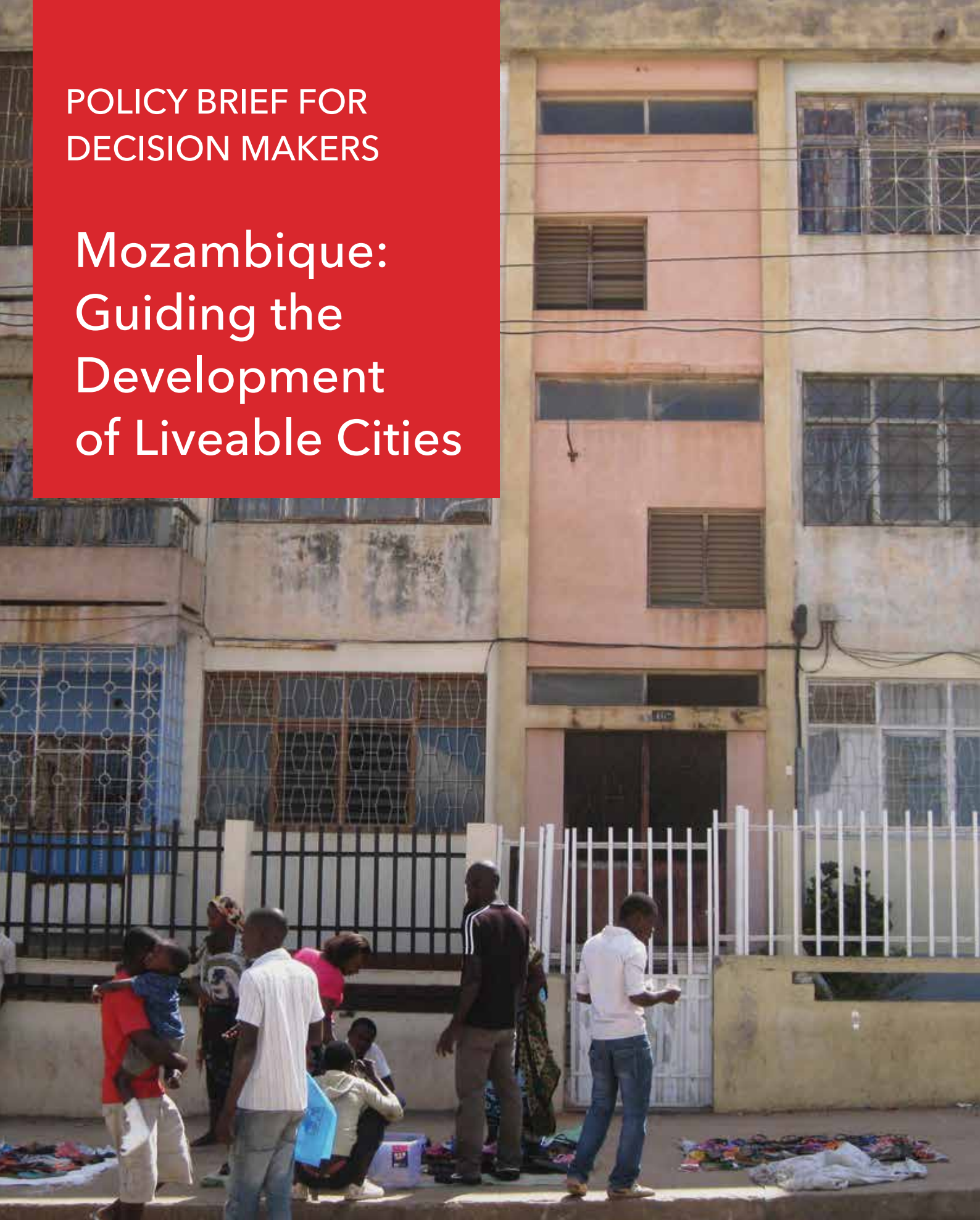
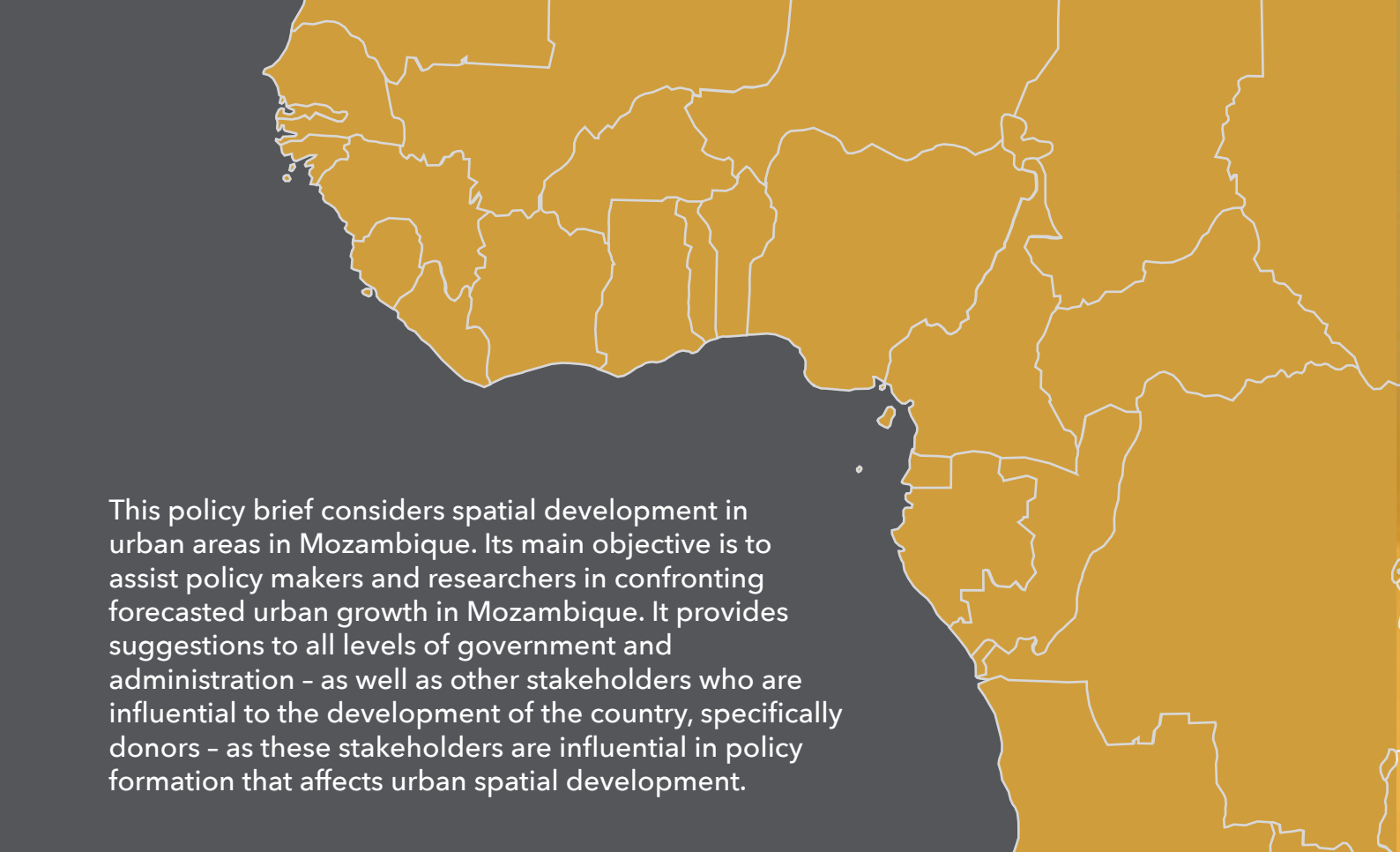


POLICY BRIEF FOR  
DECISION MAKERS

# Mozambique: Guiding the Development of Liveable Cities



A stylized map of Mozambique in a golden-yellow color with white outlines of its provinces. The map is positioned in the upper right portion of the page.

This policy brief considers spatial development in urban areas in Mozambique. Its main objective is to assist policy makers and researchers in confronting forecasted urban growth in Mozambique. It provides suggestions to all levels of government and administration - as well as other stakeholders who are influential to the development of the country, specifically donors - as these stakeholders are influential in policy formation that affects urban spatial development.



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Over the last few decades, Mozambican cities and villages have experienced a rapid population growth, but even more so in terms of spatial growth into the urban periphery. This sprawl is dominated by self-organised processes, carried out by individuals that engage in the transaction of land. However, some actions of the local governments also result in sprawl. The existing practices of land allocation and regularisation encourage the consumption of new land. Informal housing in the peri-urban areas is not controlled, but rather encouraged, as it is perceived as the permanently immediate solution to house the population. The high consumption of vacant land is harmful for the functionality of the urban fabric, as it hampers agglomeration benefits, worsens the access to infrastructure and services, and deteriorates the environment.

The reluctance to proactively manage urban areas is rooted in two main obstacles. Firstly, there are not sufficient human, technical, or financial resources to ensure the application of rules and to provide incentives for more

sustainable urbanisation. The second obstacle is closely linked to the first but less mentioned: the planning culture severely limits the effectiveness of spatial organisation. The instruments of rather obsolete master planning, developed as spatial plans of a static nature, are incapable of addressing the ongoing territorial transformation. But as cities expand rapidly over rural areas, their spatial organisation needs strategies, policies and visions that are flexible and adaptive.

To foster a sustainable urban development despite the aforementioned limitations, urban planning and management should be addressed by urban spatial policies, to which a favourable political environment is the crucial entry point. This requires the engagement of governmental entities from different levels and their political commitment. National Urban Policies could help to ensure cities' autonomy and at the same time promote better cooperation and support from the national and provincial level.



Els Keunen / The Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies



Urban development is an integrative, essential part of territorial development and hence in the interest of the nation. A national urban policy framework concerns not only the exercise of planning itself, but also the application of spatial concepts, which need to be developed and designed by the local level.

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The national level is the entry point to organising cities and fostering territorial development. The establishment of a system of cities departs from fostering the diversity and supports reciprocity and complementarity. This can be best illustrated by the different characteristics of the cities, such as coastal, agricultural, industrialising, tourist or corridor cities that possess certain features that can supplement and strengthen each other. Diversity should be sought both at the intra- but also the inter-urban level, such as mixed uses, inclusionary housing and other.

Within the city, spatial concepts can guide the urban morphology; however, the organisation of space needs to consider the dynamics of rapid urbanisation. The transformation of the surrounding rural areas and its spatial, economic and social impacts imply changes which need to be addressed. Policies of spatial organisation can apply simple instruments to trigger diversity of growth and development, e.g. with the layout of different plot sizes: these should be smaller in the urbanising peri-urban areas, but bigger in the fringes to allow people to engage in subsistence farming. In general, policies need to differentiate between at least three contexts in and outside the city: i.e. city centres, peri-urban areas and the rural-urban fringe. On the following pages, some practical recommendations are provided along this distinction.

While the policy recommendations focus on actions of the public sector, it must be recognised that urban development can best be managed by engaging the different actors that are responsible for the underlying processes. In Mozambican cities, these are the communities and individuals to a large extent. Discussing spatial forms needs to consider self-organisation and self-configuring dynamics as a major driver of urban development.



Source: Guidelines Ministry of Environmental Coordination (MICCOA)

## Developing the City Cores

The core of the city should be promoted through focused investments in infrastructure.

For the core of Mozambican cities, the “intensification” of existing urban functions - which include finance, health, and education among others - can be promoted by a number of instruments, such as land pooling, mixed land uses, cooperative housing, shared space and others. The core of the city should be promoted through focused investments in infrastructure. Development plans need to indicate clearly the provision of infrastructure in the near future. This will help businesses and households make strategic locational choices.

Specific actions to enhance the diversity and quality of life in urban centres include:

- Equilibrate between different uses;
- Retrofit existing built-up areas, i.e. using vacant plots for new buildings;
- Encourage the provision of affordable housing in central areas;
- Enhance economic diversification with supportive measures for the local economy;

- Establish and support the development of sub-centres;
- Attract local services to sub-centres;
- Support connectivity and diversify flows to ease traffic;
- Ensure contributions to the development, e.g. via land value capture; and
- Involve actively diverse stakeholders in planning and implementation.

These measures will help intensify the use of inner-city spaces, but also balance the use of different areas in the city. Cities, especially the more compact ones, do not have one single core, but often a variety of centres and sub-centres. Such polycentric development provides both shorter ways of commuting and a higher potential for densification, not only in terms of the built and population densities, but more importantly in terms of densities of services and flows which have the potential to eventually trigger agglomeration benefits.

# Transforming Peri-Urban Areas

**Policies and spatial organisation should lead the process of diversifying development, providing a variation in terms of housing, social infrastructure and businesses.**

Peri-urban areas emerge mainly on the margins of established urban areas, most frequently as a result of sub-urbanisation or urban sprawl. With the current patterns of urbanisation, these areas tend to convert into intensively used residential areas. However, it is disputable whether they will transform uniformly. Policies and spatial organisation should lead the process of diversifying development, providing a variation in terms of housing, social infrastructure and businesses.

Actions should start with identifying areas for future expansion while simultaneously preserving environmentally sensitive areas and include:

- Driving development by the coherent provision of infrastructure;
- Forecasting growth better; use data, then plan accordingly and monitor closely;
- Planning basic road grids to set 'rules of the game' in order to allow densification to happen (revising minimum standards, building codes and plot sizes);
- Protecting spaces and public places, preserving green belts and natural resources;
- Connecting territorial planning to existing regional links beyond the city's boundaries;
- Optimising allotments in new expansions, and planning plots with shorter flanks along the street;
- Providing diverse typologies for human settlements and housing in new residential areas; and
- Factoring the incremental process and dynamics into planning.

The pressure from population growth makes it necessary to develop urban fringes, but this must be done in a way that gives the option of future intensification. This also means that different locations demand different approaches. A main proposition of the compact city concept is the preservation of the hinterland. This can only be achieved if settlement activities and the consumption of land is halted at a specific perimeter in relation to the urban core. It seems therefore contradictory to discuss the rural-urban fringe as a part of the compact city; however if the fringe can be preserved as a transitional area of the urban and the rural, it will constitute a boundary that will help the city densify. The preservation of the fringes is also vital to avoid the future food and water shortages that will be the unavoidable consequence of further urban expansion.

Therefore, following activities should be pursued in the fringes:

- Protecting villages and existing land use where possible;
- Balancing settlement clusters with surrounding agricultural uses;
- Enhancing rural-urban value and nutrition chains; and
- Basing services on decentralised systems, such as decentralised wastewater treatment plants and alike which can be tailor-made for the area and which overcome the difficulty of constructing pipelines over long distances.

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## Differentiating Mobility

**Concepts for mobility do not only determine how distances are travelled, but also what kind of flows emerge and where.**

All three locations are interconnected through flows and infrastructures. The two most relevant to discuss here are transportation and mobility patterns. The latter involves not only the way people and goods move, but also why and how. These aspects relate to the urban form, which they depend on and to which they contribute. Concepts for mobility do not only determine how distances are travelled, but also what kind of flows emerge and where. Travel distances and movements are the invisible determinants that shape urban form. They can be better

conceptualised as flows, but should be part of spatial concepts despite their unphysical nature.

In terms of mobility, the following activities are suggested:

- Promoting a walking and cycling environment of short distances;
- Ensuring the safety and efficiency of public transport, especially along growth corridors; and
- Developing beneficial intra-urban distance ratios in relation to transportation costs and time.



# Cities Alliance

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Cities Without Slums