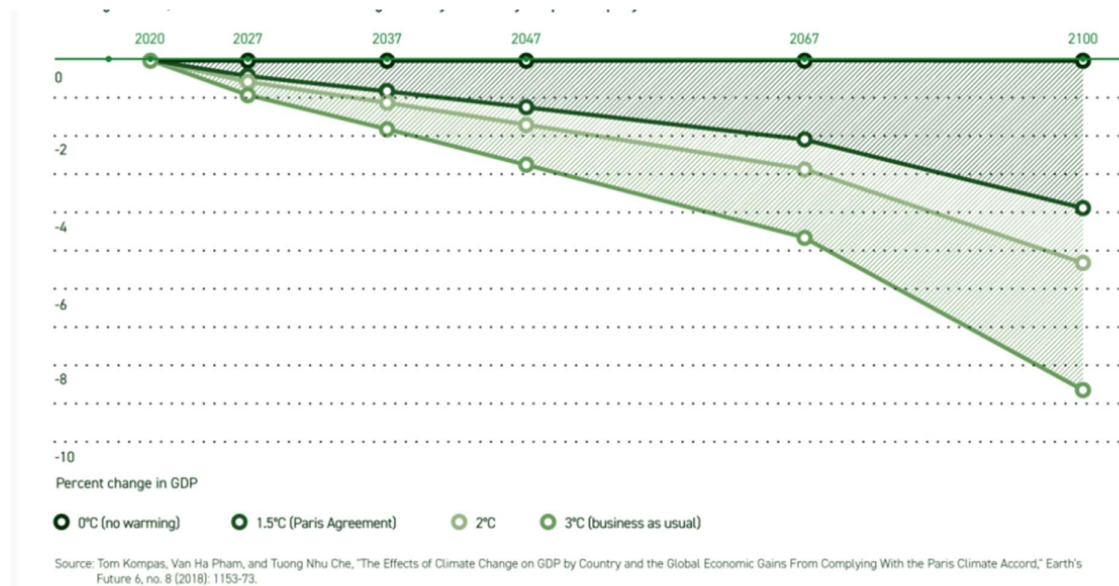
⁹⁸ Yarnell, M. and Devon, C. (2019) Devastation and Displacement: Unprecedented Cyclones in Mozambique and Zimbabwe a Sign of What’s to Come? (Washington D.C.: Refugees International.

⁹⁹ Abdi Latif Dahir, “Africa’s fastest-growing cities are the most vulnerable to climatechange globally,” World Economic Forum, December 21, 2018

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.afdb.org/en/cop25/climate-change-africa>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.oecd.org/env/climate-finance-provided-and-mobilised-by-developed-countries-aggregate-trends-updated-with-2019-data-03590fb7-en.htm>

Figure 8: Impact of Climate Change on Sub-Saharan Africa GDP



Cities in particular are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and other natural and human-made hazards, including earthquakes, extreme weather events, flooding, subsidence, dust and sand storms, heatwaves, droughts, water and air pollution, vector-borne diseases¹⁰².


Most countries have improved adaptation targets through quantitative analyses, increased the sectoral scope and aligned targets with national climate policies. In the wake of COP26, African countries are prioritising health in their climate response plans, but lack the investments required to implement¹⁰³. The following countries have made a commitment to achieving low-carbon, sustainable health systems, and/or enhance the climate resilience of their health systems: Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo, and Uganda¹⁰⁴.

Climate adaptation plans at the national levels are also taking a longer-term view, with many countries committing to net zero emission by 2050 and beyond. Many countries have integrated the international climate change policies into their national and sectoral plans, and many have implemented strategic policies and projects for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Rwanda's Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy is robust and multi-sectoral, while the climate adaption strategy for Nigeria now takes into consideration the

¹⁰² Nyiwul L.M. (2019) Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in Africa: Strategies, Synergies, and Constraints. In: Sequeira T., Reis L. (eds) *Climate Change and Global Development. Contributions to Economics*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02662-2_11

¹⁰³ <https://www.who.int/news/item/08-11-2021-many-countries-are-prioritizing-health-and-climate-change-but-lack-funds-to-take-action>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.who.int/news/item/09-11-2021-countries-commit-to-develop-climate-smart-health-care-at-cop26-un-climate-conference>



conservation of water resources sector and other nature-based solutions¹⁰⁵. Namibia has also committed to supporting farmers and women in a green future¹⁰⁶.

On mitigation, countries reported actions largely focused on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and transport. For example, Kenya's National Climate Change Action Plan (2018–2022) provides for low-carbon, climate resilient development that is centered around seven priority areas, including disaster risk management, food and nutrition security, water and blue economy, forest wildlife and tourism, health, sanitation and human settlements, manufacturing, energy and transport¹⁰⁷.

Other countries outlined mitigation actions and commitments, with references to nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement (Liberia, Uganda, Zambia). For example, Comoros will maintain its objective to remain a net carbon sink and to contribute the global mitigation effort by reducing its GHG emissions. Other countries reported on ambitious climate neutrality plans, while others are already implementing strategies for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), among them Democratic Republic of Congo and Ghana.

On adaptation, which refers to actions to reduce the impact of climate change on the well-being and livelihoods of humans, a number of countries detailed projects concerning the resilience of water resources, food security and adapting agriculture and irrigation systems (Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda).

City level interventions are championed through the C40 Compact of Mayors which has eleven African members: Accra, Abidjan, Addis Ababa, Cape Town, Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Durban, Johannesburg, Lagos, Nairobi and Tshwane. As at 2020, Five partner cities (Accra, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Tshwane and Dakar) have finalized their climate action plans. Accra has officially endorsed its action plan in 2020, and Lagos launched hers in July 2021. In Accra, Ghana, as part of the effort to enhance air quality monitoring, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) deployed a low-cost Particulate Matter (PM) air sensor network in Accra to complement its existing network of air quality monitors¹⁰⁸.


In response to the rising threat of climate change, some countries are taking financial action to mitigate and adapt. South Africa's Carbon Tax Act, which places specific levies on greenhouse gases from fuel combustion and industrial processes and emissions, came into

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/africa/cop26-net-zero-within-africa-s-reach-80174>

¹⁰⁶ https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/november-2021/priorities-africa-cop26-and-beyondhttps://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Namibiaper cent20First/Namibiaper cent27sper cent20Updatedper cent20NDC_per cent20FINALper cent2025per cent20Julyper cent202021.pdf

¹⁰⁷ Second Voluntary National Review on The Implementation of The Sustainable Development Goals. p68. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26359VNR_2020_Kenya_Report.pdf

¹⁰⁸ Ghana's Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 2019, p62. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23420VNR_Report_Ghana_Final_print.pdf



effect in June 2019¹⁰⁹. Africa, with its key Congo Basin forests, is well-positioned to tap into new, fast-growing markets for carbon credits, which are sold to compensate for emissions elsewhere.

Furthermore, renewable energy solutions such as South Africa's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement (REIPPP) program and the World Bank and International Finance Corporation's Scaling Solar program have resulted in solar prices as low as \$0.05/kilowatt-hour. As such there has been significant drop in energy prices with solar and wind prices lower than those of the national utility or from new coal plants. Off-grid solutions—like M-Kopa and Lumos that deliver electricity to thousands of households on the continent—and mini-grids are important options in both unserved rural areas and underserved urban areas¹¹⁰. Interestingly, major oil companies are diversifying into clean energy for Africa. Shell, for instance, has invested in SolarNow, which sells high-quality solar solutions in Uganda and Kenya¹¹¹. Nonetheless, fossil fuel dependence is difficult to break as many monoproducer African economies are solely reliant on it.

Disaster Management and Mitigation

Processes such as climate change, environmental degradation, increasing income inequality and unmanaged urbanization slow progress towards resilience. Climate disasters can exacerbate health risks, damage infrastructure and lead to water scarcity, conflict and instability. Across Africa, rapid urbanization processes mean that the disaster risk profiles of many countries are evolving from predominantly rural, with drought and food security as the main challenges—to urban, with challenges from floods, droughts, cyclones, and earthquakes¹¹². The most common disasters in Africa are triggered by hydro-meteorological or climatological hazards (as illustrated in Figure 9). Between 2008 and 2018, across 44 African countries, over 157 million persons were directly and indirectly affected by such disasters¹¹³. At least 1297 deaths occurred due to 2019 Cyclone Idai alone, with more than three million people experiencing the direct effects of the cyclone in Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe¹¹⁴

Droughts have affected the most people, primarily those living in the Horn, Sahel, and southern regions on the continent, with concentrated flooding incidents affecting thousands in Kenya, South Africa and Mozambique.

¹⁰⁹ Republic of South Africa, Act No. 15 of 2019: Carbon Tax Act, 2019 (Cape Town: Government of South Africa, 2019)

¹¹⁰ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/africa-can-play-a-leading-role-in-the-fight-against-climate-change/>

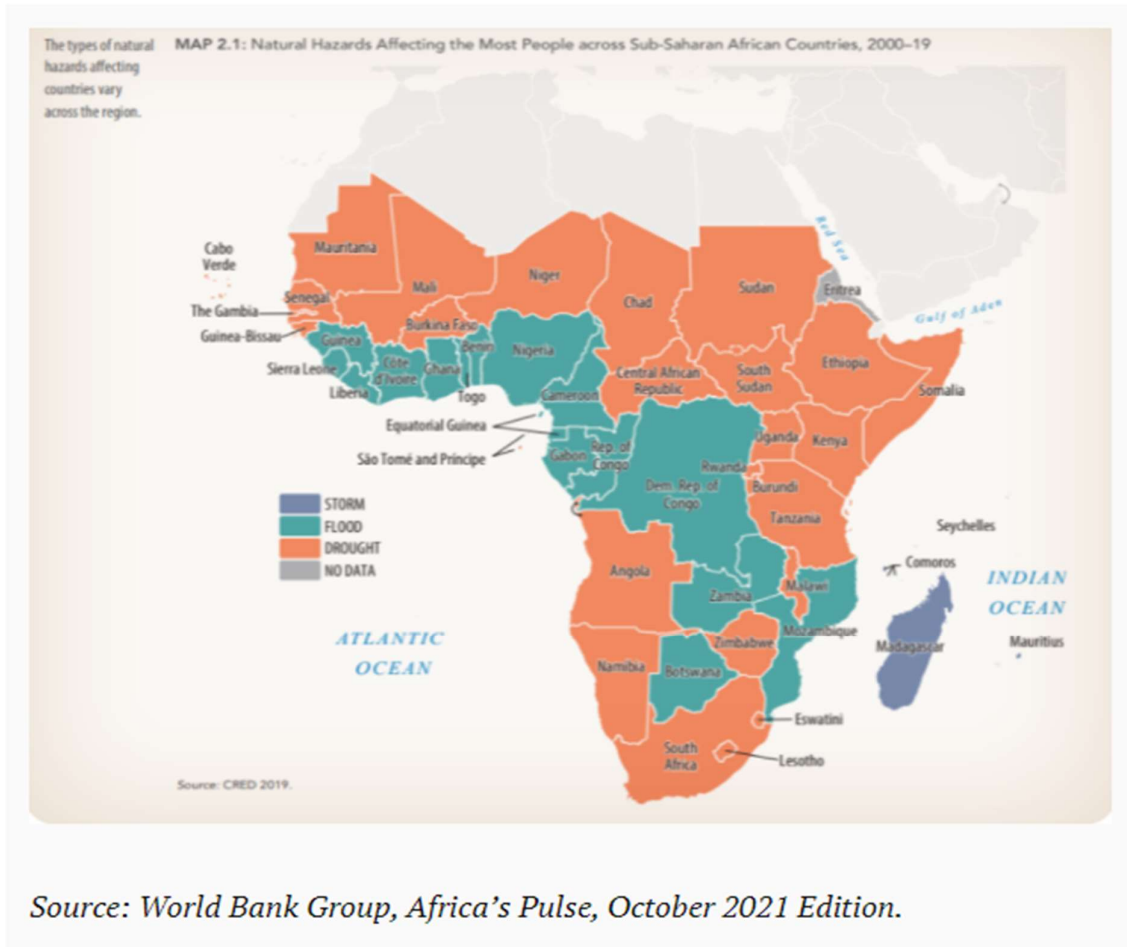
¹¹¹ <https://www.solarnow.eu>

¹¹² <https://www.gfdr.org/en/region/africa-afr>

¹¹³ <https://www.undrr.org/publication/highlights-africa-regional-assessment-report-2020>

¹¹⁴ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/36332/9781464818059.pdf?sequence=10>

Figure 9: Natural Disasters Affecting the Most People Across Sub-Saharan African countries, 2000-19



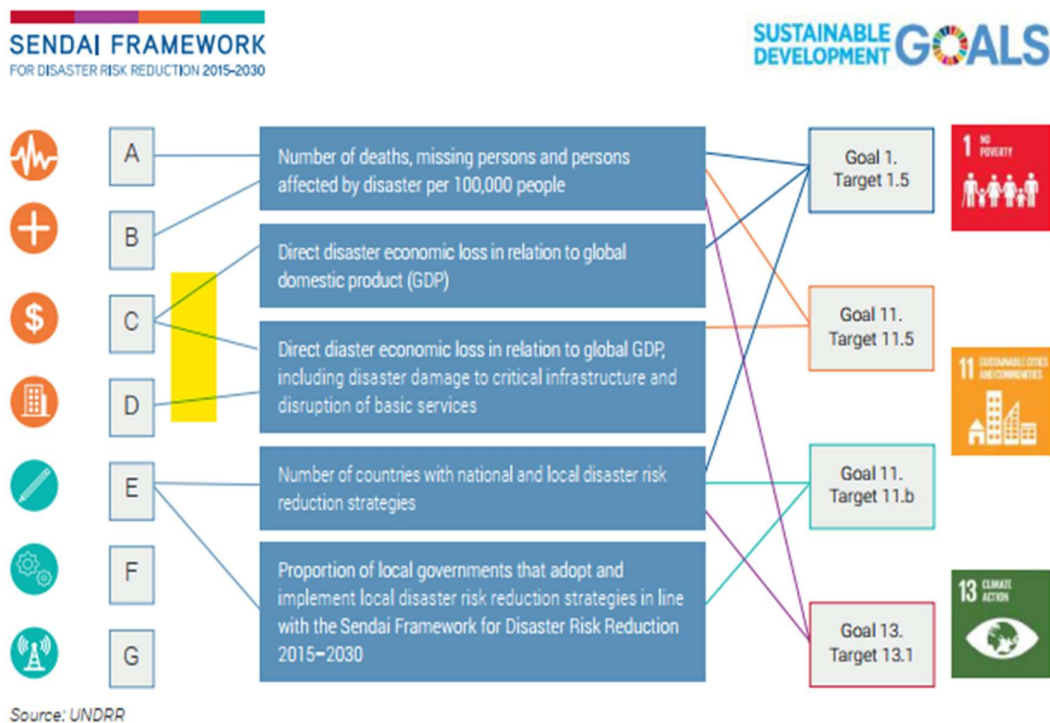
Disaster risk management is inextricably tied to the achievement of the SDGs (as illustrated in Figure 10), and Agenda 2063. In fact, one of the key goals of Agenda 2063¹¹⁵ is to achieve environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities. The Sendai framework is referenced as the specific agreement that inspires disaster risk resilience policies in Africa. Other Africa wide policy, strategies, and frameworks include the Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (Weather and Climate Services), the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy, Africa Blue Economy Strategy. These frameworks help guide countries and states to mainstream climate-related strategies.

Both systemic and urban risks threaten efforts to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development. A range of factors play a role in conditioning systemic risk in sub-Saharan

¹¹⁵ Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-11_an_overview_of_agenda.pdf


Africa, including transboundary shocks, demographic challenges linked to urbanization, climate change, poverty and conflict. Rapid spatial expansion of urban areas is causing significant ecological damage, including destruction of habitats, deforestation and alteration of hydrological cycles. Limited access to affordable housing and transport services, force residents of many African cities to live in informal settlements located in hazard-prone areas such as floodplains and unstable hillsides. Conflict and state fragility also intensify the impact of natural disasters by increasing underlying vulnerability through displacement and impacts on health, basic service provision and the capacity of individuals to escape poverty.

Figure 10: Linkages Between the Sendai Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals



The importance of a systems-based approach to risk governance, which takes into account patterns of risk and the multi-sectoral effects of interactions between human and non-human systems cannot be over-emphasised. Sub-Saharan Africa faces a complex and evolving disaster risk profile in which efforts at disaster risk reduction (DRR) occur in a challenging context of persistent technical and financial capacity constraints. Substantial progress has been made in understanding DRR, developing DRR plans and promoting green and blue infrastructure.

Some countries now have a Disaster Risk Reduction Plan which has been incorporated into the national legislative system and mainstreaming at the sub-national level (Benin, Kenya,



Mozambique¹¹⁶). Malawi has adopted a National Resilience Strategy, with the overall objective of breaking the cycle of food and nutrition insecurity in the country by bridging development and humanitarian interventions. Numerous international partnerships have been strengthened in order to facilitate sharing of experiences, mobilizing resources and implementation of common projects (Cabo Verde¹¹⁷, Ghana¹¹⁸, Mauritius¹¹⁹). For instance, Cabo Verde adopted its National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2017 - 2030) in line with the time horizon of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Africa and ECOWAS Action Plans for Reducing Disaster Risk, and covers all types of risks. Ghana launched a Disaster Prevention Campaign in 2017 with a call on citizens to change their attitude and support the fight for preservation of the environment. The government of Seychelles is also championing a campaign for environmentally conscious public behaviour.

Other approaches towards addressing systemic risk in the region include efforts to invest in early warning systems, develop risk transfer mechanisms and create social protection schemes, both on the national and regional levels. A number of countries, including Burkina Faso, Eswatini, Mauritius, Ghana, South Africa, Uganda, and others, have developed early warning systems for natural disasters.

However, funding required to achieve this has been severely limited (as illustrated in Figure 11) hence countries report challenges ranging from limited early warning systems, poor coordination among institutions and weak post disaster recovery and rehabilitation mechanisms. Cooperation across sectors and between levels of government, which is necessary for programme effectiveness remains a challenge.

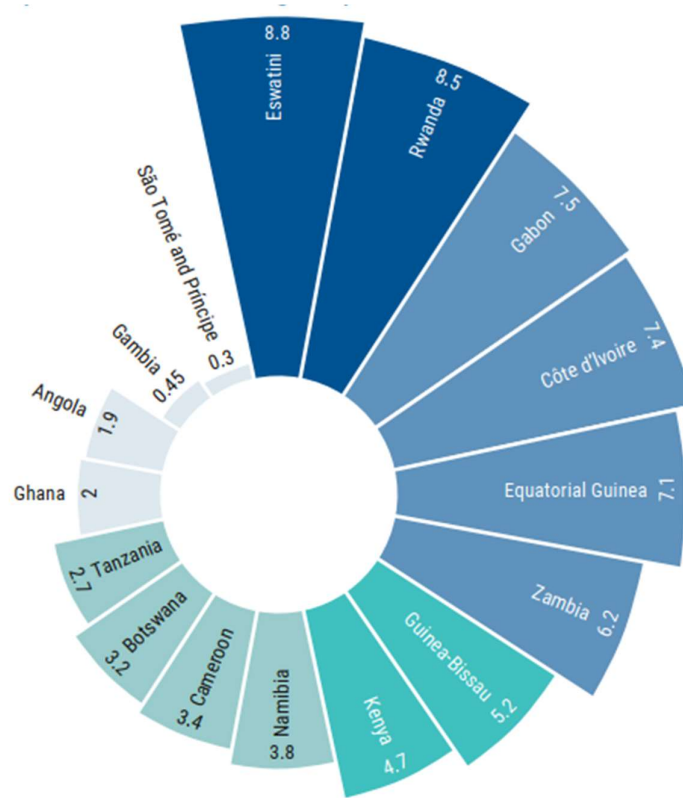
¹¹⁶ 2020 Report Voluntary National Review of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26313VNR_2020_Mozambique_Report.pdf

¹¹⁷ SDG Cabo Verde Voluntary National Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 2018. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/19580Cabo_Verde_VNR_SDG_Cabo_Verde_2018_ING_final_NU_280618.pdf

¹¹⁸ GHANA: Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 2019, pp.61-62.

¹¹⁹ Voluntary National Review Report of Mauritius 2019, p77. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23462Mauritius_VNR_Report_2019.pdf

Figure 11: Proportion of National Budgets Spent on Disaster Risk Reduction




Source: The 16 country risk-sensitive budget review reports developed by UNDRR

Note: The budget reviews cover three to five financial years depending on the country (except for that of Cameroon, which covers only one financial year).

Enhancing Urban Resilience

Urban Resilience is defined as the measurable ability of any urban system, with its inhabitants, to maintain continuity through all shocks and stresses, while positively adapting and transforming toward sustainability¹²⁰. It is a catalyst for sustainable

¹²⁰ <https://unhabitat.org/topic/resilience-and-risk-reduction>



urban development and an overarching framework for ensuring social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability (SDG 11).

Various African cities have experience and/or managed shocks and stresses over time. The COVID-19 crisis which significantly affected all sectors of society was a global shock that presents an opportunity for African cities to adopt systems approach to a resilient recovery¹²¹

Efforts to enhance resilience across African countries have been multi-faceted. They include the development of national resilience strategies (Malawi, South Africa Nigeria) and city resilience strategies (Accra, Addis Ababa, Cape Town, Dakar, Lagos Durban, Kigali, Nairobi and Paynesville under the Resilient Cities Network). These strategies have been directly targeted at addressing localised shocks and stresses, and 'building back better' (as illustrated in Box 4).

Countries including sustainable consumption and production (SCP) in national plans and strategies and reviews promoting clean technology in mining, energy and forestry sectors, agriculture (Togo), organic farming (Seychelles), health care, and green buildings (Cabo Verde). In 2006, the Government of Mali made the commitment and the initiative to develop a national strategy for sustainable development (SNDD)¹²² which is still operational and focuses on the integration of the environment into development policies and strategies.

Measures to enhance resilience embraced by countries include national laws banning the use of plastic bags or single use plastic straws (Kenya, Seychelles¹²³). Africa stands out as the continent where the most countries (34) have adopted a total ban on the production and use of plastic bags¹²⁴. Other measures include incentives to increase the social and sustainability reporting by industries (Sierra Leone¹²⁵); initiatives for increasing resource use efficiency and recycling (Ghana), and also those focused on behavioral change/ education of individuals towards sustainable consumption and production (Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana). The South African Operation Phasika Lab on the Chemical and Waste Economy was launched to support the South African economy and create jobs while reducing environmental footprint¹²⁶, while the Liberian National Export Strategy on Tourism 2016 – 2020 focused on sustainable tourism promotion.

¹²¹ <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/a-systemic-resilience-approach-to-dealing-with-covid-19-and-future-shocks-36a5bdfb/>

¹²² Rapport National Volontaire Sur La Mise En Oeuvre Des Objectifs De Developpement Durable, p50. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20200Projet_de_RNV_ODD_VFcor2_06_06_2018_Actuel.pdf

¹²³ Voluntary National Review 2020 Republic of Seychelles, p71. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26382VNR_2020_Seychelles_Report.pdf

¹²⁴ <https://www.unep.org/interactive/beat-plastic-pollution/>

¹²⁵ 2019 VNR Report on SDGS in Sierra Leone. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23378Sierra_Leone_VNR_FINAL.pdf

¹²⁶ 2019 South Africa Voluntary National Review. p90. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23402RSA_Voluntary_National_Review_Report_The_Final_24_July_2019.pdf

Box 4: Lesotho: Strengthening Climate Resilience and Adaptive Capacity

One of the significant innovations for strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in Lesotho is the development of keyhole gardens. Keyhole gardens have been promoted in Lesotho under the auspices of the Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-Safe) project, which has since grown to include the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The program's main goal was to enhance food security through better nutrition, improve climate resilience and increase incomes and savings targeting households affected by HIV and AIDS. Since their inception, 23,150 keyhole gardens have been constructed, impacting approximately 115,590 people. The structures have enhanced year-round production of nutritious vegetables such as spinach, carrots and beetroot, and have improved income available for other household expenses such as school fees.

Lesotho VRN, 2019,¹²⁷ p83

Reducing loss of Biodiversity

Africa is experiencing a dramatic loss of biodiversity. It is estimated that by 2100, climate change could cause the loss of over half of African bird and mammal species, as well as trigger a 20per cent–30per cent decline in lake productivity, and a significant loss of plant species¹²⁸. Even more threatening for African biodiversity is the loss and degradation of natural habitats due to urban sprawl and agricultural expansion especially along the Nile River in Egypt, the coast of West Africa on the Gulf of Guinea, the northern shores of Lake Victoria in Kenya and Uganda and extending into Rwanda and Burundi, the Kano region in northern Nigeria, and greater Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Desertification and land degradation continue to be a major challenge for many countries (Benin, Burundi, Niger, Seychelles, Zambia), as well as coastal erosion (Gambia), acidification and salinization, overgrazing, depletion of soil fertility and land sliding, wind and water erosion and dust storms. Comoros and Mozambique noted the lack of data and information for effective management of natural resources.


The loss of biodiversity affects livelihoods, water supply, food security and urban resilience, hence the need to develop pre-emptive land use and conservation strategies to mitigate the negative consequences of urbanization. Shifting towards the adoption of new economic models based on a circular economy enhanced by innovation and the concept of green economy are pathways to job enhancement and creating a symbiosis with national natural resources (See Box 10).

The Rwandan Ministry of Trade and Industry invested \$1.5 million to establish an e-waste facility that has created over 1,000 jobs, processed more than 434 tonnes of materials and prevented 870tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions from entering the atmosphere¹²⁹. The importance of waste and pollution control was also highlighted as many

¹²⁷ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23777Lesotho_VNR_Report_2019_Final.pdf

¹²⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/02/14/biodiversity>

¹²⁹ [23432Rwanda_VNR_Document_Final.pdf \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/23432Rwanda_VNR_Document_Final.pdf)



countries reported on challenges with ineffective waste and pesticide management (Gambia), mining (Zambia), water pollution (Burundi) and waste and single use plastics.

Progress towards increasing protected areas was reported by numerous countries (Cabo Verde, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Seychelles, Togo). Countries such as Cabo Verde have taken actions to integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, and poverty reduction strategies. Some countries also reported on their actions to protect wetlands and on new mappings and area classifications under the Ramsar Convention (Mozambique, Niger). Burundi also closed illegal and unsafe landfills and adopted more sustainable management strategies.

Several countries reported on the importance of the forestry sector for their economic growth but also simultaneously highlighted the decline of their forests. Uganda's forests provide 88 per cent of the country's energy and 61 per cent of tourism income¹³⁰. However, studies indicate there will be no forests left in 40 years if current trends continue. Similarly, as for biodiversity loss and land degradation, some of the major threats include changes in land use for agriculture and human settlements, overreliance on biomass for energy, and climate change. Other reported challenges for forests include fires, illegal logging, charcoal, and fuel production, invasive alien species, insect infestations, mining activity, weak governance and low budget allocations.

Therefore, many countries have been increasing forest cover through afforestation and conservation activities, enforcing logging bans in public and community forests (Kenya), online licensing of forest imports and exports (Malawi), tree plantations (Uganda), and sustainable biomass electricity initiatives (Benin). Countries have also developed plans and initiatives to increase sustainable agroforestry (Burundi), and some have begun rehabilitating genetic resources of trees and wildlife in the protected areas and biodiversity conservation corridors.

Again, the lack of disaggregated and relevant data as well as capacity building threatens plans for targeted interventions and effective management. Initiatives such as an ecosystem mapping a forest inventory, a communication platform for researchers and policy makers in Mozambique and the establishment of a National Information System for Nature are currently planned or underway. Almost all countries have made significant efforts to halt the decline of biological diversity and enhance its sustainable use through establishing protected areas. However, there are challenges regarding invasive alien species (Kenya, Niger, Seychelles), and targeted action to raise awareness of the importance of native species, enhance laws and regulations and additional studies on prevalence, strengthened quarantine services and establishment of a national database.

¹³⁰ <https://www.fao.org/3/ca9825en/ca9825en.pdf>



3. Implementation of the New Urban Agenda

3.1 Urban governance structure

This section examines the governance structure for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, including the decentralization systems and mechanisms for coordination at different levels of government and involvement of Parliaments; linkages of policies to financial mechanisms and budgets, capacity of local and subnational governments to implement local and metropolitan multilevel governance.

The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), the Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and the National Reports on the progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Sub-Saharan Africa revealed a variety of national institutional arrangements for the implementation of the transformative commitments, which suggests that no single institutional model is intrinsically more conducive to NUA implementation than another. Overall, countries seem to choose the institutional arrangement that is suited to their particular needs and circumstances. That being said, there are also some commonalities in countries' institutional arrangements.

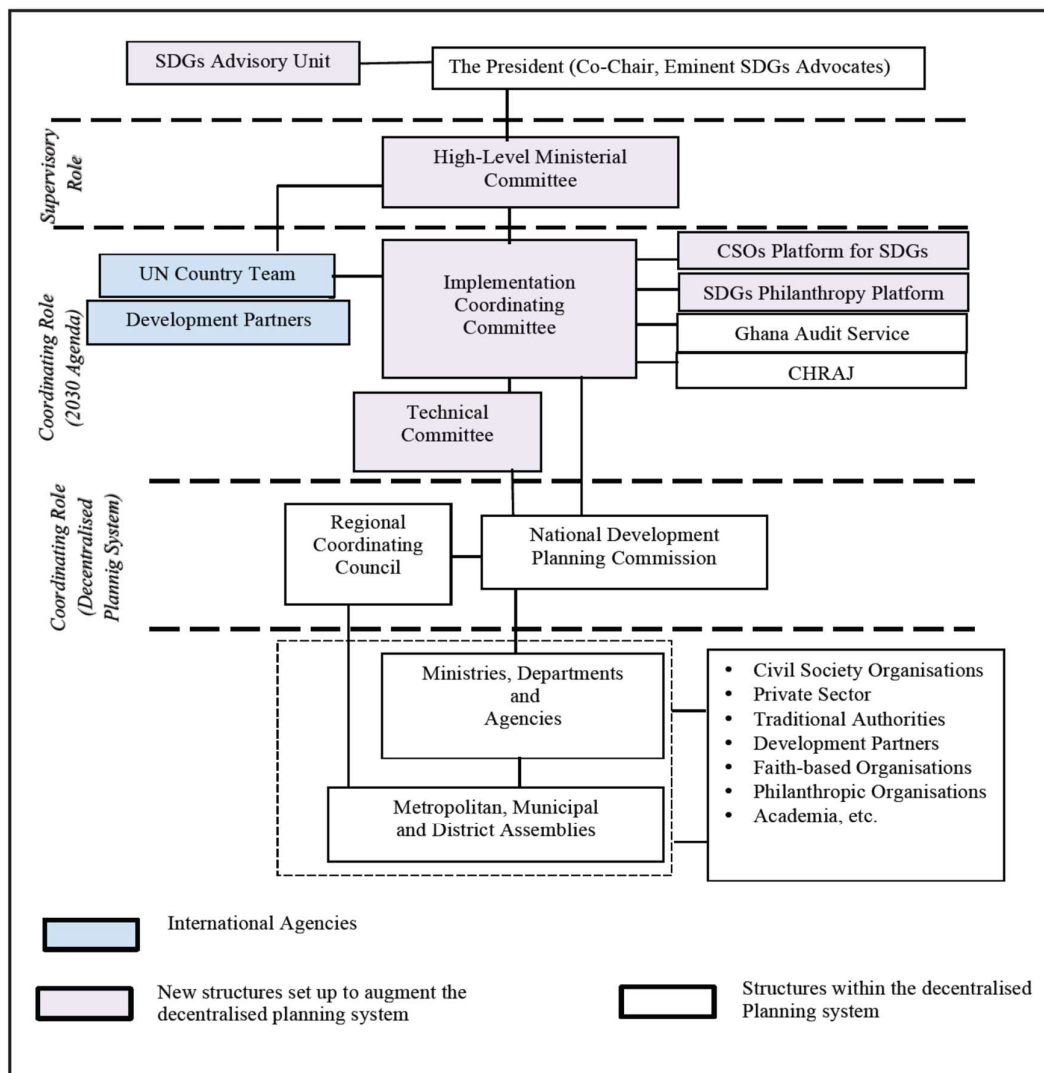
Mechanism for Decision-Making and Coordination on the NUA Implementation

In view of the integrated nature of the NUA, Sub-Saharan African governments need to work across multiple policy areas and implement whole-of-government approaches to NUA implementation. The creation of inter-ministerial structures is a way to mobilize the various agencies of the government around the SDGs and facilitate coherent and coordinated efforts.

While some countries utilized existing institutional structures for SDG implementation, many inter-ministerial committees and commissions have also been created, demonstrating high interest in cross-sectoral collaboration and policy integration in Burundi, Gambia, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia. In Uganda, the inter-ministerial commission for implementing the SDG is chaired by the Head of Government. The power of effective institutional mechanisms has also been acknowledged in Ghana, through the setting up of a number of SDG-specific institutional structures (as illustrated in Figure 12)

Countries that utilized existing institutional structures for SDG implementation assigned this task to a specific ministry. In Niger, an SDG monitoring division was created within the Ministry of Planning for SDG/NUA monitoring, evaluation and reporting. In Liberia, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning serves as the coordinating institution for the domestication of the 2030 Agenda. In Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, which was re-established in May 2018, coordinates implementation of the SDGs at the national level alongside other national development plans.


Figure 12: Institutional structure for implementing the SDGs in Ghana



Source: 2019 Ghana Voluntary National Report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, p6¹³¹

Most governments have put in place multi-stakeholder engagement mechanisms to leverage the contributions of non-state actors. In Kenya, the inter-agency technical committee set up to coordinate SDGs activities is co-chaired by government, private sector and CSOs. In addition to representatives of civil society and the private sector, countries have included members such as the heads of Trade Unions (Lesotho), the National African Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council (Ghana), youth representatives, and members of academia

¹³¹ 2019 Ghana Voluntary National Report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. [23420VNR Report Ghana Final print.pdf \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/development/desa/policy/2019vnr-report-ghana-final-print.pdf)



(Eswatini). In Chad, Ghana and Lesotho, the United Nations system also participates as members or observers. In Mauritius, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade chairs the SDG Steering Committee, a coordination body consisting of representatives from the government, private sector, NGOs and academia.

Decentralization and Enhancing Local Capacities for NUA Implementation

An important aspect of NUA progress is addressing regional and geographically based imbalances within countries, through decentralization and multi-level governance mechanisms. Decentralization is defined as measures that transfer a range of powers, responsibilities and resources from central government to subnational governments. Decentralization outcomes – in terms of democracy, efficiency, accountability, regional and local development – depend greatly on the way decentralization is designed and implemented¹³². The implementation of the transformative commitments of the NUA relies on the concrete application of programmes and policies local levels as well as an effective relationship and vertical integration between national and local governments.

Comoros, Kenya and Malawi acknowledge the importance of adopting decentralized strategies for implementing the NUA and disaster risk reduction plans. This is especially important because for global development agreements such as the SDGs to work, they must be relevant on the urban scale and must be within the capacity of urban governments to implement¹³³. Cabo Verde, Namibia have expressed a commitment to continue to strengthen the administrative capacity of local governments, while Democratic Republic of Congo affirms the importance of deepening urban development planning in secondary cities.

Attempts to integrate local governments into the implementation of the SDGs have been undertaken by Burundi through the process of integrating the transformative commitments into municipal community development plans. The Senegal Code of Local Authorities gives local authorities the competence to develop economic, spatial and urban planning documents, to ensure the management of local resources¹³⁴.

Some countries also created new coordination mechanisms at the local level. In Kenya, county governments are encouraged to create County SDG coordination units to mirror the SDGs Coordination Directorate at the national level. Mauritania has integrated the 2030 Agenda into an Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity Strategy 2016-2030 (SCAPP), with five committees – including a Regional Committee on Development - set up to implement and evaluate the plan. Similarly, 13 regional frameworks for dialogue are responsible for coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of the Burkina Faso National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES) and the SDGs, through the Regional Development Plan (PRD) and the Municipal Development Plans (PCD).

¹³² <https://www.oecd.org/cfe/regionaldevelopment/mlg.htm>

¹³³ Satterthwaite D (2016c) Successful, safe and sustainable cities: towards a new urban agenda. Commonwealth J Local Govern 19(1):3–18

¹³⁴ <https://www.sng-wofi.org/country-profiles/Ficheper cent20SENEGAL.pdf>



Involvement of Parliaments

Legislative cooperation is essential to the successful implementation of the NUA¹³⁵. The involvement of parliaments in the implementation of the transformative commitments has been variable across countries since 2018. Several countries reported that they had organized awareness-raising sessions, briefings, hearings, consultations and capacity building workshops on the transformative commitments of the NUA for parliamentarians at both national and sub-national levels. In some countries, parliaments' representatives are also members of the transformative commitments' coordination entities (Benin, Gambia, Mozambique) and have taken action through institutional mechanisms to catalyse action towards the SDGs. The Kenya Parliamentary Caucus on SDGs and Business was formed in 2017 to promote sustainable development through legislation, resource mobilization, oversight and partnerships. In the Nigerian National Assembly, there are two standing committees - the Senate Committee on SDGs and the House of Representatives Committee on SDGs – that ensure funds are committed to SDG implementation and also provide oversight on the implementation of SDGs-related projects in Nigeria. The Sierra Leonean Parliamentary Committee on SDGs engages with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation on ensuring effective implementation of the SDGs.

The Ugandan Parliament assesses the performance of the national budget using SDG compliance tools – issuing a Certificate of Compliance after gauging the country's commitment to achieving her national development priorities and the SDGs through budget interventions and allocations. This has resulted in the level of compliance of ministerial budgets to the SDGs going up from 54 per cent in 2017-18 to 60 per cent in 2018-19¹³⁶.

Multi-level Governance Capacities for Good Governance

National Urban Policies (NUPs) form a central pillar in the implementation of the NUA¹³⁷. They provide an overarching coordinating framework to address the most pressing issues related to urban development. In Africa, NUPs are envisaged to support local governance capacity building, simplify and cohere interests, bylaws, tenure regimes and piecemeal urban development programmes, while providing a means for African cities to contribute to achieving the SDGs. Since 2016, many African countries have been supported in the development of their urban policies¹³⁸, with the development of policies cascading to sub-national units such as Niger State Nigeria¹³⁹ (as illustrated in Figure 13)

Robust multi-level governance structures are required to ensure that governments at all levels work in a strategic, collaborative and evidence-based manner. In many cases, this is better said than done. The proponents of NUPs underestimated the competition between tiers of

¹³⁵ <https://www.local2030.org/library/415/Implementing-the-New-Urban-Agenda-and-SDGs-comparative-urban-perspectives.pdf>

¹³⁶ <http://www.npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Certificate-of-Compliance-201920.pdf>

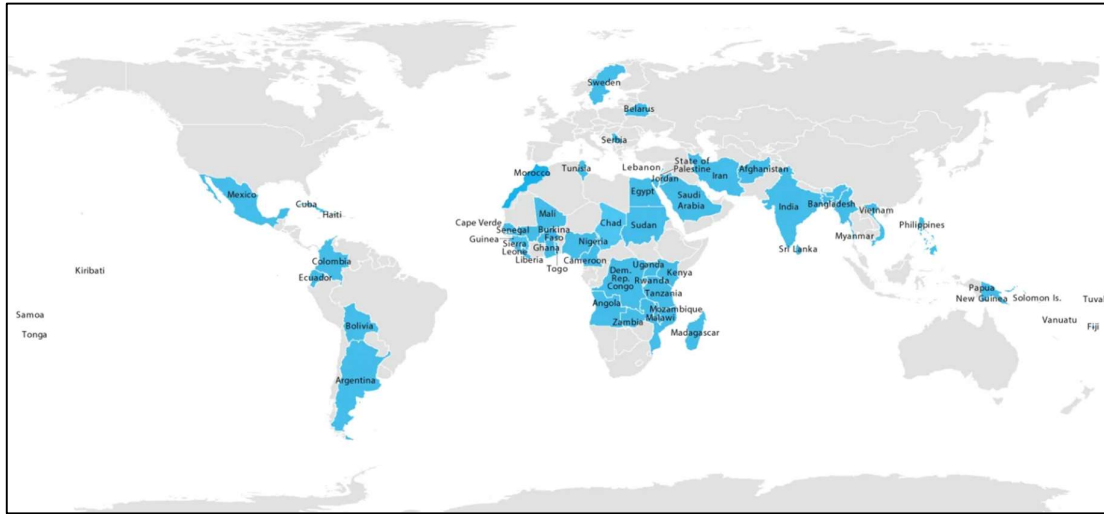
¹³⁷ UN-Habitat (2016). Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), Habitat III Policy Paper 3 - National Urban Policies. UN-Habitat, Nairobi. <http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/Policy-Paper-3-English.pdf>

¹³⁸ <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/national-urban-policy-database/#un-habitat-support>

¹³⁹ <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/niger-state-urban-support-programme/>

government and the desire of national governments to entrench centralised power structures and retain control over local governance systems. For example, many national governments do not substantially include or consult their local and regional governments regarding implementation of the SDGs or the NUA, evidenced from the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). Some cities have taken to producing voluntary local reviews (VLR)¹⁴⁰ such as Cape Town, Victoria falls, Harare, Kwale, Busia and Mansabit¹⁴¹.

Figure 13: Countries being supported by UNHABITAT for National Urban Policy Development



Source: Urban Policy Platform

The Tanzanian national government, in collaboration with UNCDF, has trained 177 people from 60 local government authorities on public investment management. Similarly, the African Development Bank is assisting Dakar, Senegal, to improve financial and administrative management systems as well as helping them to create financial mechanisms to attract new investments for sustainable urban development.¹⁴²

Linking Urban Policies to Finance Mechanisms and Budgets


The transformation of urban areas and the attendant reorientation of planning, administrative procedures and public sector services are resource intensive. A plan for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda or the 2030 Agenda within multi-level governance systems requires that municipalities have adequate financial resources and technical capacities¹⁴³. Furthermore, it is essential that in addition to embedding SDGs in long term development

¹⁴⁰ CLG and UN Habitat. 2020. Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews. Volume 1: a comparative analysis of existing VLRs. Available at: Barcelona: United Cities and Local Governments. https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/uclg_vlrlab_guidelines_2020_volume_i.pdf

¹⁴¹ <https://unhabitat.org/topics/voluntary-local-reviews>

¹⁴² World Cities Report 2020: The Value of Sustainable Urbanization

¹⁴³ <https://www.oecd.org/regional/multi-level-governance/>



plans, state and local budgets also take the SDGs into account¹⁴⁴. However, there is no standard methodology to guide government on how to do this¹⁴⁵.

Nonetheless, between 2018 and 2021, the government Kenya, Botswana, Senegal and Malawi have mainstreamed the transformative commitments and indicators into local planning and budgeting processes. In Malawi, the national urban policy advocates for innovative resource mobilization for urban development¹⁴⁶. Similarly, the country's Local Government Act of 1998 provides powers and functions to the National Local Government Finance Committee of 2018 to: coordinate, consolidate and monitor local council budgets; mobilise, allocate, disburse and account for financial resources; and regulate and ensure prudent use of financial resources in Local Councils¹⁴⁷. The Local Government Act (1998) also permits local councils to take loans from internal sources.

In some countries, all public institutions are required to mainstream the transformative commitments of the NUA into their plans, programmes and policies. For example, in Kenya¹⁴⁸, mainstreaming the transformative commitments at the sub-national level is done through the five (5) year County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs), which domesticates the National Government Medium Term Plans (MTPs) at the sub-national level. The CIDPs form the basis for planning and budgeting. The government of Senegal implement public policies, particularly urban ones, within the framework of a program approach. The budget of the policies is linked to programs to ensure a better distribution of funds according to political priorities and the objectives to be achieved. Each program has a credit allowance. The credits are broken down by action as well as by type of expenditure. one of the objectives of the program approach is to improve the link between the budget and public policies¹⁴⁹.

However, while the various national and municipalities are linking their policies to extant financial mechanisms, some challenges have also been encountered. Due to competing needs at national and local levels, these plans rarely cater for all urban development policies, resulting in non-implementation of most strategies in the development plans and policies. There is an urgent need to widen the revenue base at local levels to improve implementation of urban plans. Also, countries reported that inadequate financing, conflict between national development priorities and political interests; uninformed electorate; and limited participation of stakeholders are some of the key hinderances to linking policies to budgets – hence the need for both development and fiscal planning to leave no one behind.

¹⁴⁴ <file:///C:/Users/tolaw/Downloads/SDN1903.p>

¹⁴⁵ <https://blog-pfm.imf.org/pfmblog/2016/08/how-to-link-sdgs-to-the-budget.html>

¹⁴⁶ Government of Malawi National Report on Progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, 2021, p38. <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/member-states/republic-malawi/republic-malawi-national-report-oct-2020-sep-2024>

¹⁴⁷ Poghosyan S. (2016, August 17) How to link SDGs to the budget. Public Financial Management Blog. [PFM blog: How to Link SDGs to the Budget \(imf.org\)](https://www.pfm.org/blog/How-to-Link-SDGs-to-the-Budget)

¹⁴⁸ Kenya National Report on progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda 2021, p6. <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/member-states/republic-kenya/republic-kenya-national-report-oct-2020-sep-2024>

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/members/senegal/commitments/SN0002/>



International Development Cooperation

Official development assistance (ODA) is an essential source of external finance and is essential to achieving national sustainable strategies. In Chad, the Republic of the Congo, and Lesotho, most of the resources used to finance the SDGs come from international partners. Many countries called for the global commitment of 0.7 per cent GNI to ODA to be met and emphasized the need for increased concessional resources and better alignment of development cooperation with country needs.

Steps are also being taken to improve the enablers of development cooperation to enhance the quality and impact of resources. Benin has implemented an aid information system that supports monitoring and analysis with partners. The Gambia has created a biennial National Development Cooperation Forum to enhance policy dialogue with development partners, while Malawi has created a development cooperation strategy and sector-specific MOUs with relevant partners.


Countries highlighted the challenges of accessing concessional resources. The transition to middle-income status diminished the access of Eswatini, Ghana and Kenya to concessional loans, with external financing becoming expensive and sometimes prohibitive. South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) remains an important means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, distinct, dynamic and steeped in the principal of solidarity.

Strengthened capacities are needed to mobilize the right type of financing for different development needs. Kenya called for strengthening capacities of countries on the aid delivery architecture, mobilizing domestic revenue and innovative financing modalities, and illicit financial flows. Participation in sub-regional and regional organizations is a vehicle for numerous countries to advance partnerships, share good practices and strengthen capacities (Comoros).

Planning and Urban Management in the Domain of 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB)

African countries have in the last four years dedicated their planning to the principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB) and its meaning at national, city and local contexts. Many countries have embedded LNOB as a cross-cutting principle in their strategies, programmes and plans. There are two main ways in which countries are working to ensure that no one is left behind: the focus on universal policies and programmes that ensure basic services for all, and the planning and provision of targeted policies and measures to support specific vulnerable groups. Most often, the principle of LNOB was reflected through the lens of social protection, as targeted actions to support the most vulnerable.

Many countries have deployed a rights-based approach to development and NUA implementation, benchmarking national constitutions as the basis for equal treatment for all. Others referred to laws and decrees that aim at ensuring social inclusion, non-discrimination and upholding of human rights. Efforts have also been made to establish dedicated



institutional entities for inclusion and to reflect this aim in budgets. Democratic Republic of Congo has established a Ministry in charge of People living with Disabilities and other vulnerable groups. In Kenya, the National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) prioritizes and champions the rights of persons with disabilities. Uganda reported that the Budget Act, which takes gender and equity issues into consideration, guides the national budget process.

3.2. Planning and Managing Urban Development

Given rapid urban growth rates, urbanization in Africa is both an opportunity and a threat, and the quality of urban planning and management determine if sustainable urban development will be achieved or not¹⁵⁰. While planning policies found expression as instruments of power, domination and social control in urban space in colonial Africa¹⁵¹, in more contemporary times, they are often deployed as tools for socio-spatial restructuring and catalyzing economic development¹⁵².

Interestingly, many African cities retain the colonial dual planning regimes of planned settlements for the elite and informal settlements for the dominant urban poor majority. African cities are growing quite rapidly, and without appropriate planning, they become increasingly chaotic, inefficient and unsustainable. A shortage of urban planning and management professionals trained to respond to urban complexity with progressive pro-poor approaches exacerbates urban dysfunction¹⁵³.

With the adoption of the New Urban agenda came a new consciousness about the priority planning should be given in the national development discourse. Also readily available are templates such as the City Resilience Action Planning tool¹⁵⁴, Urban Public Space assessment tool¹⁵⁵, City Health Development planning tool¹⁵⁶ and the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial planning¹⁵⁷ that present road maps with global reference frameworks to promote healthier, safer, socially inclusive, better integrated and connected cities that foster sustainable urban development and are resilient in the face of the climate and associated crises.

Since 2016, cities and national governments have expanded efforts in the area of urban planning and management in order to fast track the realization of SDG 11. While some

¹⁵⁰ <https://urbangateway.org/content/news/top-ten-reasons-why-cities-need-urban-planning>

¹⁵¹ Ambe J. Njoh (2009) Urban planning as a tool of power and social control in colonial Africa, *Planning Perspectives*, 24 (3): 301-317. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02665430902933960>

¹⁵² de Satge, Richard and Watson, Vanessa. (2018). African Cities: Planning Ambitions and Planning Realities. 10.1007/978-3-319-69496-2_3.


¹⁵³ <https://www.africaresearchinstitute.org/newsite/publications/who-will-plan-africas-cities/>

¹⁵⁴ <https://unhabitat.org/city-resilience-action-planning-tool-cityrap#:~:text=Theper cent20CityRAPper cent20toolper cent20isper cent20used, a per cent20Resilienceper cent20Frameworkper cent20forper cent20Action>

¹⁵⁵ https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/07/city-wide_public_space_assessment_guide_0.pdf

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/urban-health/publications/2001/city-health-development-planning.-a-working-tool-concept.-process.-structure-and-content>

¹⁵⁷ <https://unhabitat.org/international-guidelines-on-urban-and-territorial-planning>



countries and cities developed urban policies, planning legislations and physical development plans, other implemented urban extensions, new cities and infill and regeneration interventions to existing ones. Countries that instituted national physical development plans or processes include Nigeria, Eswatini, Uganda and South Africa. Mauritius notes the benefits of the creation of a land database for better development planning. The Government set up a Cadastre Unit in 2012 under the Land Administration Valuation and Information Management System (LAVIMS) project to improve planning, land valuation and environmental monitoring. The whole land transaction process has now been computerized in an integrated system¹⁵⁸.

The principle of 'Leave no one behind' is taking centre stage, as many of these plans and policies are aimed at enhancing the capacities of local communities and governments in the planning process.

Integrated and Balanced Territorial Planning and Development

Urban and territorial planning and development constitutes a powerful decision-making mechanism to ensure that sustained growth, social development and environmental sustainability go hand in hand to promote connectivity at all territorial levels¹⁵⁹. With the African continent slowly transiting to a predominantly urbanized one¹⁶⁰, there is need for African leaders to expand efforts beyond traditional planning and urban development systems which typically prioritize containment of urban spread, preservation of local environments, enforcing orderliness through application of standards and segregation of land uses with the overall intention of maximizing the greater public good¹⁶¹.

The alternative is to adopt rights-based and systems approaches to urban policies, plans, designs and implementation processes. This will achieve integrated and balanced planning built on the principle of Leave no one Behind. Integrated urban development planning is necessary, it breaks down sector silos and encourages collaboration between spatial, social and financial planning. Setting out clear long-term city plans that integrate different sectors drives a successful urban agenda, removing silos and aligning different sectors. These plans should not be left solely to urban planning departments but by creating an enabling environment for integrated planning. Credible urban plans that align with national government plans reduce uncertainty for investors. Innovative funding approaches are needed to support the integrated urban development strategies.


In this domain, many countries are rethinking their national policies and development plans through wide ranging intersectoral participation and partnerships, as well as exploring multi-level governance cooperation. Cabo Verde's National Regulation for Spatial Planning and Urban Planning decentralizes and places in the respective municipalities the competences for the preparation of their detailed plans. Uganda's national development plan - Vision 2040 – sets out to control urban sprawl through legislation, integrated physical planning and strict

¹⁵⁸ 2019 Voluntary National Reviews Synthetic Report.
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/252302019_VNR_Synthesis_Report_DESA.pdf

¹⁵⁹ Ibid

¹⁶⁰ https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/events/pdf/expert/28/EGM_Joseph_Teye_ppt.pdf

¹⁶¹ <https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/leading-change.pdf>



development control. Uganda also adopted the Safe Cities Free of Violence against Women and Girls Act with the aim of ensuring that women and girls are socially, economically and politically empowered in urban public spaces that are free from sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence.

To promote inclusive and sustainable urbanization, the registration and legalization of land use rights (DUAT) with a target of issuing 5 million land tenure titles by 2024 was adopted by the Mozambican government, with 1.36 million already issued as at 2019. In Kenya, the Naivasha and Dongu Kundu Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have been gazetted as Spatial Planning areas that will support the implementation of integrated, and urban balanced territorial development policies; integration of housing into urban development plans and strengthen the role of small and intermediate cities and towns.¹⁶²

Planned Urban Extensions and Infills

In the face of rapid growth, some countries have embarked on urban extension interventions to stem the tide of uncoordinated peri-urban development as well as to develop new cities to cater for burgeoning populations. These countries strive to provide livable spaces both within and outside urban centres. An example is the collaboration between the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA), Nigeria and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to undertake urban improvement projects in eight FCT satellite towns. East African countries (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of Congo) have also proposed some satellite cities to reduce the growth of existing unplanned settlements, to limit the congestion of the biggest cities, to accommodate the impending economic and population growth expected in the major cities of the region. These satellite cities include Tatu City¹⁶³ and Konza Technology City adjacent to Nairobi, Kigamboni¹⁶⁴ and Kalungulu in Dar es Salaam and Kampala respectively and La Cité du Fleuve (River City)¹⁶⁵ in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which will literally rise from the River Congo itself. Largely driven by foreign investments, some of these new cities have been designed and are currently at various stages of implementation. However, there are concerns of elite capture and socio-spatial segregation, the lack of context between the designs and ambitions of these projects and the lived realities of the citizens who need housing and basic services, and what these portend for African sustainable urban futures¹⁶⁶.

¹⁶² Kenya Country report on Progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (2021). <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/member-states/republic-kenya/republic-kenya-national-report-oct-2020-sep-2024>

¹⁶³ <https://www.tatucity.com/>

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.newtowninstitute.org/newtowndata/newtown.php?newtownId=1791>

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.newtowninstitute.org/newtowndata/newtown.php?newtownId=1817>

¹⁶⁶ de Satge, Richard and Watson, Vanessa. (2018). Urban Planning in the Global South.: Conflicting Rationalities in Contested Urban Space 10.1007/978-3-319-69496-2



Urban Renewal and Regeneration of Urban Areas

Despite the benefits of urbanization, the rapid growth of cities forces millions of urban dwellers in Sub-Saharan Africa to confront challenges associated with unplanned urban development, including inadequate housing, slum development, poor infrastructure and services; air pollution and environmental risks; and inequalities, among others. 54 per cent of African urban residents reside in slums with precarious housing and lacking in basic services and infrastructure¹⁶⁷. percentage of urban populations resident in slums range from 27 per cent in the Gambia to 40 per cent in Tanzania, 55 percent in Zambia and 95 per cent in the Central African Republic.

Factors responsible for slum proliferation in many countries include weak local economic development frameworks and weak urban planning frameworks. New forms of informal settlements also emerge when IDP populations unable to integrate successfully into existing cities agglomerate in shack communities on the city peripheral areas and/or when people buy land in unplanned areas in order to achieve home ownership aspirations. With push factors like climate change and rural poverty expected to continue to drive migration to urban areas, and slum areas driving generational poverty patterns, urgent action is required to improve the living conditions of these settlements and the economic opportunities of those who live there.

Moderate improvements in the proportion of urban populations living in slum areas, illegal settlements or inadequate housing were observed in Benin¹⁶⁸ and Angola. Only 47 per cent of Angolans reside in urban slums in 2018 compared to 65 percent in 2010¹⁶⁹. The downward trend was attributed to the direct government's efforts to implement housing projects aimed at both the construction of new housing and the urban upgrading of peripheral neighborhoods. Zambia has also formulated a National Urbanization Policy to address the proliferation of informal settlements. Liberia has committed to piloting sustainable cities in five selected cities with specific emphasis placed on various urban renewal actions, such as in housing, waste management and other key priorities. Nigeria is currently reviewing her National Urbanization Policy, while Lagos has instituted reforms in urban renewal legislations and practice, including the formulation of Urban Renewal guidelines¹⁷⁰ and the preparation of urban regeneration plans for selected slum communities. Several countries have embarked on urban regeneration interventions particularly with respect to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure and primary health care – especially in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

There are also many local community driven efforts for community profiling, *in situ* upgrading, savings groups and mobilization against forced evictions and for climate resilience, as well as the Slum Dwellers International affiliates¹⁷¹ which spans fourteen African countries

¹⁶⁷ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.SLUM.UR.ZS?locations=ZG>

¹⁶⁸ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26282VNR_2020_Benin_Report.pdf

¹⁶⁹ https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/06/covid-19_in_african_cities_impacts_responses_and_policies2.pdf

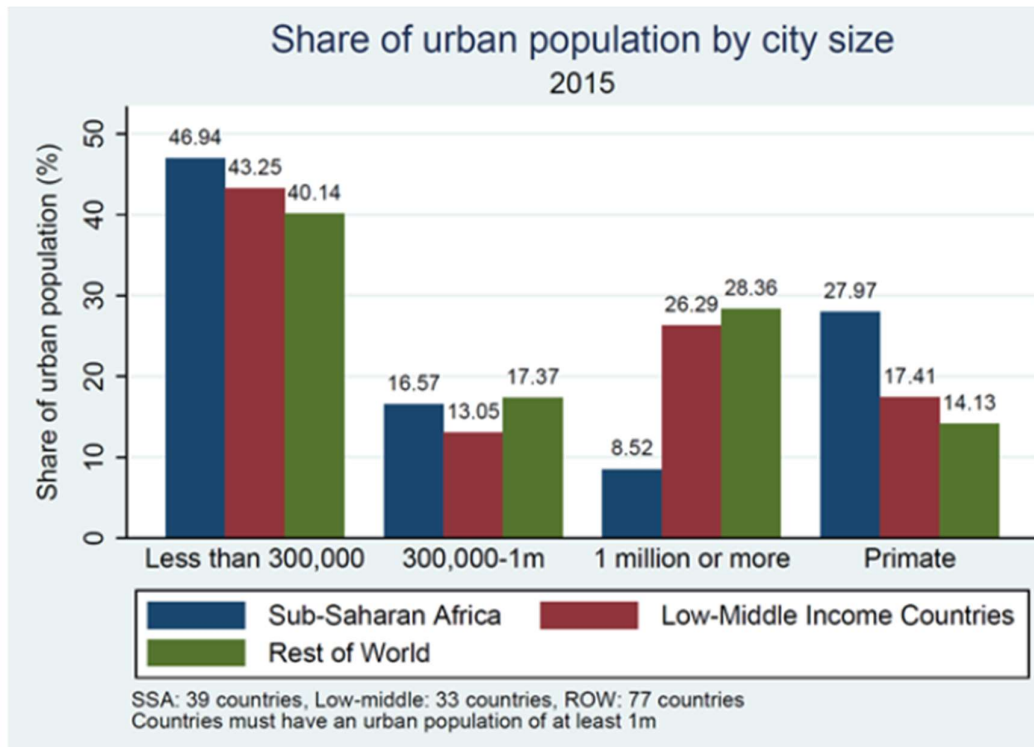
¹⁷⁰ <https://www.globalfuturecities.org/story/future-cities-lagos-urban-intervention-retreat>

¹⁷¹ <https://sdinet.org/explore-our-data/>

Small and Intermediate Cities and Towns

Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest share of secondary cities globally (as illustrated in Figure 14), ranging in size from between 150,000 and five million (as illustrated in Figure 15).

Figure 14: Urban Population Distribution by region (2015)

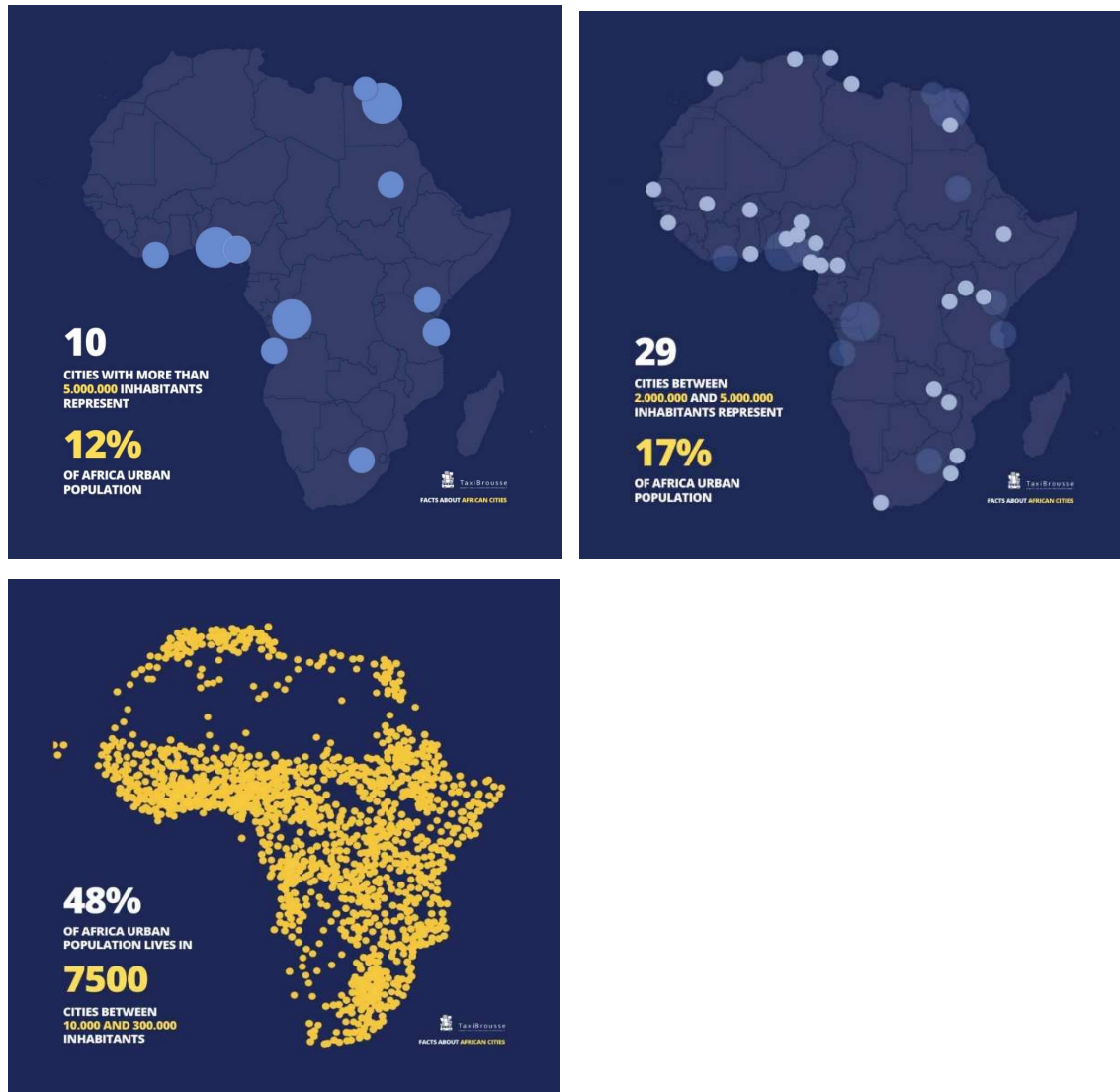


Source: UN World Urbanisation Prospects, 2018

These and other relatively small urban centres have important functions in national economies, for local government services and for producer and consumer service provision to their and to their surrounding (usually predominantly rural) populations¹⁷².

172 <https://www.uclg.org/en/agenda/intermediary-cities>


Figure 15: Secondary Cities in Africa



Source: <https://www.taxibrousse.it/en/going-small-the-role-of-secondary-cities-in-africa/>

Typically, secondary cities are the recipients of industries like manufacturing. However, weaknesses in the industrial sector of large African cities can diminish the role for secondary cities. Secondary cities also often rank low on the priorities and budgets of central governments as most of the investment and policy attention is primarily put on the capitals constituting the political, cultural, social and economic centres. As a result, many national economic policies fail to account for the dividends that a more balanced spatial development and conscious inter-city collaboration and connectiveness can generate¹⁷³. Unless secondary cities become more competitive, Africa's urban growth will likely continue to be absorbed by

¹⁷³ [Secondary Cities | Cities Alliance](#)



primate cities in the coming decades, further exacerbating challenges of slums, urban sprawl and urbanisation of poverty¹⁷⁴

Efforts towards jumpstarting economic growth in Africa's secondary cities include the Cities Alliance Country programme in Uganda which through a US\$150 million municipal support programme, expanded TSUPU from five to 14 secondary cities. In Burkina Faso, the programme is supporting the secondary cities of Dori, Dedougou and Tenkodogo in building capacity to implement strategic development plans. Through the Future Cities Africa programme, local resilience assessments have taken place across selected African cities: 14 secondary cities in Uganda; two regional capitals in Ethiopia; the Nampula-Nacala-Tete urban corridor in Mozambique; and the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA) in Ghana¹⁷⁵. The Ethiopia Urban Expansion Programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of four regional capitals was extended to fourteen additional cities¹⁷⁶.

Multimodal Public Transport Systems

Several countries contend with traffic congestion, air pollution, and road safety in rapidly urban areas and have in the last four years. The planning and development of low-carbon transportation, and increased access to and affordability of public transit, could help alleviate environmental pressures and improve urban sustainability. Hence, between 2018 and 2021, large public infrastructure projects aimed at multimodal transport efficiency and effectiveness along various corridors in Sub-Saharan Africa have been implemented in Cameroon¹⁷⁷, Kenya, Nigeria¹⁷⁸, Tanzania¹⁷⁹, Malawi etc. While Lagos, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria, George, Dar es Salaam and Accra expanded urban mobility with the introduction of BRT services between 2008 and 2016¹⁸⁰, these are largely insufficient to move the high number of urban commuters. Lagos BRT accounts for less than 10 per cent of daily travel in the city.¹⁸¹

In many cities with limited public transport systems, a thriving but informal paratransit sector exists in the form of minibuses, commercial rickshaws and motorcycles and e-hailing taxi service. However, due to the fact that they often fall out of the formal regulatory sector, many urban transport plans, and their subsequent implementation, ignore them¹⁸². The fact that they do not appear in these plans and are thus remain unregulated, usually results in poor quality of their service, hostility from state agencies and a deterioration of the overall transport network.

¹⁷⁴ Kriticos, S. (2019, October 30) The costs of urban giants in sub-Saharan Africa, International Growth Centre [The costs of urban giants in sub-Saharan Africa - IGC \(theigc.org\)](https://www.theigc.org/)

¹⁷⁵ UNCDF (2021) National Enablers for infrastructure Investment and economic development in secondary cities in Ghana and Uganda, pp.1-68.

¹⁷⁶ <https://www.citiesalliance.org/themes/secondary-cities>

¹⁷⁷ <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P143801>


¹⁷⁸ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-west/279888-lagos-light-rail-to-commence-operation-2022-official.html>

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.au-pida.org/view-programme/23/>

¹⁸⁰ <https://www.theigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Integrated-multi-modal-transport-planning-FINAL-Jan2019.pdf>

¹⁸¹

¹⁸²



Non-motorised transport policies are also being championed for climate resilience and social inclusion in many African cities. Moreover, it is estimated that the capital cost for a pedestrian walkway for 4,500 people/hour/direction is about \$100,000. This is 50 times less than an urban road that can only carry 800 people per hour¹⁸³. However, the real benefits of non-motorised policies can only be felt when urban planning is effective as transport and land use planning are complementary when it comes to improving connectivity and density in the city

Culture and Urban Planning

Culture is an important element for achieving sustainable urban development (See Figure 14). Cultural heritage, cultural and creative industries, sustainable cultural tourism, and cultural infrastructure can serve as strategic tools for revenue generation, particularly in developing countries given their often-rich cultural heritage and substantial labour force¹⁸⁴.

Across the sub-region, where there is comparative advantage, many countries are charting sustainable pathways based on cultural and built heritage preservation. UNESCO has designated 2015 – 2024 the International Decade for People of African descent in order to amplify efforts to combat prejudice, racism and discrimination and to foster reconciliation and new ways of living together, and Agenda 2064 lists African cultural values and renaissance, African values and ideals of Pan Africanism, and cultural heritage, creative arts and businesses as priorities¹⁸⁵

The Voluntary National Reviews between 2018 and 2021 point to the designation of cultural sites in cities, the preservation of indigenous languages and teaching elements such as the history of cooperation and the relationship between a community and its surrounding environment (Mauritius, Mauritania, Madagascar, etc.). Culture-sensitive approaches have demonstrated concretely how one can address both the economic and human rights dimensions of poverty at the same time, while providing solutions to complex development issues in an innovative and multisectoral manner. Kenya has begun the preparation and approval of physical planning regulations applying to cultural facilities including national heritage sites of cultural and historical significance under the Physical and Land Use Planning (Classification of Strategic National or Inter-County Projects) Regulations, 2019.

¹⁸³ Rode, P. et al. (2014). *Accessibility in Cities: Transport and Urban Form*. London: New Climate Economy Cities

¹⁸⁴ https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Thinkper cent20Pieces/2_culture.pdf

¹⁸⁵ <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/sdgs>



Means of Implementation

4.1. Mobilization of Financial Resources

Institutional Frameworks for financing African Urban Development

As cities are growing rapidly, they require extensive investments in social and economic infrastructure. The COVID-19 crisis with a predominantly urban footfall has also highlighted an urgent need for financing to scale up health response and address the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic. Depending on the country context, these challenges include, a steep decline in industrial activity; high unemployment; elevated levels of household debt among vulnerable groups; increased inflation; capital flight and record public debt levels.

Public and private financing both play essential roles in fostering sustainable development and achieving the NUA. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda provides a new global framework for financing sustainable development by aligning all financing flows and policies with economic, social and environmental priorities¹⁸⁶. Greater private sector involvement was emphasized throughout the agenda. The NUA encourages businesses to apply their creativity and innovation to solving sustainable development challenges in urban areas. Private investment, particularly foreign direct investment, along with a stable international financial system, are essential elements of development efforts.

It was estimated, in 2015, that finance for infrastructure required to deliver the SDGs globally will range from USD3.8-4.1 trillion per annum¹⁸⁷. The African infrastructure-financing gap (the difference between investment needs and actual investment) is estimated at between USD 130 and USD 170 billion per year¹⁸⁸. The Climate change adaptation financing needs (gap) in Africa is projected to range from \$160 billion to \$260 billion for the period 2020 to 2030¹⁸⁹.

Securing investment in a timely and coordinated way is often a struggle. The spread of COVID-19 adds a new layer of vulnerability to pre-existing macro-economic and financial challenges. Hence, to strengthen the financing architecture and align resources with national objectives, many countries have undertaken a Development Finance Assessment with UN support. This has helped countries to better understand their financing challenges and provided an opportunity to develop a broader, more holistic vision for NUA financing. The participation has provided insights into the development of an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to strengthen the linkages between planning, budgeting and financing, with Nigeria reporting specifically on advances in INFF design and implementation.

¹⁸⁶ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2051AAAA_Outcome.pdf

¹⁸⁷ <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/be6d1d56/files/uploaded/151112-SDG-Financing-Needs.pdf>

¹⁸⁸ https://www.oecd.org/dev/africa/Financing-Summit-for-Africa_Background-paper.pdf

¹⁸⁹ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Needspercent20Report_Africanpercent20countries_AfDB_FINAL.df



The NUA encouraged accessing multilateral funds such as the Global Environment Facility, the Adaptation Fund and the Climate Investment Funds. 37 per cent of the portfolio of the Green Climate fund totalling USD 3.3 billion is invested in Africa – spread across 70 approved projects including multiregional projects¹⁹⁰. FDI stock has created the largest number of jobs in South Africa, and Nigeria¹⁹¹.

Countries also stressed the importance of strengthening the internal control of public finance, including budget transparency and streamlined disbursement processes and guidelines. Transparency and accountability gaps hinder effectiveness of public finance, which has led to corruption and back hand deals, leading to unfinished and postponed projects. Comoros stressed the need for adequate absorptive capacity of public investment, highlighting challenges in programming, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation of projects.

Transfers from national to city governments account for 70–80 per cent of local authorities' finance¹⁹². Planning for urban infrastructure sits with city administrations who have less capacity to mobilize resources – especially international finance, resulting in a disjointed process where national governments are able to attract funding for large mega scale developments, whereas funding for critical infrastructure for everyday urban challenges is less accessible.

Policies that enable subnational and local governments to register and expand their potential revenue base (through multipurpose cadastres, local taxes, fees and service charges) are necessary. Cities are leading the way in implementing new models to mobilise finance for sustainable development. In Africa property taxes constitute about 0.38 per cent¹⁹³. Cities that have reformed their property tax regimes have seen an increase in revenues. In Sierra Leone, the cities of Bo, Kenema and Makeni increased local revenues by 200–450 per cent between 2007 and 2011 by implementing a simplified and transparent system of property valuation¹⁹⁴. In Cotonou, Porto-Novo, Parakou and other cities in Benin, the government has begun implementing a land information system (Registre Foncier Urbain) that has positively impacted local finances¹⁹⁵.

To be able to meet the financial needs of cities efficiently there needs to be a balance between decentralisation and coordination. Investment needs to be made in skills development at the city level so they are able to effectively finance, procure, and oversee projects. When financial transfers happen from different tiers of government they should be done through sound and transparent systems. In South Africa, the cities of Tshwane, Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg and Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality have been empowered and are implementing sustainable public procurement practices that not only achieve value for money but also drive toward sustainability.

¹⁹⁰ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/speech/implementing-new-gcf-urban-strategy-africa>

¹⁹¹ World Cities Report 2020: The Value of Sustainable Urbanization

¹⁹² Ibid

¹⁹³ Ibid

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

¹⁹⁵ Ibid

Resource Mobilization and Funding Options

Private investments (domestic and international) are necessary for achieving the NUA. Severe shortcomings in attracting sufficient foreign direct investment remain. To address low levels of FDI and attract private investment, countries have implemented diverse strategies. Comoros set up a National Agency for the Promotion of Investments that facilitates business registration. To address the challenges posed by narrow fiscal space, declining FDI and Official Development Assistance, public-private partnerships are another means of implementation (Zambia). Benin also emphasized the need to go beyond traditional partners by approaching philanthropic actors and sources of innovative finance.


Remittances continue to be an important source of capital for economic growth and development, although they remain below desired levels in some countries. Remittances, which are monies sent home by migrants to their families, are an established source of finance for millions of African households. The positive impact that they have is seen in the fact that their flows into Africa surpassed Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) and Developmental Aid in 2019, reaching a total of \$48 billion (as illustrated in Figure 16). This figure is believed to be higher due to those sent through informal channels¹⁹⁶. According to the Africa Growth Initiative, the top recipient countries in 2019 were South Sudan, Lesotho, and The Gambia, and in 2020, most of the money sent to Sub Saharan Africa went to Nigeria.

A number of countries pointed to the role of remittances and contributions of diaspora in providing resources for sustainable development. Togo reported that the mobilization of the Togolese diaspora has intensified in recent years through innovative initiatives such as "Réussite diaspora", which is a programme designed to mobilize capacities of the Togolese diaspora, on the one hand and to intensify the visibility of Togo abroad as a preferred destination for foreign investors, on the other hand.

Figure 16: Major Funding Flows to Africa (2019)



¹⁹⁶ <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2021/03/15/keep-remittances-flowing-to-africa/>



Source: Migration and Development Brief <https://www.knomad.org/publication/migration-and-development-brief-33>

Budget issues, limited and untimely availability of resources feature prominently in the progressive reports of many countries and cities as a major challenge, forcing countries to prioritize certain transformative commitments, giving due attention and consideration to domestic contextual realities and future development potential. Eswatini, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone reported that tight fiscal space and related challenges result in limited resources available for the implementation of programmes, regular and timely data collection and reporting. Faced with limited resources, there is strong need to identify areas of highest priority among the transformative commitments that will yield high returns at the shortest turn-around time with multiplier effects on other goals for visible change in development to attain maximum results in a cost-effective manner.

City-level revenue-raising that supports financial independence needs to go hand in hand with capacity building. Through the Joint Programme on Local Governance, UN-Habitat has been strengthening capacities for municipal revenue generation in Somalia over the past decade. It has resulted positively, for example Hargeisa Municipality has seen an increase in revenue from US\$1.3 million in 2018 to US\$1.6 million in 2019, which has facilitated the delivery of social and physical infrastructure.¹⁹⁷ In Tanzania, the national government, in collaboration with UNCDF, has trained 177 members of investment committees from 60 local government authorities on public investment management. Similarly, the African Development Bank is assisting Dakar, Senegal, to improve financial and administrative management systems as well as helping them to create financial mechanisms to attract new investments for sustainable urban development.¹⁹⁸


Expanding the Revenue Base of Sub-National Governments

Countries reported on progress in mobilizing additional resources to finance the implementation of the NUA. Countries including Congo, Ghana, and Tanzania highlighted contributions from the private sector as a critical source of financing. In order to mobilize private sources of financing, countries stressed the importance of bolstering the domestic business climate by taking targeted policy action such as simplifying procedures to obtain business licenses and permits.

Public private partnerships (PPP) play key roles in supporting infrastructure investments. Several countries reported on steps taken at the legislative level to strengthen the transparency and efficiency of PPP frameworks. Countries also pointed to the importance of private sector commitments to doing business sustainably and responsibly. Ghana has established a CEOs Advisory Group on the SDGs, which champions the private sector's engagement on sustainable development. The reviews of Cameroon, Chad and Eswatini highlighted expanding access to finance, including MSMEs, as critical to unlock resources for

¹⁹⁷ World Cities Report 2020: The Value of Sustainable Urbanization

¹⁹⁸ World Cities Report 2020: The Value of Sustainable Urbanization



sustainable development and the transformative commitments. Some countries also reported on strategies to support start-ups through business development services and funding, especially for the youth (Ghana, Rwanda, Tanzania) and women (Mauritania, Rwanda, Tanzania).

Several countries noted efforts to promote investment, including foreign direct investment (FDI), as important drivers for the mobilization of additional resources for sustainable development.

4.2. Capacity Development

Capacity-building is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world¹⁹⁹. One of the essential elements in capacity-building is the transformation generated and sustained over time; transformation of this kind goes beyond performing tasks to changing mindsets and attitude (SDG 17)²⁰⁰. To this end, capacity-building opportunities and progress are examined vis-a-vis challenges, prospects and progress.

Capacity Building Gaps


Many countries, including Burundi and the Gambia, noted the crucial role of capacity development for effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with limited capacity being one of the challenges hindering SDG achievement²⁰¹. Rwanda articulated the gap, expressed by many countries, between the ambition of the SDGs and available financial and human resources and called for more consolidated efforts among stakeholders to increase resource mobilization and capacity development. Countries also expressed a desire for public sector capacity development in the area of coordination of inter-ministerial development planning and implementation of programmes and projects; managing synergies and trade-offs; and strengthening institutional accountability relationships. Countries also highlighted capacity needs amongst different stakeholders such as local government administration and intergovernmental system and members of Parliament.

Building national capacity for achieving policy coherence was a priority for Mauritius. Kenya and Niger called for increased support and scaling up of international cooperation to strengthen national capacities. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems was also considered a priority in Malawi and Seychelles.

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/capacity-building>

²⁰⁰ Capacity-Building | United Nations

²⁰¹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26360VNR_2020_Kenya_Report.pdf



As countries continue to devolve power to local authorities to implement the 2030 Agenda, weak institutional capacity in sub-national and local governments was highlighted as an impediment. The VNRs highlighted the need for more capacity development for local governments²⁰². Capacity building for public and civil servants and strengthening of national institutional frameworks is needed²⁰³.

Responding to the Capacity Development Gap

Activities towards bridging these gaps were usually done in conjunction with UN partner agencies²⁰⁴ and knowledge institutions. Sudan invests in the use of information and data to generate new knowledge for the SDGs, especially by engaging researchers in universities²⁰⁵. By partnering with civil society organisations, Malawi enhanced capacity development aimed at eliminating violence against women and children²⁰⁶. Capacity building training was also undertaken towards violence and human trafficking in Lesotho²⁰⁷ and strengthening resilience in Mozambique (as illustrated in Box 5).

Several countries focused on capacity building to develop local responses to climate change²⁰⁸, with Tanzania, through the Local/Decentralized Climate Finance project (2016–2018), helping small holder farmers, pastoralists and fishermen acquire the basic technical skills required to make informed decisions in their income generating activities as well as engaging women and traditional leaders in planning²⁰⁹.

Box 5: Mozambique: Gender Sensitive Capacity Building

Quelimane, Mozambique, shifted from focusing only on poverty reduction and socio-economic development to a climate compatible development approach in which these aspects are integrated into the local adaptation mechanisms.

The approach was focused on community engagement during planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of the Coastal City Adaptation Project (CCAP), supported by USAID.

By planting new mangroves in the poorest parts of town, the project aims to yield opportunities for social justice and financial gain for the predominantly female residents of these areas who were trained and tasked to manage the seedlings and plants²¹⁰.

Source: ICLEI, 2018

²⁰² 27027VNR_Synthesis_Report_2020.pdf (un.org)

²⁰³ 27027VNR_Synthesis_Report_2020.pdf (un.org)

²⁰⁴ 27027VNR_Synthesis_Report_2020.pdf (un.org)

²⁰⁵ N1816664.pdf (mfa.gr)

²⁰⁶ 26317MalawiVNRReport.pdf (un.org)

²⁰⁷ VNR Report 7th July 2019.pdf (un.org)

²⁰⁸ 27027VNR_Synthesis_Report_2020.pdf (un.org)

²⁰⁹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23429VNR_Report_Tanzania_2019.pdf

²¹⁰ Local Government for Sustainability [ICLEI] (2018). Resilient Cities Report 2018: Tracking progress on the resilience targets of 11. RC2018_Report.pdf (iclei.org).

Network Building

Countries noted the pivotal role of non- state actors and the importance of capacity development for civil society. In fact, over the past 50 years, Mauritius has focused on building partnerships among civil society, the public and private sectors and academia towards achieving a people-focused development and consolidated social cohesion²¹¹. Furthermore, Mauritius built similar partnerships at the bilateral and regional levels. Mauritius and Seychelles were the first countries to make a joint submission on the sharing of maritime space at the regional level²¹². Mauritius also exemplified how these partnerships can have a catalytic role in the successful advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals as part of its broader national agenda, which encompasses Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the African Peer Review Mechanism²¹³.

International and domestic partnerships, including with the UN, were highlighted by several countries, including South Africa and Sierra Leone, to expand partnerships²¹⁴. International networks such as C40, ICLEI work directly with local authorities while academic platforms like the DAAD funded SDG Graduate school programme, Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS), African Urban Research Initiative also offer opportunities for peer learning and collaborative activities towards achieving the NUA.

To continuously strengthen capacities to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals in policies, planning, budgeting, implementation and reviews, Kenya has undertaken training of trainers at the national level and subnational level²¹⁵. In Malawi, education efforts are focused on building and equipping new classrooms, training teachers, updating the curriculum and engaging girls in teaching. Those efforts have resulted in an increase in the net schooling rate from 86.4 per cent (2016) to 93.5 percent (2019)²¹⁶.

4.3. Information Technology and Innovation

Technology as an SDG Catalyst

Technology is considered to be a cross cutting means of implementing the SDGs²¹⁷, underpinning the achievement of every goal. All three pillars of sustainable development - economic prosperity, social inclusion and environmental protection – need ICT as a key catalyst²¹⁸.

Across Africa, Science Technology and Innovation (STI) have greatly shaped society and the environment. Countries noted that applying science and technology to sustainable

²¹¹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23462Mauritius_VNR_Report_2019.pdf

²¹² <https://thecommonwealth.org/project/mauritius-and-seychelles-secure-and-manage-joint-seabed-rights-through-continental-shelf>

²¹³ [252302019_VNR_Synthesis_Report_DESA.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pubs/252302019_VNR_Synthesis_Report_DESA.pdf) (un.org)


²¹⁴ Microsoft Word - 11.06.21SierraLeone_Final_2021VNR_Report (un.org)

²¹⁵ [2020_VNR_Final_Kenya_Popular Version.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pubs/2020_VNR_Final_Kenya_Popular_Version.pdf) (un.org)

²¹⁶ [26317MalawiVNRReport.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pubs/26317MalawiVNRReport.pdf) (un.org)

²¹⁷ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=9502&menu=1565&nr=10>

²¹⁸ <https://www.ericsson.com/assets/local/news/2016/05/ict-sdg.pdf>



development challenges can play a transformative role in alleviating poverty, advancing human rights, and accelerating inclusive economic growth. The NUA explicitly encourages the use of technology for urban-rural interactions and connectivity, evaluating and improving integrated planning, innovations in transport, and to make information and communications technologies accessible to the public. There is a need for policies and financing instruments that include the promotion and development of new technologies in all sectors. E-government strategies, as well as citizen-centric digital governance tools, which should include capacity-development programmes around innovation and technology are integral to opening up governance and building resilience while promoting sustainability. This becomes more urgent given the experience from the COVID-19 pandemic and new realities of Working from Home and online learning.

Data collection, management and use is also important for development and investment of urban projects. In most African cities data collection is inconsistent or all together lacking. Technology can play a supportive role in data collection. Mobile phone data and satellite imagery can be utilised to capture more detailed assessment regularly even at the neighbourhood level, as well as measuring needs data should be used to measure impact, creating reliable indicators to encourage investment.

Countries reported that building capacity for STI is crucial for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda but is a long-term process. Apart from capacity for STEM skills, countries noted other aspects that would require capacity development related to STI policy making, with enhanced inclusiveness through a multi-stakeholder approach. Effective implementation of measures to achieve the SDGs and the transformative commitments requires stronger global partnerships to garner increased resources and improve access to technology and good practices (South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo).

The international partnership is important to develop a coherent approach to STEM education standards for graduate attributes and professional competencies that are internationally recognized and supported. Mauritius, Botswana, Malawi, Kenya, South Africa and others have called for concerted actions to accelerate international technology transfer to accelerate the empowerment of vulnerable sectors. They note that many SDG targets can only be achieved through transformative technological innovations. Many of such technologies are already available, but need to be applied at scale, adapted to the country and regional realities

Countries emphasized the need to enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on, and access to, science, technology and innovation. Countries also stressed the need to enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the UN level, and through the global technology facilitation mechanism. Iceland stated that knowledge sharing and the distribution of environmentally friendly technologies to developing countries must be promoted.



Digital Inclusion

Sub-Saharan Africa is sprinting toward digitization. This can be seen by the growth of mobile phone sales, internet usage, usage of online payment platforms and the number of tech hubs on the continent. Internet penetration in sub-Saharan Africa has grown tenfold since the early 2000s²¹⁹, with the region being home to nearly half of the world's mobile money accounts in 2018. The growth of tech hubs has been substantial with 643 in 2020.²²⁰

On the continent digital technology is driving change and therefore building resilience. Expansion of digital financial services has been notable, fostering greater financial inclusion. The percentage of Kenyan adults with access to basic financial services has grown from 26 to 83 per cent in approximately 15 years due to the introduction of Mpesa. In Nigeria the ICT sector contributes almost 14 percent to the country's GDP²²¹ and in 2020, Nigeria was the third highest trader in cryptocurrency (generating \$400 million).

South Africa is the only sub-Saharan African country to have launched commercial 5G services. Due to great advancements in fiber optic networks across the country, the price of internet bandwidth dropped²²². However, the cost of digital technologies continues to be high across the region, limiting the number of people who can access them²²³. Equatorial Guinea has the highest internet data price in the world.

The private sector has performed well in developing ICT infrastructure and pushing investment into the sector. To see continued growth in this sector governments, need to encourage and incentivize the private sector. Continued investment in infrastructure assets (both traditional digital-friendly infrastructure such as reliable electricity), digital-ready IT infrastructure such as fibre optics) and digital skills need to be made with particular attention paid to rural areas to close the digital divide.

Internet shutdowns also limit social inclusion and slow down progress on the ease of doing business²²⁴. Countries like Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Chad have had several internet shutdowns and in June 2021, the Nigerian government shutdown access to the social media platform Twitter²²⁵. In the light of closing civic spaces in recent times, Twitter has been used for effective citizen mobilization around causes²²⁶ such as #Bringbackourgirls and #End Sars in Nigeria, #Feesmustfall in South Africa and #FreeBobiWine in Uganda²²⁷.

²¹⁹<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/06/15/na061520-digitalizing-sub-saharan-africa-hopes-and-hurdles>

²²⁰ <https://briterbridges.com/innovation-maps>

²²¹ <https://uschamberofcommerce.swoogo.com/2020NigeriaDigitalEconomyConference>

²²² <https://www.businessinsider.co.za/heres-how-internet-costs-in-sa-compare-to-the-rest-of-the-world-2020-12>

²²³ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1180939/average-price-for-mobile-data-in-africa/>

²²⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-47734843>

²²⁵ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-06-05/twitter-shuttered-in-nigeria-after-removing-president-s-tweet>

²²⁶ Lawanson.T & Udoma-Ejorh. O (2020) How Smart is Smart City Lagos? Willis. K and Aurigi. A (eds) The Routledge Companion to Smart Cities. London: Routledge, Chapter 10. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315178387>

²²⁷ <https://theconversation.com/social-media-mobilisation-is-a-bright-spot-in-ugandas-dark-bobi-wine-saga-102273>



Leveraging Technology in Pandemic Times

Technology is identified as key to addressing some of the economic and social fallouts of the COVID-19 pandemic²²⁸.

Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa deployed technology to support their COVID-19 efforts. Rwanda, introduced robots as part of their fight against COVID-19²²⁹. The robots have the capacity to screen 50 to 500 patients per minute, deliver food, administer temperature checks, monitor patient status, and keep medical records of COVID-19 patients. Telemedicine across the sub-region also enjoyed a boost²³⁰. With some of the worst doctor-patient ratios in the world, Africa is proving fertile ground for telehealth providers. In fact, in Rwanda, daily consultations of about 3000 in March 2020 before the pandemic grew to about 5000 by August 2021, while Uganda saw a 500 per cent increase in phone and video consultations in 2020²³¹.

Kenya also launched the enhanced eCitizen portal, to continue delivering government services during the health crisis. In Nigeria as in many other countries social media was deployed for health messaging and public advisories by governments and for social interaction among citizens.

During the COVID-19 lockdown period in many countries, tele-working did not see the uptake needed to keep businesses running like in other parts of the world. Less reliable internet connectivity and electricity supply contributed to the inability to transition to tele-working and truly leveraging on the potential technology has. Moreover, many workers are in the informal economy and are unable to provide services from home. The economic and social effects of COVID-19 also highlighted the digital divide, with regards to public information and access to care.

Deploying Innovative Learning Processes

Skills development and capacity building should go hand in hand with the development of the ICT sector. Improving core education as a basis for continued learning alongside focused investments in digital skills is necessary. Having a skilled workforce who can take up available jobs in this sector will help reduce unemployment.

²²⁸ <https://institute.global/policy/leveraging-tech-developing-world-covid-19-and-beyond>

²²⁹ <https://www.afro.who.int/news/robots-use-rwanda-fight-against-covid-19#:~:text=Onper cent20Tuesdayper cent20Cper cent20Mayper cent2019per cent20at, Belgianper cent20companyper cent20specialisedper cent20inper cent20robotics>

²³⁰ Chitungo, I., Mhango, M., Mbunge, E., Dzobo, M., Musuka, G., & Dzinamarira, T. (2021). Utility of telemedicine in sub-Saharan Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic. A rapid review. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 1– 11. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.297>

²³¹ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-20/covid-induced-telehealth-boom-in-east-africa-is-picking-up-pace>

Box 6: Senegal - ICT and Higher Education Through Online Learning

Faced with a growing number of students seeking university education and not enough spaces, Senegal integrates distance learning with higher education by establishing the Virtual University of Senegal (UVS) in 2013. UVS aims to provide young Senegalese with equitable access to higher education. Within five years, enrolment had grown to over 28,000

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI), has provided open digital spaces called Espace Numérique Ouvert (ENO). The ENOs are physical spaces where students can access digital materials for students and provide ICT equipment.

In 2020, UVS partnered with Orange (a technology company) to launch Orange Campus Africa, specifically focused on courses related to technology and the digital economy.

This initiative strengthens regional development, revitalising particularly rural areas. It reduces inequality of access to higher education; and the digital divide. It also increases access to higher education and youth employability. With these it supports Senegal's achievement of SDG 1-5, 8-10, 16-17 and Agenda 2063.

Source: Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium²³²

The Sierra Leonean Government established a National Civil Service Capacity Enhancement scheme and a Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) in 2018. DSTI is leading the transformation towards e-governance in Sierra Leone and has developed and tested three web and mobile applications as part of the Government's Digitization Initiative. It also developed a prototype for an integrated GIS mapping solution of government services and infrastructure in collaboration with several ministries.

Towards improving the capacity of technology and data usage. Ghana, in 2019, developed a National Data for Sustainable Development Road Map with three priority objectives: filling data gaps, encouraging data use, and strengthening the entire data ecosystem. Administrative data are being harnessed to generate timely and disaggregated information for monitoring.

The reviews of Lesotho, Tanzania, South Africa highlighted science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills as key elements for developing STI capacity. There is a significant shortfall in the countries in the STEM skills, with a gender imbalance being particularly evident (Tanzania). In many societies, there are still barriers that prevent girls and women from receiving STI-focused education. Many women in STI-related careers also do not advance as much as their male counterparts²³³. There is therefore a need for gender mainstreaming to be a key part of STI interventions such as capacity building programs

²³² Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium https://www.tipconsortium.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/4575_TIPC_policy_brief_03_2nd.pdf

²³³ https://www.aasciences.africa/sites/default/files/Publications/Womenper_cent20inper_cent20STEMper_cent20Report_Final.pdf



4.4. The City's Role

Cities as Engines of Sustainable Development

SDG 11 affirms the role of cities as engines of sustainable development. Cities can provide the much-needed interlinkages and integrated approaches across sectors and goals. The NUA's transformative commitments thus represent a pivotal first step towards integrating sustainable urban development into the global framework for action at a recognisable spatial context²³⁴.

Furthermore, Urban areas are the backdrop²³⁵ which commits UN Member States to “work closely on implementation with regional and local authorities”, and is a positive sign that the weight of (urban) local government action will be taken into account in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, it behooves cities to position themselves as catalysts for the implementation of sustainability. By getting urban development right, cities can quicken progress towards realising the SDGs, offering jobs and better livelihoods, promoting social inclusion, economic development, living standards and the efficient use of resources.

Across Africa, this has proven to be true, given the pace of urban development and the significant role cities play as catalysts for innovation, wealth creation and development

Cities as Catalysts for Innovation

Cities have been the engines for changes to advance resilience and sustainability. Cities are the testing ground for transformational ideas like the sharing economy, addressing urban challenges to re-shape living spaces. Innovation drives cities, and this has a direct gain to sustainable development.

The technology exchange and transfer of affordable, scalable solutions available in cities can increase collaboration between regions and provide a boost to developing and developed economies. Along this line, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit (2015) established a technology facilitation mechanism to enhance the production and application of innovative technologies for the SDGs²³⁶. As urban areas are critical areas of technology uptake in, e.g., transportation, housing, mobility, technology transfer through public-private community partnerships, it is paramount to expedite the replication and scale-up of solutions²³⁷

In the knowledge economy, capital follows people, and people want to live in proactive cities in the areas stipulated in the NUA. It is imperative for cities to position and leverage existing technological sophistication to implement the NUA successfully. While cities like Nairobi and Kigali are leveraging this successfully, others are lagging behind due to scale and lack of institutional support for the enabling infrastructure to trigger this.

²³⁴ ICLEI. [ICLEI-Briefing-Sheets-02-Cities-and-the-Sustainable-Development-Goals.pdf \(local2030.org\)](https://www.iclei.org/~/media/Files/2017/02/ICLEI-Briefing-Sheets-02-Cities-and-the-Sustainable-Development-Goals.pdf)

²³⁵ United Nations. (2015). Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

²³⁶ [United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015 .: Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/knowledgeplatform/)

²³⁷ Local Governments for Sustainability [ICLEI], (2015). Implementing the SDGs in cities. ICLEI-SDGs-Briefing-Sheets-05-Implementing-the-SDGs-in-cities.pdf



Cities As Hubs Hub for Data Generation

A significant impediment to implementing the NUA is the lack of available data for measurement, monitoring and evaluation at the local level. As most social and environmental indicators are aggregated concepts defined by statistical authorities for the national level, various approaches are needed to disaggregate existing indicators while advancing the development of bottom-up indicators locally. In many African cities – birth and death data – are unavailable, thus making planning based on actual trends in population growth difficult.

Fortunately, innovative data collection practices – from citizen science to satellite images – can create large quantities of new data while simultaneously giving rise to fresh understanding of the urban scale²³⁸. Cities are at the heart of finding, aggregating and providing these data.

Leaning on crowdsourced data, big data, internet of things and new technologies present a paradigm shift to unlock new perspectives and opportunities for local and national governments, and allow cities to ensure that the evidence base for producing urban solutions are accurate, relevant and reliable.

Cities as Agents for Collaboration and Cooperation


One of the city's roles is the mobilization of actors, and to successfully implement NUA calls for vertical integration of cities through multi-level governance. It implies a better connection across the different levels of government. To effectively attain this, sub-Saharan cities need to ensure that actors exchange, plan, and coordinate planning, implementation, and reporting activities while sharing financial resources and reporting for results. If the city vertically aligns itself to the strength of local leadership, the generation of bottom-up methods for decisions and consultative processes would go a long way to distinguish and implement solutions collaboratively

Strengthening the capacity of local governments as well as ensuring decentralization of power and basic service provision will go a long way towards ensuring that no one is left behind. For cities to be better placed, answers need to be provided to the persistent questions around building capacities, mobilising resources, access to technology and innovation and qualified human resources, especially in smaller and intermediate African cities where urban growth is largest.

Partnerships

Partnerships are required if meaningful progress will be made towards the actualisation fo the NUA in Africa. Partnerships should be premised on decentralised cooperation, NGOs, and humanitarian organisations by a range of intervention schemes. For cities to be more active in implementing NUA projects, the city must leverage the full involvement of local stakeholders (NGOs, community, academia, private sector). This approach should create ownership and co-responsibility among all actors for the effective and reallocation of resources centralized . Cooperation partnerships are required to establish platforms for local

²³⁸ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/Data-for-Africa-description.html>



and regional governments to exchange knowledge and expertise, give professional support, connect communities, and stir exchanges among citizens, Civil Society Organisations [CSOs], the private sector, and knowledge institutions.

Local, regional and international partnerships are required to address diverse challenges and provide peer-learning opportunities. Leveraging on global partnership at the regional scale is also necessary to generate contextualised solutions to global challenges that have localised nuances. Several networks and international organisations are already facilitating city-level action in low carbon development (C40) and nature-based solutions (ICLEI). Resilient Cities Network, UCLGA Africa etc. are some organisations that act as multipliers for good practice exchange, methodologies, frameworks, and tools to mainstream and scale up the results achieved at the city level²³⁹.

Capacity Development

Notwithstanding their level of development, cities are elaborate structures with a glut of intertwined problems and solutions that require adequate and relevant skill sets. The capability to execute these decisions demands achieving, strengthening, and controlling knowledge and skills across sectors. Promoting the adoption of indigenous knowledge systems, community learning processes and upscaling the capacity of municipal governments to respond to and manage urban solutions is critical to advancing the capacity required for diverse local actors to make collaborative decisions towards implementing the NUA.

In this direction, sub-Saharan cities need to build endogenous capacities within local and regional governments for institution-building, policy analysis and development management. This enhances the actor's strength to address long-term challenges rather than focusing solely on pressing problems. In achieving this, cities must be equipped with specific knowledge and skills to accomplish tasks more efficiently with a change of mentality as well²⁴⁰.

Concerning endogenous capacity building, peer-to-peer learning and capacity building necessary for supporting leadership for city administration is imperative. The city must leverage this to effectively enhance service delivery, change workstreams, address demands, shortfalls and encourage problem-based learning. The essence is for local and regional authorities of similar backgrounds to come together while maximising management, political and territorial impact. This addresses the issues around inclusion and ending poverty as stipulated in the NUA. Programmes such as training of urban administrators and local government staff in public finance reporting and management, basic and higher education reforms in Sierra Leone and Senegal as well as the more grounded Community led Sanitation programmes in Ghana offer opportunities that other cities can learn from.

²³⁹ Local Governments for Sustainability [ICLEI], (2015). Implementing the SDGs in cities. ICLEI-SDGs-Briefing-Sheets-05-Implementing-the-SDGs-in-cities.pdf

²⁴⁰ <http://www.unep.org/documents.multilingual/default.asp?DocumentID=>



Cities as Centres for Wealth Creation and Shared Prosperity

While domestic resources have been the largest source of financing for development²⁴¹, all urban stakeholders have the capacity to mobilise financing and manage investments aimed at promoting sustainable development. While the stakeholders have various interests, expectations, and agendas, they often share their territories' sustainable and inclusive development. Their participation in multiple stages (definition, funding, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) can be distinguished according to their abilities and resources (technological, financial, knowledge-based skills, innovation and technical).

For local and regional plans to correctly exhibit the local needs of the city, public institutions can advance the engagement of citizens, especially the most vulnerable groups, by mechanisms that promote their contribution. Noteworthy, when citizens are included at the planning phase of a plan, they are regularly more enthusiastic about participating in the implementing and monitoring stages.

Financing urban Development

Realising the vision of the 2030 Agenda entails meaningful financial resources, with currently calculated costs being estimated at trillions of dollars. Sadly, many cities do not have mechanisms in place to obtain development financing. Very few African cities have been able to raise municipal bonds or other investments required for infrastructure and/or development. Furthermore, where municipal bonds are issued, they often focus on the largest cities and are often not a choice for smaller communities.


These financial impediments can be reversed to opportunities only if sub-Saharan cities adopt administrative changes, improve transparent planning and accountability, and execute efficient monetary administration. Intensifying cooperation with national governments, partnerships with private sectors and research, and involving citizens in crowdfunding schemes will help cities access finances to create local solutions to financial challenges²⁴².

Regarding partnerships for funding SDG projects, public-private partnerships (PPP) were noted to play key roles in supporting infrastructure investments many cities. Furthermore, countries that focus on expanding access to finance for MSMEs and even financial inclusion often focus on cities due as critical to unlock resources for sustainable development. Ghana, Rwanda, Tanzania also reported that strategies to support start-ups emanated through business development services and funding, especially for the youth and women in urban areas.

For cities to be better placed financially, local budgets should efficiently align with identified priorities established in the local or regional development plans. It implies allocating or re-allocating available resources to meet priorities aligned with the Agenda. It is also essential to promote management potentials within institutions to efficiently utilise available resources.

²⁴¹Galvanising actions for the Global Goals http://www.cib-uclg.org/sites/default/files/challenges_2016_global_goals_mackie_deneckere_ecdpm.pdf

²⁴² UN Habitat. ROADMAP for localizing the SDGs: Implementation and monitoring at sub-national level. [818_11195_commitment_ROADMAP_LOCALIZING_SDGS.pdf \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pubs/818_11195_commitment_ROADMAP_LOCALIZING_SDGS.pdf)



Several sub-Saharan countries have reported on measures taken to strengthen domestic resource mobilization and improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection. This includes fiscal reforms, strengthening audit and enhancing efficiency of tax administrations, Rwanda), tax enforcement and the and promotion of digital payment schemes²⁴³.

Leveraging Remittances from the Diaspora

The African diaspora can play a significant part in implementing the SDG, with remittances serving as an efficient financial means to realize the Agenda associated projects at the local level, especially in health, education and housing. Besides, their contribution can also strengthen trade ties, knowledge and technological exchange essential for developing local projects. Now, the city must position itself by harnessing remittances, which needs local understanding and dedication to work²⁴⁴. Furthermore, if the wealth of knowledge of the diaspora is leveraged, accessing finance to implement SDG will be achieved. Likewise, alternative finance channels should not be neglected: crowdfunding, for instance, raises funds through small contributions from diverse individuals and organization's that are focused on specific home communities ²⁴⁵.

Cities and Sustainable Urban Futures

In conclusion, if cities change, so does the world. The global shift to urban areas presents risks and opportunities: in Africa, this is especially so. Cities are vulnerable to the projected consequences of unmanaged urbanisation and also have the potential to trigger unprecedented waves of prosperity and sustainability it managed right.

When examining the scale of urbanisation over the next 15 years, with 60 percent of the areas yet to be occupied in 2030 yet to be built, there is no doubt that local governments have sizable motivation to make the NUA a success. If nations and international actors sufficiently empower local governments and other urban actors, cities can be the destination where the 2030 Agenda's goals are linked and achieved.


Concluding Remarks and Lessons for Policy

Through the various case studies drawn from the VLRs and VNRs, as well as the NUA platform and other institutional and academic sources, this report has assessed the implementation of the NUA in sub-Saharan Africa between 2018 and 2021. Particular

²⁴³ [252302019_VNR_Synthesis_Report_DESA.pdf \(un.org\)](#)

²⁴⁴ UN Habitat. ROADMAP for localizing the SDGs: Implementation and monitoring at sub-national level. [818_11195_commitment_ROADMAP_LOCALIZING_SDGS.pdf \(un.org\)](#)

²⁴⁵ [252302019_VNR_Synthesis_Report_DESA.pdf \(un.org\)](#)



focus has been on the NUA's three transformative commitments; *social inclusion and ending poverty; inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all; and environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development.*

The report shows that rapid urbanization across the sub-region persists, accompanied with poverty and inequality – which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. With involuntary migrations to urban areas increasing due to issues of conflict and climate change, and many unable to effectively integrate, new typologies of urban poverty and homelessness are emerging. There is therefore an urgent need to establish platforms for accurate evidence gathering as a precursor to the design and development of practical approaches for urban integration of migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees.

Governments at local, regional and national levels have made considerable progress in addressing various SDGs, through policy formulation, collaboration, programme development and implementation. However, the geographic focus of many of these programmes remain the primate cities – with issues affecting secondary cities which are experiencing the highest population growth rates not sufficiently attended to. While progress has been made across all sectors, there have also been significant shortfalls regarding investments for infrastructure required to address climate change impacts and build resilient futures. While remittances have been an important buffer to households, larger scale investments for enhancing systemic resilience have been limited. Foreign direct investments are thus required for critical infrastructure development across various cities and towns.

Technology is an important opportunity for bridging gaps of learning, information and good governance across Africa. Though the internet penetration is increasing in many countries, the digital divide retains a geographic manifestation. While infrastructure deployment to rural areas is slow, the cost of access is a major barrier even in urban areas. Therefore, policy action is required to ensure that infrastructure and affordability gaps are holistically addressed and that 5G and other enabling technologies are given a rapid footfall on the continent. The opportunities for economic development through technology hubs should be pursued. The NUA as a catalyst for the implementation of the SDGs, alongside Agenda 2063 and other global development agenda provide a coherent framework for systematically achieving sustainable urban development, climate resilience and social sustainability across the African continent. Intentional adherence and contextualization of the commitments is thus a sine qua non for the progressive improvement in the lives of everyday Africans and the enhancement of institutional structures that guarantee same. In implementing this, an incremental approach is required in which better urban futures are imagined at micro and macro levels and systemic changes in governance and investment structures are put in place. Cities must remain at the centre of this agenda as centres of wealth creation, drivers of innovation, cultural integration and solution providers. The monitoring and evaluation of the NUA, SDGs and other cross-cutting agreements should be done through an iterative process that promotes their intricate relationships and highlights the agency, contribution and role of all actors – big and small

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