HOW SECONDARY CITIES ARE MANAGING RURAL-TO-URBAN MIGRATION

Insights into Urban Expansion Planning from Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda

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Kampala, Uganda

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Cities Without Slums

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OBJECTIVE OF THE REPORT

This report provides insights into how secondary cities in the Horn of Africa are approaching challenges related to rural-urban migration.

It is based on a regional dialogue organised by the Cities Alliance Cities and Migration Programme in partnership with New York University (NYU) Marron Institute and Jigjiga University from 23-24 November 2020 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Kampala, Uganda. The Cities and Migration Programme is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

SUMMARY

Rural-to-urban migration is one of the major dynamics secondary cities across the developing world have to manage. It is not the only reason cities are growing fast; natural growth and expanding jurisdictions are also factors. Migration is, however, a primary cause for the growth of secondary cities, especially in Ethiopia and Uganda.

With the support and partnership of the SDC, the Cities Alliance Global Programme for Cities and Migration has identified a promising approach to support cities in low-income countries to better manage rural-urban migration: urban expansion planning.

From 23-24 November, Cities Alliance, SDC, the New York University (NYU) Marron Institute, and Jigjiga University organised a regional dialogue on rural-to-urban migration and urban expansion planning to share experiences in the Horn of Africa and explore how to replicate the approach.

The dialogue was an opportunity for cities and ministries from Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda to learn from each other and identify the way forward for designing solid urban expansion plans that respond to the realities of each city and build partnerships to facilitate implementation. It also included concrete options for financing – a key concern for the cities.

KEY MESSAGES

- All cities confirmed that they are experiencing rapid rural-to-urban migration and require approaches to managing this growth.

- It was reaffirmed that rural-to-urban migration is one of the major drivers of urban growth for secondary cities in the Horn of Africa, along with natural growth and expanded jurisdictions.

- Urban expansion planning "makes room" and thereby supports equitable access to a city for all, with greater opportunities for social and economic inclusion.

- Participants concluded that urban expansion planning is an effective approach to proactively managing urban growth that is simple, cost effective, and delivers results.

- With some technical guidance, cities have the capacity to implement urban expansion planning.

- Financing urban expansion planning is within the reach of cities and is not solely dependent on international funding or donors.

- Urban expansion planning needs political will, which the dialogue supports by presenting evidence-based knowledge, offering peer-to-peer exchange among cities, and providing the space for cities and national governments to build the necessary partnerships.

- The approach is readily adaptable to local realities. Cities can pursue the options that work within their local legal, political, and economic contexts.

- Migrants tend to settle in the urban periphery. Proactive urban expansion planning can help cities integrate these migrants by providing them with access to the city through a basic grid of arterial roads on the urban periphery before it is developed.

"We have many factors driving urbanisation in Uganda, but the aspect of rural-urban migration is critical. This workshop comes at the right time, when the country is grappling with a high level of urbanisation."

– Mr Joseph Pade, *Commissioner of Urban Development for the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development*

"Rural-urban migration is a major reason why cities in Ethiopia and Uganda are growing. Three quarters of their urban growth is informal, a community-driven process."

– Mr Patrick Lamson-Hall, *Urban Planner and Research Scholar, New York University*

"

Urbanisation and migration are important and closely interconnected demographic processes affecting the growth, decline, and the geographic distribution of populations in cities. Urbanisation is defined as the increasing share of population living in urban areas (Poston and Bouvier, 2010). The increase can be due to natural population growth, urban migration, and the expansion of urban boundaries and growth of new urban areas (Tacoli *et. al.*; 2015).

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Cities Alliance is the global partnership fighting urban poverty and promoting the role of cities.

Cities Alliance promotes long-term programmatic approaches that support national and local governments to develop appropriate policy frameworks, strengthen local skills and capacity, undertake strategic city planning, and facilitate investment.

The Cities Alliance Secretariat is hosted by UNOPS, through which the Cities Alliance operates a multi-donor fund supported by an efficient, flexible grant-making mechanism with global reach.

"Planning for future growth is such a key issue and it has often been neglected by local and national policy makers and equally by the international development community. That is why this dialogue is so important."

– William Cobbett, *Cities Alliance former Director*

Cities Alliance Cities and Migration Programme

This programme brings together Cities Alliance members and partners around a common objective: to enable partner cities, local governments, host communities and migrants to manage challenges and leverage opportunities arising from migration to cities in low-income countries for sustainable and inclusive development. It also aims to encourage a positive narrative on urban migration, generate new knowledge, and become a platform for advocating new thinking on migration.

The programme is engaging 14 cities in five countries – Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Somalia, Tunisia, and Uganda – across three regions (the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean).

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

SDC believes migration can contribute to development, and that most migrants contribute through their work to developing the prosperity both of their host country and of their country of origin. Migration is a priority for SDC, which is committed to taking concrete action and promoting global dialogue to make migration safe and bring benefits to all. Its migration programming focuses on five areas: international dialogue on migration, refugees and IDPs, diasporas, labour migration, and shaping Switzerland's foreign policy on migration. A member of Cities Alliance, SDC supported the establishment of the Cities and Migration programme and continues to be a close partner in its initiatives

New York University Marron Institute of Urban Management

The NYU Marron Institute conducts innovative applied research, working with cities to take on critical challenges of urban living. It has four major research programmes, including one dedicated to urban planning. The faculty receives seed funding to develop portfolios of externally-funded projects that have the potential to improve outcomes in cities. One such project is the urban expansion planning approach that is discussed in this report.

Jigjiga University

Founded in 2007, Jigjiga University is located in Jigjiga, the capital of the Ethiopian Somali Region. Cities Alliance and the Jigjiga University Institute for Migration and Displacement Studies are implementing a project to support the Ethiopian Somali regional and local governments to mainstream diaspora engagement in policies, development plans, and approaches to better leverage the important role the diaspora plays in local development.

"If we do not proactively plan our cities in an appropriate way, we have to ask the question: At some point you will have to build roads, you will have to put in power lines and sewers. How do you superimpose that infrastructure on top of informal settlements, without forced removals and destruction of livelihoods?"

– Julian Baskin, *Principal Urban Advisor, Cities Alliance*

HUMAN MOBILITY AND THE NEED FOR PROACTIVE PLANNING

"We at SDC consider human mobility – whether taking place internally, across borders, or internationally – as a main feature of the urban phenomenon. Urbanisation and migration are demographic phenomena that are closely connected, and these interconnections are still to be explored.

Cities are centres of economic, social, and political transformation, and act as magnets for migrants who see urban settings as opportunities to enhance their livelihoods.

Taking also into consideration the forecasted population growth in urban areas that will affect mostly secondary cities in the Global South – in particular, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Horn of Africa – it is of crucial importance to embrace and anticipate proactively those phenomena in urban and territorial planning.

Questions of poverty reduction, inclusive urban growth, social inclusion, and social cohesion depend heavily on how urban centres develop and how

urbanisation is handled. Those are central questions that will be explored during this Regional Dialogue [which] bridges different communities of practitioners and policy makers, the urban planners, the migration specialists, among the many other development profiles relevant to multisectoral urban development.

A joint endeavor is necessary to allow the proactive mainstreaming of migration and mobility into urban planning models which can be a cost-effective way to tackle informality and lead to numerous social and economic benefits, such as facilitated physical and economic connection of the urban periphery, potentially driving the integration of informal areas and new residents.

Over the past year and a half, the Cities and Migration programme identified the urban expansion approach as a promising instrument for improving rural-urban migration management for secondary cities in low-income countries.

From SDC's side, we are committed to leveraging this know-how in relevant migration development forums that are tackling sustainable development in the region."

- Anne Savary, *Programme Manager on Migration and Development, SDC*

URBAN EXPANSION PLANNING

Migration is driving urban population growth in secondary cities. Cities need to plan for their inevitable expansion, and urban expansion planning is a simple, cost-effective approach to doing so.

The urban population is increasing rapidly, with cities in developing countries growing much faster than those in developed/industrialised countries – in some cases quadrupling over a short period of time. Much of that growth is driven by rural-urban migration to secondary cities.

As cities grow in population, they grow in area. In Ethiopia, for example, it is projected that by 2045 cities will increase five times in population and seven times in area. The challenge is how to make room in the city for this population growth and prepare for growth at scale over the next 30 years.

Cities grow either through densification (making room in the existing city), or through urban expansion. The Marron Institute has found that most city growth is through urban expansion; worldwide, of the population that moved to cities between 1990 and 2014, 23% was accommodated in the existing area through densification, and 77% was accommodated through expansion (Angel and Lamson-Hall 2020). That trend is likely to continue over the next 30 years.

The issue is that much of today's growth is disorderly, poorly planned, or unplanned, with migrants (and other new residents) settling wherever they can, often in the urban periphery (Caldeira 2017 and Mabin et al 2013).

For cities to thrive in the long term, they must find a way to include migrants in the urban economy and society to achieve greater social cohesion at the city level. This requires governments to plan for urban expansion and link the places where new residents are likely to settle with the existing city (Gerritse and Arribas-Bel 2018). These linkages shorten travel time for goods and people, creating economic connections and helping integrate informal areas and residents.

Cities Alliance advocates a simple, cost-effective way for cities to proactively plan for their urban expansion: by preparing a grid of arterial roads in the urban periphery before it is developed. The key to the approach is to gauge the amount of land needed and secure the rights of ways before urban development happens. This approach is much cheaper than retrofitting roads and services onto land that has already been developed.

The urban expansion planning approach has been pioneered by Professor Angel Shlomo and his team at the NYU and applied in 18 different cities with the support of Cities Alliance. It is now being extended to nine cities in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Uganda within the context of rural-urban migration.

Guiding principles of urban expansion planning

Mr Patrick Lamson-Hall, Urban Planner and Research Scholar at the Marron Institute, laid out the basic principles that guide the urban expansion planning approach:

1. **Urban expansion is inevitable.** No society has ever contained the growth of cities, whether driven by migration or natural growth. The only pragmatic thing to do is to plan for this growth and accommodate the expansion that is taking place.

2. **Cities must maintain population densities in a sustainable range.** When densities of urban residents become too high, especially in developing countries, it means there is a shortage of accessible land for development. In this case, more land should be made accessible so cities can decongest. Density that is too low is usually the result of laws or policies restricting the size of a building on a plot or limiting the height of a building. This means eliminating the restrictions that are keeping density low.

3. **Land markets must be accessible.** Actions should be avoided that restrict the supply of land; migrants and poor residents already struggle to access decent housing. Cities need access to land the most when they are growing rapidly.

4. **Land must be well connected to the existing urban fabric.** Corridors should be laid out that connect the low-income areas so new and old residents can access services and jobs throughout the city. The key to this is identifying and securing corridors of land before development happens, creating a skeleton the city can grow into and a line for public works.

The methodology

Mr Lamson-Hall outlined the four steps that comprise the urban expansion planning methodology: predict, control, preserve, and plan.

1. Predict. Figure out how much population growth the city is likely to face, both by migration and natural growth. This involves studying demographics, satellite imagery, and anticipating the amount of land that the city will most likely consume based on actual trends.

2. Control. Identify an expansion area where this growth can take place and make sure the city is able to plan that area legally for the next 30 years of growth.

3. Preserve: Map out the environment so that growth will not take place in environmentally sensitive or hazardous areas and incorporate them into the plan as no-build zones.

4. Plan. Prepare a grid of arterial roads. These are the corridors of land that can carry trunk infrastructure, water, sewage, electricity, and eventually public transportation.

Once the planning is complete, the next step is to acquire the land for the grid over five years before development takes place or squatting and incursions happen. Then, the arterial road grid should be marked, such as through trees.

Mr Joseph Walter Pade, the Commissioner for Urban Development in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development in the Government of Uganda, immediately reacted to the approach and signaled an interest in institutionalising it for all 15 of Uganda's new cities. Six weeks after the Regional Dialogue took place, meetings were held with the newly upgraded cities to see how expansion planning can be integrated into the new Master Plan development.

"What role do the communities play in urban expansion planning? How are they included?"

– Ms Sarah Nandudu,
  Slum Dwellers Federation, Uganda

Jinja mayor Majid Batambuze – who also serves as chairman of Urban Authorities Association of Uganda (UAAU), a union of all cities, municipalities, and towns of Uganda – was intrigued by the urban expansion planning approach and requested support from the Cities & Migration Programme so that Ugandan cities could apply it.
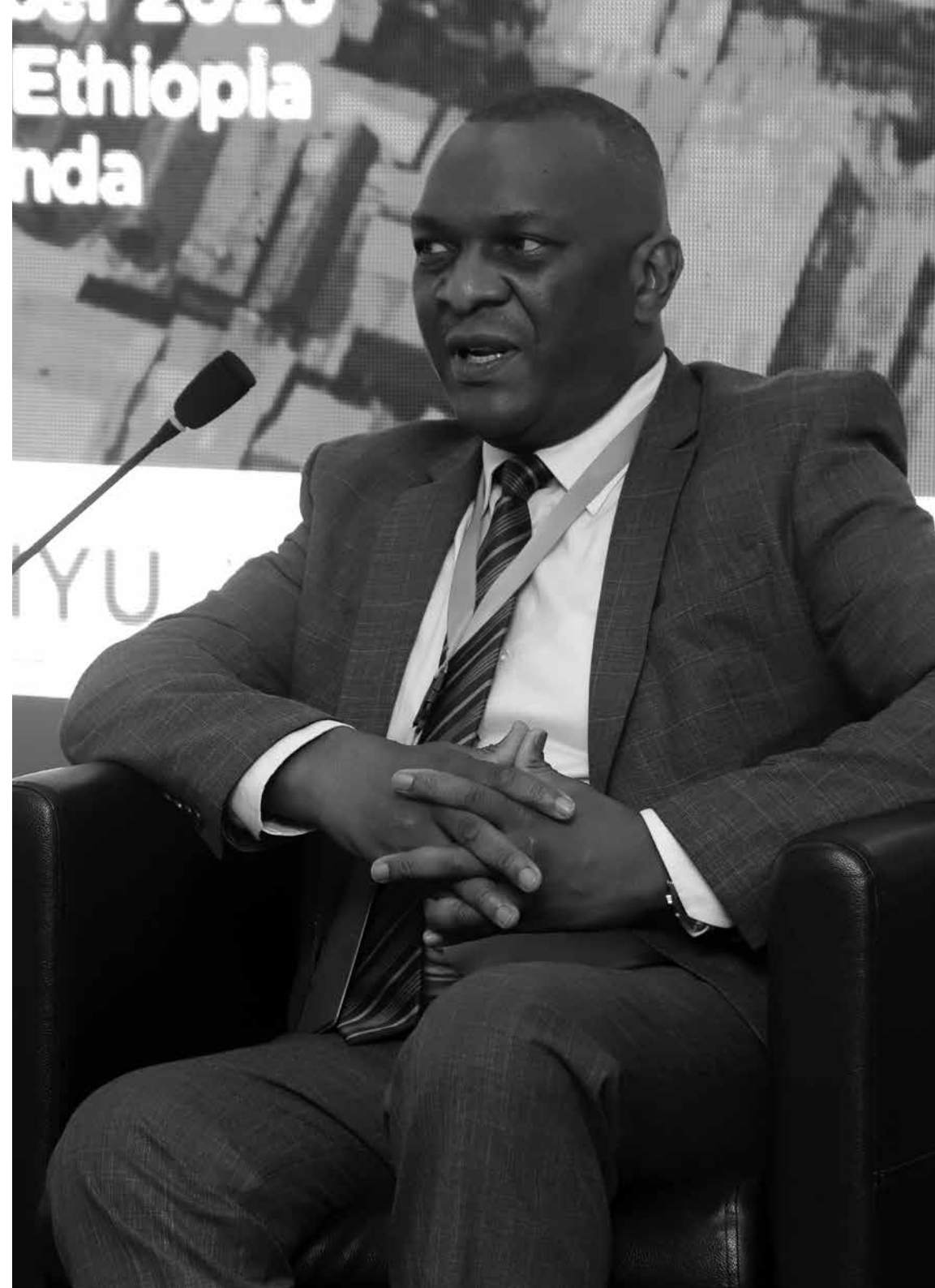
CASE STUDIES FROM ETHIOPIA AND COLOMBIA

Ethiopia

The methodology was first piloted in 2013 in four Ethiopian cities: Adama, Bahir Dar, Mekelle, and Hawassa, and then replicated across other interested secondary cities. The initiative was initiated by the Ministry of Urban Development, the regional bureaus, and supported by NYU and Cities Alliance.

In Ethiopia, the methodology has proven to work and have a real impact. Within nine months, the cities had their plans approved and their boundaries expanded by regional governments. Two to three years after undertaking the planning exercise, cities were able to have 570 km of arterial roads constructed and protected, and the work remains ongoing.

They are also starting to see other benefits as well, such as less informality, lower housing costs, better access to services, and revenue expansion.

Hawassa was one of the cities that piloted the urban expansion planning approach. Mr Biru Wolde, former city manager of Hawassa, shared six ways his city has benefited:

1. Advance planning helped the city integrate its planning approaches to accommodate projected population growth, primarily driven by rural-to-urban migration. Hawassa developed a 30-year urban expansion plan that has been integrated into its 10-year structural plan, which in turn is aligned with the expansion plan. This has helped the city embark on large urban projects such as an airport and an industrial park that provide essential jobs for the new, growing population.

2. Protection of Hawassa Lake. The lake is mostly surrounded by rural areas, and the city is creating an arterial road grid with drainage lines that prevents waste water from flowing into the lake and therefore helps people living downstream accessing clean water.

3. Alignment with the Universal Rural Road Access Programme. Hawassa's expansion plans are aligned with the Ethiopian government's large-scale programme to connect rural areas with all-weather roads for better access to services and transportation. The alignment has helped Hawassa reduce the compensation costs for acquiring the land for its arterial grid.

4. Access to services and economic opportunity. Hawassa's water and electrical supply lines are aligned with the arterial grid. These identified blocks have helped facilitate large projects, such as housing as well as commercial and social services for new and old city residents.

5. An integrated urban transportation system. The city built an industrial park which offers good jobs for the rural populations. With the plan, the city laid out transportation so that low-income workers in the periphery can easily access the industrial park and other areas of the city for employment.

6. Land supply for different land uses has increased.

Mr Wolde said that the urban expansion planning has increased the rate and base of revenue for Hawassa. When the city started building roads, it attracted businesses and investment. In addition, informal settlements have been regularised. The plan has also helped increase job opportunities for young people in rural areas, who can come into the city for work and go back to their homes thanks to good roads that foster rural-urban connectivity.

"This planning tool has resulted in less informality, lower housing costs, more access to services, and a larger number of formal sector jobs because businesses had more land to expand."

– Ms Aisha Mohammed, *Minister for Urban Development and Construction in Ethiopia*

Colombia

Juan Nicolas Galarza Sanchez, Deputy Minister of the Colombian Ministry for Environment and Sustainable Urban Development, shared some experiences from Colombia's urban expansion planning initiatives.

Using the methodology set out by NYU, Colombia identified a list of five cities that had rapid population growth, forecasted how much land would be needed over 30 years, and designed an arterial network of roads.

Once they finished the design of the arterial network of roads, the cities began considering how to engage landowners. The local governments feared that property owners would charge exorbitant prices for the city to purchase a portion of land and decided to meet with a small group of landowners along one of the main corridors slated for intervention.

Surprisingly, the local governments found that property owners were very willing to give land for one simple reason: a well-connected plot with good access to infrastructure has a higher market value.

Mr Galarza advised looking at different legal and financial systems in order to arrange a fair compensation scheme that is workable. The market works, and there are good economic incentives for the landowners to engage with cities in urban expansion planning.

"The landowners quickly realised that if they gave away maybe five, eight, or ten percent of their parcel, the value of the remainder of their plot increased in an amount that was higher than the value of the land that was taken by the road. There's a clear incentive for them to engage in the initiative."
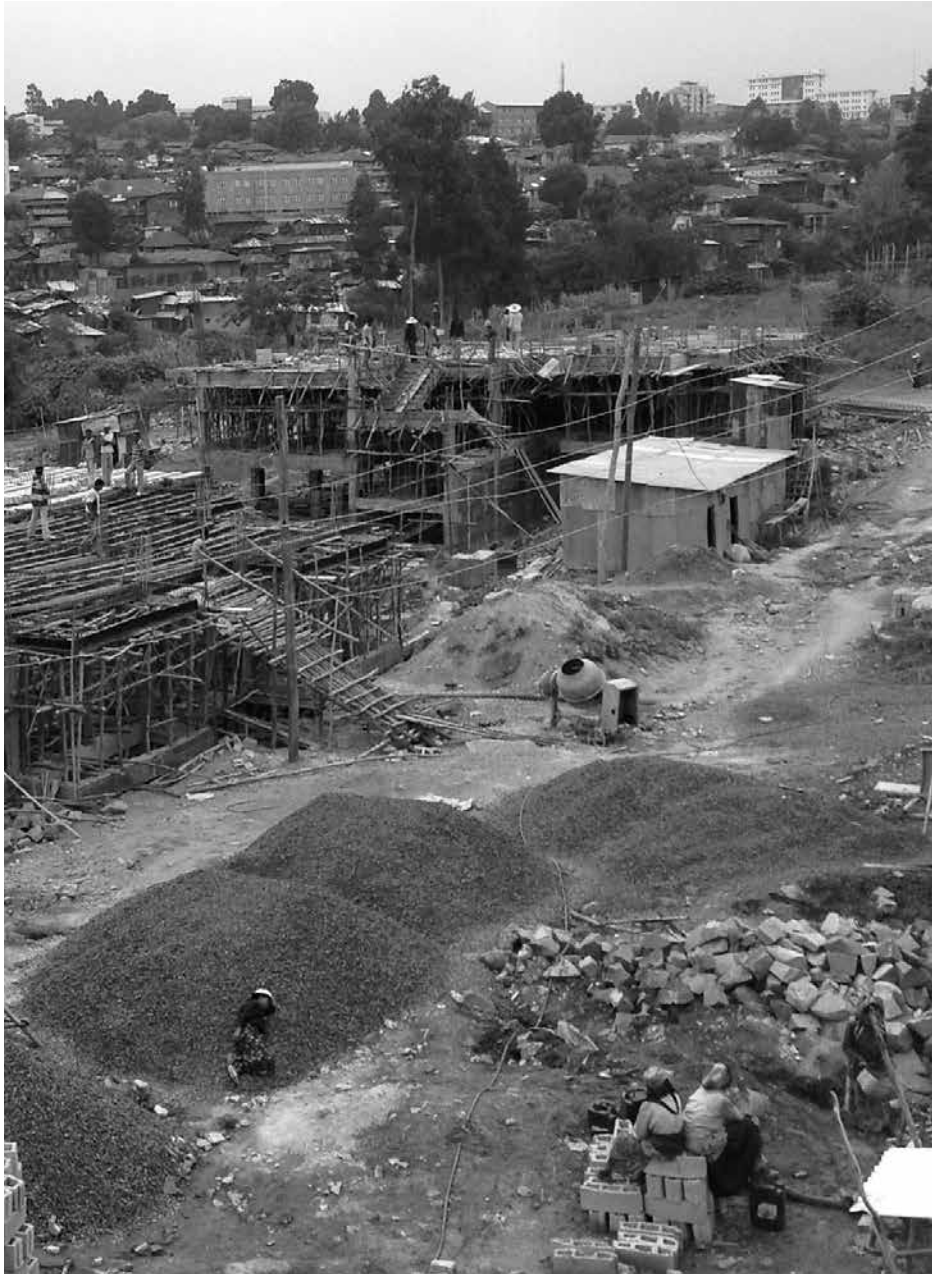
– Juan Nicolas Galarza Sanchez, *Deputy Minister of the Colombian Ministry for Environment and Sustainable Urban Development*

"Urban expansion plans have helped significantly enhance both city and state revenue. When we provided the road, people started living in the urban expansion area and businesses settled."

Mr Biru Wolde,
former city manager of Hawassa

HOW TO FINANCE URBAN EXPANSION PLANNING

When contemplating urban expansion planning, a city's first concern is how to finance it. The key success factor of urban expansion planning is securing the entire arterial grid within five years, which can pose a considerable challenge for cities facing financial constraints. Cities are expected to use municipal revenue for capital investment, but that revenue is typically insufficient to meet the need for urban infrastructure and services.

To undertake urban expansion planning, cities need financing for surveying and demarcating the arterial roads, paying compensation, investing in basic infrastructure, and the human resources and equipment to enhance land supply capacities. Without enough revenue, cities must turn to alternative approaches to financing.

Tsigereda Tafesse, Urban Expansion Planning Expert at Cities Alliance, outlined four options for financing and implementing urban expansion planning based on Ethiopia's experience. They include options for revenue enhancement, cost reduction, municipal and regional financing facilities, and changes to legal frameworks. All four are concrete solutions that are attainable and not reliant on international development funding. Most importantly, cities can tailor them to their own specific contexts and needs.

WHY FINANCE URBAN EXPANSION?

To manage the inevitable urban expansion driven by migration and natural population growth in an orderly manner.

To promote the social and economic inclusion of all residents for greater social cohesion and a vibrant city.

To provide an attractive local economic framework for industries to settle and provide much-needed jobs for a growing urban population.

To increase the attractiveness of secondary cities to live in and find work. This in turn reduces the pressure primary cities face as magnets for migrants.

To ensure national social, economic, and political stability and prevent land-related political tension and conflicts.

1. Revenue enhancement

• **Increase down payment percentages, except for residential plots intended for low income citizens.** It is reasonable to charge higher down payments for wealthier citizens, businesses, and industries. Cities can ask for a 30-40% down payment for commercial properties and higher down payment percentages for businesses leasing property along the main arterial grids. Exceptions can be made for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are not located along the main arterial roads.

• **Differentiated pricing.** No land should be leased for less than its development cost, either through bidding or allocation, and there should be different pricing for commercial, small industrial, and other services. For example, an industrial park will cost a city more to develop in terms of paying compensation and providing services than a small residential plot. Small plots for low-income citizens can be subsidized through higher prices from bigger plots sought by wealthier citizens and businesses.

• **Incentives for early payments.** Inflation will drastically erode the real revenue from leases over 20-50 years, and it is advantageous for cities to provide real incentives for early payment. For example, cities can offer a 20% discount for early payment – giving them much-needed revenue early in the implementation of the expansion plan and helping them avoid 17-47 years of collection and administration costs. It is advantageous for buyers, too, who avoid 20-50 years of interest charges.

• **Introducing property tax.** Cities should institute property taxes throughout urban expansion areas within one year of awarding leases or plots and begin collecting immediately.

2. Cost reduction options

Incremental street surfacing. Paving the arterial roads, including the grid arteries and cross streets within blocks, is one of the most expensive components of implementing an expansion plan; it consumes about half of the total cost to develop the macro-blocks within the grid. Cities can undertake incremental street surfacing by beginning with well-maintained gravel roads, delaying paving costs for the first several years and strengthening cash flow.

3. Municipal and regional financing facilities

• **City Expansion Revolving Funds (CERFs)** that receive all down payments, early payments, and about 75% of lease payments for the first 10 years. These funds can be reinvested to further urban expansion until revenues comfortably exceed investment costs (around year 10 or 12). At that point, a higher percentage of revenues can be diverted to the general budget.

• **Compensation cost sharing.** Cities, especially regional capitals, provide services to a much broader population than their residents. Therefore, regions should share the investment burden for infrastructure. For instance, the region should support payment of compensation, which cannot be financed by bigger infrastructure grants or loans, in expansion areas including industry parks and zones. Hawassa used compensation cost sharing very effectively to help finance its expansion plan.

• **Use of infrastructure and capacity development grants.** Large capacity development and infrastructure financing facilities, such as the Urban Integrated Infrastructure Development Programme (UIIDP) in Ethiopia, are mainly channeled to inner-city infrastructure devel-

opment. Some of the funds from these facilities can be strategically invested in allowable expenditures such as opening arterial grids or capacity development to enhance land supply (such as staff, surveying equipment, etc.) to accelerate the implementation of urban expansion plans.

4. Options requiring changes in legal frameworks

• **Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).** Cities should consider entering partnerships with private land developers, especially early in the implementation process when investment capital may be scarce. Tapping private developers to finance and implement development per plans approved by the city can bring modest revenue flows to the cities. This option requires cities to have the capacity to effectively supervise implementation of the plans, and it likely will require guidance from the national or regional government on setting up the framework for a PPP.

• **Favorable revenue assignments for cities.** High-yielding revenue sources are often assigned to national and regional governments, and cities do not have the taxing powers to meet the growing need for infrastructure financing. If cities are given the autonomy

to revise tariffs and fees or retain state revenue they collect, this will unlock revenue sources they can use to finance urban expansion. For example, Hawassa received special status to keep all state revenue it collects, which has enhanced its service and infrastructure financing capabilities.

- **Municipal bonds and borrowing.** Municipal bonds enable local governments to raise money to fund public projects, paying bondholders interest for the loan. Also, accessing commercial markets enables cities to make immediate investments, rather than wait until there is sufficient capital. For cities to enter into municipal bonds and borrowing, they need a strong financial management system, growing revenue base and a system of accountability.

5. Urban expansion in traditional land governance systems

Ms Tafesse noted that the options outlined above apply to cities where there is a land supply system in place and functioning land markets. There are cities in Ethiopia, such as Jigjiga, where the city administration does not have control over the land market and land ownership belongs to clans. These cities process changes in ownership but they do not derive any

revenue and have never issued a lease. The challenge for such municipalities is how to generate revenue that can be reinvested in developing more land and building infrastructure.

In these municipalities, consultation with traditional leaders and the communities is vital to at least free the arterial grids for development. Clan leaders also want to see the development of their communities. One potential solution is for the municipalities to charge a lease payment when they process a change of ownership and issue title deeds for new owners, without violating any of the traditional rights.

PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGE AMONG PARTICIPANTS FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA

After introducing urban expansion planning, the dialogue provided space for participants to begin thinking about how they can move forward with the approach in their own cities and countries.

Energised by the discussions, the Ethiopian and Ugandan delegations identified gaps in policy, legal, institutional, and financial frameworks, and discussed how they can close those gaps to roll out urban expansion planning. Kenya provided expertise on how land ownership and urban planning are structured at the regional level.

It was an opportunity for ministries and regional governments to hear directly from cities about their challenges – such as ability to raise revenue, lack of capacity, and absence of accurate data on migrants in the city – and figure out together how to resolve some of these issues and move forward with planning.

For instance, the Ugandan delegation highlighted the importance of having a "champion" to advocate for urban expansion planning at the national level. Two

Members of Parliament participated in the regional dialogue, and they clearly backed the outcomes of the discussions – a step towards building the necessary political will at the national level.

That support is especially important for Uganda, which has created 15 new secondary cities that require planning support. The delegation issued five resolutions to move forward with urban expansion planning, and participants suggested including more Members of Parliament in future dialogues to help secure government support.

The Ethiopian delegation agreed that the institutional frameworks in Ethiopia are workable for urban expansion planning. Challenges primarily centre around capacity, financing, and acquiring reliable data, as Ethiopia typically estimates population numbers between censuses.

The two cities in Somalia, Gabiley and Boroma, held discussions with Ethiopian delegates on how to contextualise the approach in their cities.

This is the value of a Regional Dialogue: bringing different stakeholders together to learn from each other's experiences, providing space for collaboration around localised needs, and building the partnerships needed to take action. This regional networking and exchange will be further strengthened through a new collaboration between Cities Alliance and the European Union Trust Fund for Africa, as presented by Ms Claudia Marinaro, Attaché at the EU Delegation in Uganda.

"It is important to exchange with other municipalities so we can learn from each other. Every city has its own problems but exchanging among ourselves bears the chance to find solutions together."

– Mr Sulaiman Hassan Haddi, *Mayor of Borama, Somalia*

"We have a number of ways to manage urbanisation in Kenya based on decentralized governance, the participation of communities and innovative mechanisms to finance urban service provision."

– Jennifer Nawoi, *County Executive for the Ministry of Lands, Energy, Housing and Urban Areas Management in Turkana County, Kenya*

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Practitioners and residents in these communities understand the challenges and strengths better than anyone. They are in the best position to figuring out what might work best for their neighborhoods and in their cities.

– Dr Angela Hawken, *Professor of Public Policy and Director of the NYU Marron Institute of Urban Management*

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REFLECTIONS

This Regional Dialogue faced unusual logistical challenges from the beginning. Originally planned as a major conference in Addis Ababa, Cities Alliance was forced to adapt due to COVID-19 restrictions, opting for a hybrid virtual-in person exchange instead. Nonetheless, thanks to flexible planning and enormous commitment from participants, it ended up as a high-quality, substantive, policy-oriented and interactive knowledge exchange on a critical issue facing secondary cities today.

Urban planning is challenging for secondary cities in less developed countries, and planning methods should be as simple as possible. The Regional Dialogue gave cities the opportunity to see a simple, tested approach to urban expansion planning that they can take and adapt to their own specific contexts.

Moreover, the cities realised that the approach is actually achievable. They already know how to do many of its elements, such as surveying roads and negotiating

"I must say [the dialogue] has changed my thinking about physical planning. If we are to have sustainable cities without slums, all I am thinking is to start engaging the stakeholders to think of adopting this new model of urban expansion planning."

– Dr Sanya Kirk Fixer Wilson, *Mayor of Koboko*

compensation to acquire land. The variety of financing options presented during the dialogue provide cities with many choices for approaching financing, and they can select the ones that work best for their political and financial realities.

Ethiopia's experience showed that there are tangible short and long-term benefits to urban expansion planning: it can increase city revenue, create job opportunities, provide access to land for housing and basic services, improve public transportation connections between cities and rural areas, and spur business growth. Cities can use such evidence to garner support from policy makers, argue for resources, and build the necessary political will.

Nine of the participating cities are partner cities in the Cities Alliance Cities and Migration Programme: Arua, Jinja, Gulu, and Mbale in Uganda; Adama, Dire Dawa, and Jigjiga in Ethiopia, and Gabiley and Boroma in Somalia. For them, the dialogue was the first step in creating their own urban expansion plans. As they move forward with the process, they now have a network of cities with knowledge and experience they can learn from and, in turn, inspire other cities to undertake urban expansion planning.

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