
SECTION III.

New Urban-Age Agenda for Secondary Cities



15

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Few in-depth studies have been conducted of African secondary cities compared to metropolitan regions. Most studies on secondary cities have been undertaken by international development assistance or national agencies. These tend to have a sector-specific focus with minimal detailed information to support proposed development projects and activities. The same applies to master plans, many of which are outdated. The primary message coming out of the findings of the book is more research and significantly better data are needed to meet the planning, urban management and sustainable development needs of African secondary cities.

PHOTO 15.1
Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Southern
Africa YALI Regional Learning Center

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This chapter attempts to synthesize the principal findings of the book. It highlights the major policy gaps as well as failures in policies, management and development practices. It recommends ways the development of secondary cities, including their role in supporting national and regional socio-economic development, can be supported. Historical and other factors have significantly influenced the development of secondary cities in Africa and have led to many of its current development problems. Changing development and governance paradigms that are a legacy of the past will be difficult. The research indicates a significant need for a change of approach to urban governance and management, the strengthening of enabling environments, and addressing risks and impacts associated with climate and economic change, pandemics, migration, regional disparities, and environmental degradation. Hopefully, these findings will inform the discussion and debate on the need for a new urban agenda to support the development of secondary cities in African countries.

The case studies have formed an important part of this research. They reveal the diversity of approaches adopted by the eight countries studied to support the development of secondary cities. Countries like Ghana, Kenya and Uganda are giving strong support to the development of secondary cities linked to policies on decentralisation. Other countries like Nigeria are less engaged in developing secondary cities and continue to favour a more centralised national development approach. This research has found many commonalities of development issues and challenges facing African secondary cities. Post-independence, many countries have failed to review their governance and administration systems for relevance to the African context. In many cases, they have allowed systems that were put in place by colonial powers to be eroded and corrupted. This is particularly the case in many aspects of urban planning and management systems.

This research has revealed a range of factors contributing to the lack of sustainable development of African secondary cities. The main findings are summarised below under the headings of policy and governance, physical and spatial development, economic development, socio-demographic features, the environment, connectivity, and international development assistance.

15.1 Features of Secondary Development

Since the end of the colonial era, African countries have experienced an unprecedented period of rapid urbanisation and development. Africa's urbanisation rate is 1.1%, although this is predicted to fall slightly over the next three decades. Africa is 43% urbanised and is likely to reach 50% by 2030. Some countries, like Egypt, are heavily urbanised, whereas countries like Burundi have low levels of urbanisation. This rapid urbanisation is placing enormous pressure on African countries. A clear finding of the research undertaken for this book is that African countries must make more vigorous efforts to manage urbanisation: the consequences of not doing so on future generations of African urban dwellers, especially in secondary cities, will otherwise be significant.

This research has shown that secondary cities face similar development and management problems to those of large metropolitan and primate cities, but at different types and scales – and these problems vary between regions and within countries. The economic and spatial geography, roles and functions, levels of development and socio-economic structure of secondary cities differ from those of metropolitan areas and smaller regional cities – as secondary cities are significant catalysts for development and exchange within national and cross-border economies.

Secondary cities are a subsidiary type of city that forms part of a national/regional system of cities and urban settlements. Without secondary cities, national economies in countries with large populations would not function efficiently, and economic performance would be significantly reduced. While in the context of Africa, secondary cities tend to be defined by a population range between 100,000 and 1 million, they can be larger in countries like Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya or smaller in Botswana and Mali. Secondary cities are usually defined more by their function than their size – but not always.

Secondary cities play an essential role in the command-and-control systems of government, policy, supply chains, logistics, economics, infrastructure development and human services delivery. Unlike primary cities, they are not the centre of economic activity and government in the country. Many secondary cities fill a role as high-order intermediaries, hubs or loci in transportation and logistics networks, connecting large metropolitan areas with smaller regional networks of towns and cities. They are vital to facilitating the efficient and effective two-way flow of trade, people, investment, information, infrastructure and human services between metropolitan regions, smaller regional towns, cities and rural areas. They also play an important role in facilitating trade between cross-border towns and cities.

Historically, advanced economies would not have developed without well-functioning and connected national systems of cities and regional economies. Generally, these had good logistics, infrastructure, governance, and local services delivery systems. Secondary cities play a crucial role in national spatial, economic and social development in all countries, especially in rapidly urbanising countries. Overall, however, African secondary cities are not functioning, performing or operating well within national systems of cities – they are not value-adding to processes and supply chains.

A key problem throughout most of Africa is the focus of national governments on supporting the development of primary cities, resulting in policy neglect and an unsustainable system of cities development. This situation, accompanied by other factors beyond the control of the national and local government, has left the capacity and development potential of secondary cities severely weakened and is hindering national and regional development.

I 15.2 Policies and Governance

15.2.1 Secondary Cities Not a High Priority Area of Policy Focus

For more than 50 years, there has been intermittent interest by governments, international development agencies and researchers in developing secondary cities in Africa. Many of the issues facing cities, including inequitable development, poor governance, unmanaged urban development, low levels of investment, and environmental neglect – have been extensively documented. Despite this and despite considerable assistance funds being injected into African economies, minimal progress has been made. Despite the growing interest in secondary cities and the wider recognition of their contribution to national economies, they have not until recently featured widely in national and international urbanisation and economic development policy discussions. To date, less than 20 African countries have national urbanisation policies, strategies, or plans, and only 14 were found to mention secondary or intermediaries in their urban policy statements.

15.2.2 The Legacy of Colonialism Development Policies

Colonial development policies and governance practices have undoubtedly had a profound and ongoing impact on secondary city development across much of Africa – as all but two African countries (Ethiopia and Liberia) experienced significant periods of colonial rule. Most of today's secondary cities were established as regional administrative centres of provincial and local governments. Their primary purpose was to provide localised administrative and service centres to support the colonial focus on opening vast areas of Africa to agriculture – for cash cropping and pastoral farming – and for mineral extraction to support European industrialisation. This had significant impacts on traditional culture and governance, the effects of which continue today.

During colonial times local governments in secondary African cities were, generally, better funded, administered, and managed than today, as they were recognised as important to maintaining efficient national and international trade and supply chains. In most cases after independence, the focus shifted to a more centralised approach, with the role of secondary cities being primarily to support national and regional economies' trading and governance requirements. Today most secondary city economies in sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa, are not heavily engaged in export supply chains, apart from natural resources and a limited range of agricultural products, and transport.

In many countries, the transition to self-rule resulted in a significant loss of professional and managerial personnel, with both colonial and highly educated nationals leaving or migrating. This loss of human and corporate capital, along with reduced access to core funding for infrastructure and community services investment, severely depleted the capacity of secondary and small local governments across the continent to recruit competent staff and secure development and operational funds. Reductions in central government funding to local governments after independence, severely weakened local authorities and their capacity to deliver services, resulting in the progressive centralisation of political power, financial control, decision-making, and delivery of municipal services by central government agencies.

Colonial government policies and approaches to urban planning, development and governance significantly impacted how secondary cities were developed and managed post-independence. Many of those policies and approaches have remained in common practice, despite many former colonial countries reforming their planning systems, laws and practices over time. This continuation of a Western systems approach to planning and development, albeit outdated, is not unexpected, given that much of the policy advice provided to African governments over many decades has come from advisers from Western backgrounds, and that a significant proportion of senior national public-sector managers, policymakers and academics also were educated in developed countries. There is yet to emerge an endogenous hybrid system of governance that merges colonial, customary, and modern-world policies and practices appropriate to the needs of African cities.

15.2.3 Decentralisation and Devolution

Few of the African countries studied had adopted national decentralisation and evolution policies focused on the planning and development of secondary cities, although some attempts have been made. Angola has a secondary city policy, starting with its new-town satellite cities located around Luanda, the capital. Kenya had a national growth centre strategy in the 1970s; however, this proved ineffective and is now defunct. In 2010, Kenya adopted a new Constitution⁽¹⁾ that introduced a decentralisation program with new country structures and autonomous regional secondary cities. However, 6 of the 10 leading secondary cities lie within 65 km of Kenya's capital, Nairobi. Rwanda, Uganda, Tunisia and Senegal have all embarked upon programs aimed at decentralisation.

Nigeria has made the most frequent experiments with devolving power. However, except for the founding of the new federal capital Abuja, deep federal centralism has and will continue to make it difficult to decentralise power to the extent desirable that would stimulate far-reaching growth in the country's many secondary cities. The Nigerian National Development Plan 2021 to 2025 (Government of Nigeria, 2021). states explicitly that specific cities within each region will be developed into regional growth centres. This policy aims to speed up the growth of secondary urban centres within respective regions or states. The mechanism for achieving this is not explained in the document.

South Africa, post-1994, has had far-reaching policy transformations to redress in its spatial economy. Ethiopia is currently supporting policies that specifically address secondary cities. Senegal has developed policies to develop 10 secondary cities as growth centres to rebalance the distribution of the nation's urban population.



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Decentralisation of government should result in significant support for the development of secondary cities. However, research shows the process is slow, with a strong reluctance of central government to develop the powers and financial management and resources required to support it. Few countries have advocated a more equitable distribution of natural resources to secondary cities. Central governments tend not to trust the local government to deliver urban services. Only in the large metropolitan regions has there been a willingness to develop more service delivery responsibilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has thwarted most attempts at decentralisation, as local governments do not have the capacity, resources, training, nor leadership to manage the crisis. Many responsibilities have been re-centralised and may not easily be wrested back by local governments.

15.2.4 Policies and Initiatives to Support Secondary City Development:

Initiatives and policies are necessary to support the development of secondary cities. Cities Alliance has supported the preparation of city development strategies that seek to identify elements of competitiveness and development potential for secondary cities in several African countries.

In Angola, the notion of competitiveness and economic efficiency of secondary cities is unlikely to be realised unless there is a rethink on the national urban policy and decentralisation, given the high level of urban primacy. The central government devolved power to Huambo and other cities and allocated national resources for their

reconstruction. Progress, however, has been slow because of the weakness of local government administration and management. In Ghana, the local government is severely constrained by the lack of capacity to develop and implement policy, uncertainty in flows of grant money, and little responsibility for local economic development. An unwillingness to enforce planning and building controls has resulted in deforestation and the construction of housing in wetland and flood-prone areas, with severe environmental impacts.

In Kenya, Mombasa’s policy gaps include pro-poor policies, sound local government financial systems, decisions based on a firm foundation of data and information, and a transformational framework aligned with the 2010 Constitution. The recommendation from the study of Touba-Mbacké in Senegal is simply to have in place data and information for decision-making. In Nigeria, Ibadan’s initiatives and policies are weak and poorly articulated. They revolve around the provision of housing. Devoid of national policy interventions and reforms to strengthen the decentralisation process, little change is expected to improve the management and competitiveness of Ibadan. Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth), in South Africa, like other secondary cities, must target multi-sectorial investments that suit its condition.

15.2.5 Local Government Reforms

The legacy of colonial rule and government systems continues to shape the administrative, planning, development, and economic development policies and management functions of secondary cities in Africa, despite the decline in local government authority over time. There is growing pressure for greater decentralisation and devolution but attempts at local government reform have been slow. They have not significantly altered the urban governance structure and local government systems in many African countries. Countries like Ghana, Kenya, Morocco (Houdret & Harnisch, 2017) and Tunisia, however, have embarked upon local government reforms to urban planning, finance, administration and management systems.

Transformation and reforms have proved difficult, with many restrictions on funding arrangements and entrenched employment and organisation systems that have changed little since the colonial era. This is partly because local governments and regional offices of central government agencies based in the secondary cities create significant local employment. Attempts at institutional and labour efficiency reforms have been difficult where job losses are threatened. This issue was specifically relevant to Cape Coast and Gqeberha in South Africa.



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Changes have occurred in some countries due to political reform: for example, Nigeria’s civilian and military experimentation with federalism; Ethiopia’s swing from feudal to Marxist-Leninist inclinations; South Africa’s apartheid; and Angola’s new federalism after the civil war. Other determinants of the transformation identified in the case studies arise from opportunities presented by constitutional changes that affected all eight of the secondary cities studied. As an area of policy focus, secondary cities were identified through the research as a non-policy priority for African countries, except for Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, and South Africa, which has started a conversation on the concept.

15.2.6 Public Consultation and Engagement

Many case studies raised the need for improved public consultation and engagement. The level of public consultation is improving in countries like Kenya and Uganda, but it is often led by the community, non-government advocacy or specific interest groups. Public consultation in secondary cities is limited in scope and scale, especially for inclusive urban planning and budgeting: many local government's view consultation and participation in urban governance processes as a threat to their authority. Wider community consultation and participation in local urban governance in secondary cities will serve as a check on the abuse of power, introducing accountability and engaging communities in decision-making, planning and implementation processes. Community participation needs to go a further step: to engaging with the community and special interest groups so that they are not only involved in planning and policy-making processes, but also in co-executing programs of activities and being chartered to deliver local infrastructure and services, undertake maintenance, and educate communities on becoming more responsible for taking care of the environment and the needs of the poor and marginalised groups.

15.2.7 Urban Governance

Urban governance was found to be a challenge in all of the case study secondary cities. The biggest issue is the growing re-centralisation of power at the expense of local autonomy, identified in Angola, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Senegal and, to a lesser extent, in South Africa. The centralisation of power significantly impacts local government governance because of their dependence on the political will and controls at the centre of government. The consequence is weak local governments that struggle to sustain themselves financially and deliver what may be considered even minimal services to their populations, let alone aim to improve the sustainability and robust development of the area within their responsibility.

The most significant challenges to urban governance in secondary cities are the poor qualifications, knowledge, and experience of city management staff. Most lack professional staff and technical skills. Few secondary cities have qualified planners, engineers, or financial or environmental experts to undertake local governments' mandatory functions and responsibilities in managing urbanisation. Technologies, bylaws, management practices, and processes need to be modernised and financial accounting practices improved. Faculties are poor, with a lack of furnishing, equipment and motor vehicles making it extremely difficult to conduct many processes of local government efficiently. Few secondary cities have adopted e-governance, which is essential to modernise and improve the efficiency and productivity of government to deliver urban services. Many of the governance systems are not open, leaving space for corruption and other malpractices.

15.2.8 Land Administration and Management

Land administration and management is one of the most challenging issues in secondary cities. Illegal occupation, theft, disputed ownerships, and dual land registries (state and customary) complicate ownership rights and land-use, which deny people and businesses the opportunity to generate wealth through tenure security. In Angola, the situation is more challenging, with many areas surrounding secondary cities being land-mined during a disastrous 41-year period of civil war. A well-performing land management and administration system will ensure the efficient operation of land markets, property taxes, security of tenure, change of use, economic returns, and wealth generation. A well-functioning system requires customary land leases to be registered to guarantee property rights and for the securitisation of loans against land and property for investment.

Land ownership and lease records are poor, leading to significant property tax shortfalls in secondary cities, and widespread disputes related to customary land. Over the past three decades, most countries in Africa have experimented with ways to solve the challenges related to ownership and development of land, especially land conversion. Land problems are multi-faceted and multi-layered, and the development and use of land is a significant disincentive to its improvement in secondary cities and rural areas.

15.2.9 Municipal Financial Management

All secondary city case studies identified municipal financial management as being poor. Even Gqeberha (South Africa), which had good municipal financial management practices, faced significant challenges. Poor revenue generation instruments, financial mismanagement, wasteful expenditure, insolvency, and corruption are common problems. During the colonial era, municipal financial management practices were good, partly because access to and flow of funds for capital works investment and maintenance were reliable, and property and other taxes were collected. Since independence, in most cases, local government effectiveness has been weakened by centralist policies, limited access to well-trained staff and insufficient funds to meet budget outlays, including wages.

Municipal financial management practices identified by the research as needing improvement include:

- Modernisation of municipal financial practices, including accrual accounting, budgeting, and transparency.
- Taxation mapping and property valuation.
- Debt management.
- Tax collection.

15.3 Physical and Spatial Development

In all case studies, the need for better planning and management of secondary city urban development is a strong message. The periphery of most secondary cities has grown significantly in recent years without adequate planning and control on urban development. The case studies indicate a reluctance by local governments to enforce planning rules, plans, standards and regulations. The consequences are that spatial development patterns for African primate and secondary cities have been laissez-faire and low density. Many secondary cities' urban-area growth rate, especially in eastern, western and parts of central Africa, is expanding at twice the population growth rate. Uncontrolled sprawl in peripheral low-density urban settlements has left many newly urbanised areas lacking basic infrastructure and human services.

Secondary city local governments must manage peripheral and informal/slum area settlements and uphold the rule of law and planning for development. The trend in the spatial development of secondary cities will not change, and they will become sprawling metropolises. The consequences of sprawling, uncontrolled development are already compounding severe economic, social and environmental problems. The difficulties, and cost of addressing them, will increase with time. Although this message has been stated many times over decades, there is little evidence in the research to suggest that secondary city local governments are willing to change. This unwillingness of the local government to change their approach and uphold the rule of law related to the management and sustainable development of secondary cities is the single biggest obstacle to their sustainable development.

In Ghana, for example (Photo 15.2), despite having a plan for the development of the city of Tamale, development on the periphery has not been well managed. This has resulted in many parts of the city lacking good urban services and housing. With growing civil unrest in the Sahel, secondary cities like Tamale are likely to experience an influx of refugees, which will only compound the problems associated with poor urban planning and management for secondary cities with an increasing migrant population across the continent.

PHOTO 15.2

Unplanned urban expansion on the periphery of secondary cities: Tamale, Ghana

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Except for Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Kenya, Congo and South Africa, which have populations of over 1 million, the populations of most African secondary cities are between 100,000 and 300,000 (Table 15.1). The growth in the number of secondary African cities has been significant. In 1990 it is estimated there were 243 secondary cities with populations between 100,000 and 1 million. By 2020 there were 882 cities with that population, and by 2050, if growth rates continue, this number could reach 1,800 to 2,000. The consequence of this trend is that by 2030, more than 30,000 km² of the most fertile land is likely to be converted for urban use.

TABLE 15.1 | Type and numbers of urban agglomerations in Africa (2015)

AFRICA	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2030	2035
10 million or more		1	2	3	3	5	5
5 to 10 million	1	2	2	3	6	13	19
1 to 5 million	24	37	42	51	59	81	93
500,000 to 1 million	29	35	56	60	75	111	128
300,000 to 500,000	43	48	65	90	92	117	121
100,000 to 300,000*	171	255	351	485	715		
50,000 to 100,000*	290	454	636	782	815		
Total	558	832	1,154	1,474	1,765		
Eastern Africa							
10 million or more	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
5 to 10 million	0	0	0	1	1	4	5

Source: Africa's Urbanisation Dynamics (2020). Estimates derived from Africapopolis Data (2015).

15.3.1 The Dominance of Primate Cities

African countries have one of the highest levels of urban primacy of all global regions. In 41 out of 51 African countries, more than 15% of the urban population lives in the largest primate cities. In 27 countries, more than 30% live in primate cities, while in 2 cities – Togo and Djibouti – more than half the urban population lives in those countries’ largest cities. This results in a disproportionately high concentration of population, human capital, wealth and economic investment in one place. Many of these primate cities are experiencing increasing land disputes, infrastructure, environmental and social issues. More than 30% of national GDP output occurs in primate cities. Measures of GDP, levels of investment, infrastructure, wages, access to services, and other development indicators per capita show that primate cities are 1.5 to 3 times better off than secondary cities. This imbalance poses significant risks, given that a major disaster or civil unrest in a primate city would have severe impacts on national economies. In addition, many primate cities are in hazardous coastal zones and face potential climate change threats.

15.3.2 Secondary City Agglomerations

Africapolis (spatial data and research) shows two emerging phenomena of secondary city agglomeration in African regions. One is a poly-centric agglomeration of a primate city surrounded by rapidly expanding secondary cities, due primarily to significant spill-over of the population, such as has occurred in Casablanca (Morocco), Lagos (Nigeria) and Johannesburg (South Africa). The second is where an existing secondary city has expanded rapidly, due to the rapid urban growth of surrounding towns and smaller cities that have become spatially and economically integrated with that secondary city. While the latter has resulted in very large population agglomerations, these function as one secondary city, such as Ibadan in Nigeria and Kisumu in Kenya. This phenomenon is becoming more widespread in western and eastern Africa.

The agglomeration phenomenon creates significant challenges for the clustered secondary cities surrounding primate cities such as Lagos, Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), and Tunis (Tunisia). While the agglomerations developing around existing secondary cities often lead to an emergence of regional markets, creating trade, employment, and service opportunities, they face significant public transport, urban services, and environmental problems. The primary cities in Africa may well have an international outlook, and secondary cities can capitalise on this advantage by complementing the hosting of productive activities in smaller clusters, which can capitalise on lower costs associated with smaller size or proximity to inputs such as agriculture or natural resources.

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In addition, the phenomenon encourages increased rural-urban migration. There are no effective regional government mechanisms for funding or coordination of infrastructure development and service delivery. Service delivery, therefore, becomes piecemeal, as local governments compete for an ever-decreasing pool of funds, primarily from federal sources, to provide basic urban services. Similarly, there are no effective mechanisms for integrating regional development planning, investment, or service delivery in cities like Ibadan (Nigeria), Kisumu (Kenya) or Touba-Mbacké (Senegal).

In most cases, critical elements of hard and soft infrastructure needed to support agglomeration economies’ development and sustainable growth are not available or are inadequate. Urban utility corridors are seldom reserved or protected from illegal development, which adds significantly to land acquisition and construction costs later, when services are needed.

The case studies show that as secondary cities become part of primate cities or expand to form new urban agglomerations, a new metropolitan management structure is required to ensure effective and orderly coordination of planning, infrastructure, and service delivery of the newly integrated agglomeration.

15.3.3 Emerging International Trade Corridor Secondary Cities

Another trend emerging in western and eastern Africa is the development of international trade corridor secondary and cross-border cities. Over 50 cross-border secondary cities are expanding rapidly. The corridor cities comprise a series of smaller towns and cities whose economies are linked by trade along the highway that connects them. A wide range of goods and services are traded between such cities and between countries. This expansion will lead to a series of narrow, linear secondary cities. A key problem emerging from this form of development is that the cities within the corridors compete for limited trade, infrastructure, and other development funds from the central government rather than collaborate – and the disbursement of development funds is often disjointed, erratic and politically based.

As a result, infrastructure providers responsible for ensuring that the network of cities along these corridors are well connected and function better end up facing traffic bottlenecks and conflict between local- and through-traffic flows. Better corridor development planning, especially land-use, roads and traffic management, could reduce many of those problems.



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The research found little evidence of attempts to support collaborative efforts on secondary city corridor development. Mechanisms are needed to improve both the planning of economic development corridors and the development of secondary corridor cities. These mechanisms are particularly critical for corridors crossing international boundaries. New forms of partnerships will be required to manage secondary cities along trade development corridors in African countries. This includes ratifying international agreements between countries involving free-trade regulations, code sharing of infrastructure, policing and free movement of people.

15.3.4 Coastal, Inland and Landlocked Secondary Cities

Coastal secondary cities, especially port cities like Gabès (Tunisia), Mombasa (Kenya), Warri (Nigeria) and Sekondi-Takoradi (Ghana), enjoy relative advantages over landlocked secondary cities due to the substantial infrastructure and support services investment needed to function. In addition, port cities lead to other spinoff industries, which help diversify the local economic base. Inland secondary cities, such as Dire-Dawa in Ethiopia, are less fortunate, as their economic base often revolves mainly around agriculture and transport logistics. Natural resource-based secondary city economies such as Obuasi (population 114,795 in 2020), a gold mining centre in Ghana, and Tete, a coal-mining centre in Mozambique, often fare better, as they receive significant benefits from the investment in mining activities.

The challenge for inland and landlocked secondary cities is to diversify their economic base, become more competitive and engage in trade and development to and with neighbouring towns and cities. Dire-Dawa is an example of this. It is expected to benefit economically from developing the new railway between Addis Ababa and Djibouti, which will pass through Dire-Dawa, offering trade and other opportunities. Inland cities need support from central government and international agencies to develop greater self-sufficiency and adopt a more endogenous economic growth model, allowing import substitution and more digitally developed economic activities to grow. Opportunities for growth in these cities are limited. Many, such as the Dadaab and Kakuma in Kenya, are refugee-based economies, with limited prospects for diversification or development, as much of the population is transient.

15.3.5 Urban Sprawl and Density

Many secondary cities are large, with the population dispersed over a wide peri-urban area. However, northern African cities tend to be more contained and densely settled. Densities are often high in the inner city, with informal slum areas, poor housing, and unsanitary conditions. The consequence of unmanaged urban development is the extremely high cost of providing extended or infill urban services. The average density of African secondary cities is around 4,000 persons per km², but this varies between regions. As noted in Chapter 5 (on demographic trends), however, average density presents a misleading picture of the concentration of population in secondary cities. Africa's largest secondary cities mostly have a densely populated and settled inner-city core, which progressively reduces in the concentric gradient as the city spreads out into peri-urban areas. Many secondary cities take on a starfish pattern of development, which progressively fills in. Unfortunately, the lack of planning and development controls leave many infill areas without adequate access to services and transport.



The consequence of unmanaged urban development is the extremely high cost of providing extended or infill urban services.

15.3.6 Need for Infrastructure

Without exception, all of the case study cities have old or obsolete infrastructure, large un-serviced urban areas and insufficient capacity to accommodate the projected high population growth rates. All secondary cities face challenges in investing in new infrastructure (with one or two exceptions) and expanding and maintaining existing infrastructure. Estimates for infrastructure that would positively impact GDP run into billions of dollars annually that neither the cities nor the countries can afford.

15.3.7 Neglect of the Built Environment

Many secondary cities have well-kept urban residential and parkland areas, public spaces, and monuments. Cities like Gabès, Cape Coast, Mombasa, and Touba-Mbacké have important cultural and religious buildings, archaeological sites and old city housing areas with significant character and history. Some secondary cities, such as Stone Town in Zanzibar, have World Heritage status. However, the quality of the built environment of most African secondary cities is poor and neglected. Civic pride is often low. Local governments lack funds to maintain public assets, spaces, and waterways, which become used as community waste dumps and for toileting. Dumping of medical waste also is a significant problem identified in several case studies.

The neglect of the built environment is a product of many factors, including weak local government enforcement of rules and regulations and poor community attitudes towards the use and cleanliness of public and private open spaces and facilities. The consequences of this are: significant threats to public health and well-being; public safety concerns (with no night-time streetlighting); compact and high-density substandard informal building; overflowing solid and sanitary waste; polluted streams and river systems; failure to control air pollution; lack of access to potable water; and the prevalence of controllable human diseases. It also affects the function and aesthetics of many secondary cities and their attractiveness as places to live, do business and visit.

I 15.4 Economic development

As the name suggests, secondary cities play a secondary role to primate cities in terms of the diversity of investment and their contribution to the national economy. Without exception, secondary cities exploit their strategic regional roles as service and resource-processing centres in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and mining – but little else. The case studies show that secondary cities have similar economic characteristics. Significant port cities like Mombasa, Gqeberha (South Africa) and Port Harcourt (Nigeria) play a key role in their national and international economies. Cities such as Touba-Mbacké and Cape Coast have developed a competitive advantage in cultural tourism and education. Others have built a competitive advantage in global manufacturing, such as Gqeberha, and Mombasa in logistics. Yet other smaller secondary cities, such as Dire-Dawa, struggle to have a regional impact.

15.4.1 Lack of Economic Data

The lack of reliable and up-to-date data is a significant impediment to the provision of adequate support for the physical, economic, and social planning of development and infrastructure in secondary cities. Cape Coast, Mombasa and Gqeberha were the only secondary cities for which detailed data could be obtained on economic activities and competitiveness. Few African countries, apart from South Africa and Morocco (Haddad et al., 2017), have developed subnational input-output tables at the provincial or city level. This lack of information makes the benefits of allocating national resources and the budgeting of public funds to cities and regions difficult to determine. Data on foreign direct investment (FDI) flows, off-budget capital grants and remittances to regions and secondary cities is unavailable, making it extremely difficult to estimate investment capital needs in secondary cities.

As found in the Ibadan City Masterplan studies (Oyo State Government, 2019), a high percentage of private capital flows go to localised consumption of consumer goods and services (appliances, food and medicines). There are also high levels of capital flow leakage of profits and transfers with extremely low margins on sales. This is because extremely low levels of capital are retained in secondary cities and regions for investment. There is a high reliance on remittance capital to fund private consumption and construction projects, including housing and trading facilities.

15.4.2 Economic Development Policies and Planning

Local governments generally have no role in local economic development (LED). For most secondary cities in Africa, LED policy and planning is the responsibility of the central government. In some countries such as South Africa, it is the responsibility of the provincial government. Few cities have economic development plans, although some did prepare city development strategies many years ago with the support of the Cities Alliance.

There is a significant disconnect between economic development, land use and infrastructure planning. There is still a strong reliance on master planning to guide development and an absence of integrated planning. Although some countries such as South Africa, Rwanda, Kenya and Morocco have begun to recognise the importance of integrated planning to support the more sustainable development of cities, few secondary cities have the knowledge or capacity to engage in this approach to planning and development. Most countries do not have integrated development planning legislation. Many of the case studies demonstrated the need for more integrated and greater responsibility for local economic development. Significant education and assistance are needed to enhance the capacity of secondary cities in local economic development.

15.4.3 Green Economies

African secondary cities, in the main, lag in the introduction of green economy initiatives. Adopting economic policies to develop green economies is essential to improve the sustainability of development in these cities. Some African countries are developing policies to support a transition to a greener economy, but efforts tend to focus on primate cities such as Cape Town in South Africa and Kampala in Uganda. Few secondary cities have policy agendas to encourage biomass, clean energy production, water and solid waste recycling, and materials re-use. Rwanda has developed an action plan for economic development to transition its capital and secondary cities towards green economies. The focus on green economic development in secondary cities offers a pathway to more sustainable development and new employment opportunities. However, this requires governments to develop green growth funds for cities with development assistance programs.

15.4.4 Scale and Critical Mass of Markets

Secondary cities, especially those that do not have a manufacturing, resource, or transport base, have difficulty creating scale and a critical mass of business and associated activities to diversify the local economic base, including market development opportunities. Scale and critical mass are thresholds in the pathway to economic diversification. Catalyst industries, such as a food processing plant, and significant infrastructure and human capital investment, often are needed to trigger secondary city growth. Universities and technical colleges are also significant triggers. Significant investment is required in mining, regional irrigation for agriculture, and transport, such as the railway linking Addis Ababa and Djibouti, which will trigger growth in Dire-Dawa.

Low-income levels leave little household disposable income for discretionary expenditure. Issues such as the lack of access to credit (see below) and settlement of debts at the end of each month slow the daily circulation of money through the local economy. High levels of unsecuritised indebtedness and low levels of business skills make it difficult to diversify economic opportunities. Subsequently, the size of markets for products and services can become very narrow.



Scale and critical mass are thresholds in the pathway to economic diversification.

Unlike metropolitan regions where there are multiple subnational market demands for goods and services and more scope to create employment and business opportunities, secondary cities find it challenging to create the scale and mass to grow new markets. Historically, city-state economies in many western African countries did this through specialisation and value-adding to industry supply chains along camel and river routes, such as the bronze industry in Benin and the leather industry in Touba-Mbacké. Policies and incentives to encourage industry specialisation and collaboration between cities and businesses to co-create new value-adding and niche industries are essential to creating the thresholds of scale and critical mass required to create expanded subnational regional markets engaged in city-to-city trade. This calls for government support to foster administrative and economic decentralisation and free up cross-border trade between cities within Africa. It calls for a new economic policy agenda on decentralisation.

15.4.5 Lack of Capital Investment

There are considerable variations in national/secondary city investments. Whilst petroleum and resource-rich countries can generate the revenues for investment in Angola, Botswana, Ghana and Nigeria, most African nations struggle to attract foreign direct investment – especially to secondary cities. Many rely heavily on bilateral and multilateral assistance and remittances to support their development and well-being. Most countries are still applying an export-growth development model to create an environment attractive to foreign investment in order to develop export markets. Only Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and South Africa secondary cities have relatively strong export manufacturing sectors. Some countries have turned to mobilise domestic investment through reform, such as Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria and Senegal. However, impacts are primarily at the metropolitan city level, with little flow-on to secondary cities and subnational regions.

Despite the broad range of challenges, Kenya, Morocco, South Africa, Nigeria and Angola are leading places to invest. However, the sophistication of the regulatory levels of business and business infrastructure differ substantially. Gqeberha in South Africa is a global anchor for motor vehicle assembly but has suffered setbacks due to the closure of General Motors. In Nigeria, the closest Ibadan comes to a global institution is the University of Ibadan. Cape Coast in Ghana also has a good university, but it lacks partnerships with the city government and research and development capacity to support knowledge services to the local economy.

Huambo in Angola currently is not sufficiently competitive to attract secondary city investment on its own accord. Extensive post-civil war restoration must take place before it can reach its pre-independence output levels. Mombasa's Kilindini Harbour is inefficient, but currently is the leading seaport in Kenya and the principal port for several eastern and central African countries. Gabès, Tunisia, is a significant industrial city and phosphate export centre, but environmental and pollution problems impede its ability to attract business.

New geopolitical changes in Southern Sudan and the significant oil and coal deposits in eastern and northern Kenya will provide competition for Mombasa, as the new Port of Lamu opens to its north. New mineral discoveries may drive the development of secondary cities in the eastern heartland of Kenya. In Senegal, Touba-Mbacké is unique as a notable Islamic pilgrimage centre. All indicators show that the eight case studies are economically inefficient, heavily reliant on central government grants and unsustainable in their present situation.

15.4.6 Weakness in the Development of the E-Economy

Capital investment, especially in smart hard and soft infrastructure, is a high priority for secondary cities and regional development. The development of internet services to support business, services, procurement, and governance is a high priority for African secondary cities. Without these services, regional Africa is in danger of falling further behind the rest of the world in economic and social development. Kenya, Rwanda, Tunisia, and South Africa are developing support for e-based economies to support secondary city development. The development of e-based systems to replace manual systems will improve the speed of transactions and efficiencies, including better governance and financial controls, including tax collection.

15.4.7 Weak Access to Micro Credit

Microcredit facilities to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) business investment and development are limited, especially in smaller secondary cities. Bank deposits are centralised and directed to the creation of capital in large cities. Little of the deposits made at local branches of national banks return to secondary cities to create loans for fixed capital investment. Most formal sources of capital are used as credit for procuring stock or materials for trading or construction. Secondary cities have high informal-sector employment, and most businesses are not incorporated entities, which adversely affects tax revenue. Profit margins are meagre, resulting in little profit to create working capital or investment. Cities like Gqeberha have much higher corporate business enterprise levels, profits, and retained earnings, but this is not the case for most African secondary cities.

Local, small-scale, corporate-cooperative banking arrangements operate in most secondary cities, providing a valuable service and offering limited facilities and levels of credit. Phone banking is growing in secondary cities in Rwanda, Nigeria, Ghana, and northern Africa. Still, poor internet services in sub-Saharan regional areas and low incomes do not provide much room for credit expansion.

The research shows significant weaknesses in developing local capital markets and microcredit facilities and services. Microcredit and expanded loan capital are needed to support housing, industrial, commercial, and social services facilities, plants, and equipment. These investments are significant drivers of economic development. They have high employment and value-adding multiplier effects. The development of microcredit facilities, especially for low-income and poor households, and post-COVID-19 recovery efforts, are essential to boost economic activity and jobs in the micro and SME sectors. Innovative ways of improving access to credit by banks, finance and phone banking telecommunications companies are needed to expand credit facilities to the pool.

15.4.8 Cost of Doing Business

Many case studies show that the cost of doing business is a significant factor in creating more dynamic and competitive secondary city businesses and governments. The case studies show that the economies of most secondary cities in Africa are not nationally or globally competitive, economically efficient, nor well-managed. World Bank (2020) reports on the cost of doing business confirm Africa’s poor performance: Rwanda, Morocco, and Kenya rank the highest, with Rwanda scoring only 38 in the global ranking. Sub-Saharan Africa remains one of the weakest performing regions for the ease of doing business, with an average ranking score of 51.8. Cities, especially metropolitan regions, and large primate cities, contribute most to national GDP. Poor infrastructure, including information and communications technology (ICT), and poor governance in these secondary cities add to the cost of doing business, increase the cost of living and operational costs, and result in a loss of competitiveness by local businesses.

The situation is worse in most African secondary cities, except for gateway port cities. The case studies report factors such as poor levels and maintenance of infrastructure, inefficiencies in service delivery by local governments, poor communications, poor access to skilled labour, and weak business enabling environments, all of which add significantly to the high transaction costs of government, institutional and private sector business. Transaction costs rise substantially the more distant secondary cities are from metropolitan regions and port cities. While food, land and rents are lower than in the metropolitan areas and offer a competitive advantage to a business, these advantages are more than offset by the lack of good logistics, high level service providers, skilled labour – especially management – access to a reliable supply of production inputs and high transportation costs.

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*Cities, especially metropolitan regions,
and large primate cities, contribute most
to national GDP. Poor infrastructure...*

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15.4.9 Reducing Transaction Costs of Business and Government

One means of reducing the transaction costs of doing business and government involves collaborative partnerships (Kindseth, 2021) to construct and operate common-user infrastructure and shared services. Investment in common-user facilities and infrastructure is needed to reduce business and government transaction costs. Common-user-space warehousing could significantly reduce storage and stock-holding costs for businesses. The construction of these facilities could be encouraged by central government-backed bank guarantees to encourage

cooperative type investment. Other cost co-sharing arrangements can be introduced to reduce costs for transport, local area energy, water treatment, and waste recycling. These investments would create green economy jobs and reduce the environmental damage done to waterways systems and soils. Secondary cities must partner with the central government to develop eco-friendly investments in technologies and facilities that help create sustainable development opportunities.

I 15.5 Socio-Demographic Features

15.5.1 Population Growth

There is much debate about the size of Africa's urban population and the number of people living in secondary cities. The United Nations estimates the current urban population at 600 million or 43% of Africa's total population. Of this, 15% or more live in secondary cities. Africapolis, supported by the OECD, puts the figure at 50%. Africapolis estimates that the population of urban areas in 2015 was 567 million, compared to UNDESA's estimate of 491.53 million. Africapolis' estimates are made from capturing the population of urban areas based on spatial imagery. UN estimates are derived from administrative boundaries. In many cases, urban areas of urban administration districts extend well beyond city boundaries. The differences are explained by the two organisations using different definitions of 'urban'.

African secondary cities are expanding at a rate of 3%, compared to 2.6% for many large metropolitan regions. Rates of growth vary significantly between regions. Northern African secondary cities, with populations between 0.5 and 1 million, are growing fastest at 4.6%; southern African cities are growing at 2.5%, the slowest rate, due to higher national levels of urbanisation. Many regional secondary cities are the first step for rural-urban migrants. A significant proportion of these cities eventually develop into primate cities.

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Africapolis estimates that the population of urban areas in 2015 was 567 million, compared to UNDESA's estimate of 491.53 million.

The demography of secondary cities varies between metropolitan regions. The age cohorts of secondary cities show they have younger populations, due to higher growth and migration rates and slightly higher male populations. There is a slight hollowing out of the population cohort between 15 and 45 years of age in many secondary cities, with the movement of skilled people and students to larger cities in search of higher salaries, education and career opportunities.

The growing physical and socio-economic development gap between primary and secondary cities has a polarising effect, creating socio-spatial inequalities and multiple deprivations. In line with the demographics of secondary towns and cities, children and youth are most affected by these inequalities and deprivations (UNICEF & UN-Habitat, 2020).

15.5.2 Migrant Populations

The make-up of migrants in urban areas varies within African countries and regions. Three types of migrants make up the demographic structure of urban populations: refugees, economic migrants, and seasonal migrants. Depending on countries, this mix may include a large cohort of international or ethnic groups. Secondary cities close to international borders in Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and the southern Sahel often have many international migrants. In southern

and northern Africa, small urban areas currently absorb about 75% of rural-urban migration, and their growth rates can be higher than in metropolitan centres. Analysis of rural-urban migration in eight southern African countries indicated that this type of migration accounts for about half of the urban population. An estimated 25% to 30% of the population growth in secondary cities is attributable to migration. More definitive studies are needed to identify the demographic structure of migrant populations in secondary cities. Many of these are second-phase migrants from smaller urban areas or transient migrants to large metropolitan regions as seasonal workers.

Migrants bring significant economic net benefits to secondary cities. While migrants experience many prejudices and discrimination, they add significantly to productivity and employment growth, as discussed in Chapter 4. They also add to the diversity and, through the diaspora, develop business connections that enhance trade and investment. Migrants tend to have better education and bring skills used to create local businesses and enterprises. Many will take up jobs that resident-born populations will not do, and many of these are essential for providing basic sanitation services. There is evidence that migration to secondary cities is rising, especially in the southern Sahel and northern countries and in South Africa. Often, these secondary city locations are part of a staged migration to large cities, once migrants have gained basic language and technical skills.

15.5.3 Lack of Decent Employment Opportunities

Secondary cities tend to have high levels of informal sector employment. The narrowness of the economic base and a high proportion of the population engaged in consumption-driven economic activities severely limits the diversity of jobs, income and business skills, and local government revenues. Trading, transport, and domestic services are high employment sectors. Few secondary cities have high employment levels in the advanced services sectors, such as finance, health, and education services. Cape Coast is an exception; it has higher employment levels in the education sector due to its university and the high number of private boarding schools. Without higher levels of demand for advanced services, it is difficult to broaden the economic base of local economies to provide access to decent higher-paid jobs. Dire-Dawa has focused on reducing urban unemployment and slum/informal settlement areas, increasing access to land and essential services, and strengthening urban-rural and urban-urban linkages. It is a good case study of a secondary city addressing the need for employment creation.

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Cape Coast is an exception; it has higher employment levels in the education sector due to its university and the high number of private boarding schools.

15.5.4 High levels of youth unemployment

The secondary cities studied have high levels of youth unemployment and the accompanying stresses. While youth unemployment is high in African cities, secondary cities face very high incidences of social disorder linked to a lack of employment opportunities. Gangs, criminal activity, drug-related activities, and violence against women are significant social issues in several case study cities. Many males are poorly educated, with low self-esteem, are unemployed or under-employed and easily led to criminal and gang activity, often associated with cross-border illicit trade. Youth unemployment is high among new and transient rural-urban migrants, who tend to be less educated than locally born residents and often do not speak the local dialect or have the same tribal association. The focus of assistance to a secondary city is to reduce urban unemployment and slum/informal settlement areas, increase access to land and basic services, and strengthen urban-rural and urban-urban linkages.

15.5.5 Low levels of education

The skill base in most secondary cities is narrow, making it hard for businesses to recruit well-educated local staff. Secondary city populations tend to have fewer years of schooling, lower levels of higher education, fewer schools per 10,000 population, lower levels of literacy and numeracy, and lower-level facilities and equipment. In secondary city primary and secondary schools, expenditure per capita is often significantly less than in larger cities, but much higher than in rural areas. Many schools do not have computers and internet services, reducing access to e-learning and improved knowledge opportunities to equip students for working in the twenty-first century. Attracting high-quality staff is challenging, with high teacher turnover rates and poor teacher training standards. These factors affect the development of regional secondary city skill bases, both in quality and quantity. Low education levels reflect nationwide problems across Africa – of low expenditure on education as a proportion of GDP. Rwanda has recognised this problem and is seeking to introduce e-learning into secondary cities. E-learning and learning of English have been introduced to good effect in the refugee city of Kakuma in north-western Kenya.

15.5.6 Housing

Africa has some of the worst housing conditions globally, with 60% of the total urban population of sub-Saharan Africa living in slums and informal settlements (UNICEF & UN-Habitat, 2020, p. 11). Housing deprivation is associated with low income and high unemployment. Several reports show that housing conditions in secondary cities are lower than in primary cities. The household size in the inner-city core slum areas is often very large. Factors contributing to this situation include land tenure disputes, the inability of urban authorities to plan and layout plots for housing, lack of capital to build affordable housing, poor construction skills and poor quality of building materials. Ibadan is an example of a secondary city with significant housing problems.

The lack of decent housing profoundly impacts the quality of life and well-being, affecting people's physical and psychological health – especially children and the elderly. The need for better quality, layout, and housing design, with basic services in all African cities, has been documented extensively. Still, given the low income and education levels, solutions to these problems have not been forthcoming. Secondary cities are positioned better than larger cities to solve housing problems, as access to land is less constrained and land cost is cheaper in secondary cities. However, a paradigm shift is needed to enable local governments to engage in housing partnerships with landowners to ensure that land is developed for housing through an orderly process, even if services are provided later. The housing finance problem in secondary cities is still acute, given the low income of much of the population.

15.5.7 Low-level Investment in Social Infrastructure

Capital investment is needed to develop and improve social services facilities such as health, education, welfare, emergency services, and police. This is crucial to support the development of healthy, safe, and knowledgeable inhabitants of secondary cities. Secondary cities have extremely low ratios of schools, hospital beds and emergency services facilities compared to primate cities. As shown in the Mombasa case study (see Chapter 12, Kenya), low youth education levels can severely impact unemployment and crime. Indicators of the level of basic social infrastructure for health and education for some of the case studies show that social infrastructure levels, quantity, and quality are significantly lower than in metropolitan regions. Poor social infrastructure significantly affects the quality of life, public health, and productivity in secondary cities. Private social services are developing in many cities like Ibadan and Mombasa. Still, these only provide for the needs of high-income groups, leaving most low-income people lacking many essential human services.

15.6 State of the Environment

The state of the environment in many secondary cities is poor. Environmental reporting on the state of cities or regional reports scarcely mentions the environmental problems facing the development and management of secondary cities. Little data is collected on air and water quality, land conversions and vegetation loss. Secondary city governments cannot enforce environmental regulations, as they lack the staff, resources and equipment needed. Little has been done to address waterways pollution and water resource usage rights; this requires total catchment management, which current government systems are not equipped to do.

15.6.1 Catchment Management

The loss of vegetation in peri-urban areas surrounding secondary cities in the arid regions of Africa is high - especially where trees are cut for firewood or making charcoal. Loss of vegetation has become more severe due to climate change, land clearing and overgrazing of water catchment areas. This has led to growing flood problems, not only in immediate catchments but downstream. Local governments are not in the position administratively or have the resources to police the loss of vegetation through illegal land clearing, a factor noted in the Cape Coast study, Ghana (see Chapter 7).

The Climate Change Pact adopted at the Glasgow 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) calls for an end to deforestation by 2030; however, this will require concerted efforts to reduce the loss of vegetation in regions where secondary cities have an impact on this. Greater resources must be given to secondary cities and regional local governments to improve catchment management. New innovative approaches will need to be introduced to encourage greater community self-organising and management arrangements to restore water catchment health and reduce runoff and soil erosion. Schemes such as the National Landcare Program in Australia⁽²⁾ offer solutions for improved catchment management of African secondary cities. However, this will also call for collaboration between local governments that make up large water and vegetation catchments on preparing management plans and sharing the cost, information, and resources for their management.



New innovative approaches will need to be introduced to encourage greater community self-organising and management arrangements to restore water catchment health and reduce runoff and soil erosion.

15.6.2 Waste Management

Smaller secondary cities in Africa tend not to have well-organised waste management systems and services. Waste rubbish is disposed of extensively by burning and dumping. Few secondary cities have well-developed waste management facilities or incineration. Poor waste management, especially medical waste, is having a significant impact on public health. Toxic industrial wastes (especially abattoirs), for example, in Cape Coast, is mainly discharged untreated. As a result, waterways, groundwater tables, and soils in many low-lying areas of secondary cities are becoming heavily contaminated. A review of international development assistance projects

shows that African primate, and a few larger secondary cities, have received project aid to address soil or water table pollution. For many low-lying small secondary cities, groundwater pollution is a significant problem. Many of the poorer communities in these cities rely on wells as their main source of potable water.

Waste management and groundwater pollution are emerging as long-term severe public health issues for secondary cities. In the lower reaches of river systems, the problem is compounded by the cumulative effects of solid and liquid waste dumping on land near and in waterways. Collaborative solutions are required to address these issues, some of which will involve international efforts to ensure waste does not contaminate soils and waterways. While secondary and intermediary sized cities with populations between 100,000 and 1 million comprise 30% of Africa's urban population, they significantly contribute to national pollution. A more holistic approach to waste management, including using shared regional waste services and recycling, is required to avoid further degradation of land and water environments.

15.6.3 Air pollution

Compared to secondary cities in other regions of the world, Africa has low air pollution levels. Nevertheless, deaths from smoke pollution caused by household cooking and burning of rubbish are high. In sub-Saharan Africa, four out of five inhabitants use solid biomass for cooking, leading to high death rates – especially amongst children and women. This may not decrease any time soon, until alternative fuel or energy sources and equipment are made cheap enough for even the poorest household to purchase.

National programs are required to reduce unsustainable domestic use of biomass for cooking and energy for petrol-driven engines – especially motorcycles and mopeds. This transition will take many years to achieve. It will require a targeted-change program, starting in the extensive primary and secondary cities where population levels and energy use are highest.

15.6.4 Management of Climate Change

African secondary cities contribute minimally to climate change, but they are increasingly affected by it. More frequent flooding, droughts, and rising temperatures reduce the habitability of many secondary cities in the Sahel region. Coastal secondary cities like Cape Coast are severely affected by coastal erosion and significantly impacted by rising sea levels. Secondary cities are poorly equipped to deal with climate change, especially in applying adaptation measures to address flood mitigation and coastal erosion. This involves expensive infrastructure, for which local and central governments do not have funds to pay. Most secondary cities will have to develop local solutions to climate change impacts through low-cost technology, self-organising communities, or community-based emergency and disaster management plans for dealing with threats as they arise.

Addressing issues of climate change in African cities will require extensive investment in programs for adaptation. In preparing development plans, secondary cities must identify climate change risks and public sector investment plans to mitigate these. Comprehensive secondary and intermediate city-level climate change audits will be necessary for all African countries to know what priority investments are needed to adapt to climate change. International development agencies can play a crucial role in developing national capacity to conduct audits and assess climate change adaption needs for cities.

15.6.5 Green Finance

Most African countries cannot fund measures needed to address environmental management, regeneration, and climate change adaption. The COP26 conference revealed that substantial funds and resources would need to be raised from developed economies to address climate change and meet other sustainable development goals (SDG) targets. The need for green finance funds, which would give access to funds to redress climate change and environmental management problems, is crucial if African cities are to meet the SDG targets and improve the quality of life for Africa's urban and rural populations. National governments also need to develop green finance funds using nationwide pension savings.

15.7 Connectivity

There is enormous diversity and contrast in the pattern and level of development of sub-Saharan African cities. Unlike other world regions, urbanisation in sub-Saharan countries is dominated by large metropolitan cities, most of which are the national capitals or former national capitals. Secondary city development is occurring around some of the major cities of Nigeria, South Africa, and Angola. Most secondary cities are part of the system of cities developed under colonial rule.

While all sub-Saharan African cities are experiencing severe growth-management problems, secondary city problems are the most severe. These cities have poor urban governance and management systems. Many lack basic infrastructure, good education, community, and health services and have unreliable urban and regional logistics systems. Professionally managed sub-Saharan Africa and secondary cities have dynamic local economies; they are mostly consumption-driven with a large informal employment sector. Their peri-urban areas tend to be highly dispersed, with inhabitants engaged in semi-subsistence activities. In these cities, the population and labour force tend to be transitional, with migrants frequently returning to rural areas or moving into metropolitan cities when employment is not available.

Local economies are dominated by the transport, government, and trading services sectors. The industrialisation of African secondary cities has been slow to develop, partly because of poor infrastructure, logistics and government systems. The inefficiency of systems outside of the principal metropolitan regions adds to business and government transaction costs. Secondary cities struggle to attract investment and build and retain human capital. Many are becoming heavily reliant on domestic and foreign remittances to supplement household incomes and support local economic activities. Urban financial management, revenue, and land management administration systems are weak. Land and housing markets are distorted, uncertain, lack transparency, and are influenced heavily by expatriate investment. Property and land-tax evasion is widespread.

Most sub-Saharan African secondary cities are not competitive. There is no policy framework for fostering competition for trade and investment between cities. National governments have shown no strong commitment to implement administrative and physical decentralisation policy reforms to encourage greater local autonomy, responsibility, and effort to promote local economic development by secondary city governments. While the development of some secondary cities has been driven strongly by natural resource development, productivity improvements in the agriculture and services sector are low, undermining the ability of secondary cities to compete. Most sub-Saharan African secondary cities do not have the capacity to develop competitive export-orientated economies and industries, so they will need to focus more on encouraging endogenous growth and stimulating national trade and markets. These are strategic directions needed in national urbanisation and regional economic development policies that stress the important role those secondary cities play in the social and economic development of systems of cities and countries.

15.8 International Development Assistance

Sub-Saharan Africa countries have received significant international assistance for urban development, especially after attaining independence. More recently, assistance agencies have varied from the United Nations to pan-European, American, and private institutions and the Chinese. Some researchers argue that international assistance has left African countries worse off than they were 50 years ago. Key problems are seen to be not the amount of aid or assistance African countries have received, but the inequality of opportunities given to the development of African economies compared to other regions of the world, such as Asia, together with the 'one size fits all' approach adopted by many assistance agencies. Solutions need to be developed that recognise and address the different needs of different African countries.

I 15.9 Key Takeaway Lessons

African secondary cities are falling well behind metropolitan regions in the development race. While some are dynamic centres of commerce and trade, most secondary cities are struggling to develop more advanced economies that will enable them to become self-sufficient and prosperous. There is a need to start a conversation at the higher national political and technical levels across the African continent on the merits of secondary city development. Substantial investment is necessary for human capital development to support the development of cities and jobs, as sub-Saharan Africa transitions to a post-agriculture economy. There is an urgent need to build local governance capacity and support land and infrastructure development, markets, and logistics systems. This should begin with the rehabilitation of existing urban systems – to provide the bare minimum level of urban services to support the operation and maintenance of primary and secondary cities.

The development of local secondary city economies can be transformed to support endogenous economic growth and the development needs identified. Developing local business networks, collaboration to reduce common-user costs of providing infrastructure and services, fostering industry clusters, specialisation, and cooperation will be essential to leverage resources and create economies of scope and scale. Building a network of collaborative-competitive cities will be crucial to achieving this. There is a need to showcase global, continental, and local urbanisation best practices and make knowledge about these accessible to stakeholders.

There is need for parallel conversations with African peoples of the mind shift required to achieve accelerated and sustainable economic growth and gains associated with local, national, and global opportunities. Government must review their taxing systems to ensure fairness and equitability in a user-pays system that is managed effectively, and that all due taxes are collected. Such conversations must recognise the need to evolve sustainable, home-grown solutions to the challenges and opportunities presented by urbanisation. This includes developing local capital markets to realise the potential to capitalise land and public assets to provide pool funding to supplement private sector and public-private partnership (PPP) investments. A focus on the reform of urban land administration and management systems is necessary to underpin the development of and confidence in urban land and property markets.



There is a need to showcase global, continental, and local urbanisation best practices and make knowledge about these accessible to stakeholders.

The immediate and long-term efforts at planning, management, and development of secondary cities will become severely hampered without national statistical offices and data improvements. Reliable data is essential for modern cities to plan physical, economic, and social development and infrastructure and monitor environmental impacts and performance. The establishment of African and international research ‘centres of excellence’ would enable cross-continental, regional, national and local urbanisation issues to be openly addressed and data to be made available to any stakeholder interested in the planning management and development of a region’s cities.

Official development assistance (ODA) supporting urban projects in Africa has been allocated disproportionately towards the needs of primate cities. It has not been well-coordinated, as agencies focus on single-sector investments and technical assistance, and it seldom involves integrated packages of aid to secondary cities. Secondary cities are disadvantaged by both FDI and international development assistance in realising their development potential. There is an urgent need for ODA agencies and national governments to ascertain why the design, delivery, and performance of so many internationally assisted projects do not deliver on development outcomes. The ODA with institutional, NGO and private sector resources is poor. A more spatially integrated, collaborative, and targeted approach to development aid, planning, financing, operations and maintenance is required for secondary cities to make a more significant contribution to urban and regional development and reduce the growing inequities

occurring between them and metropolitan regions.

The development of African secondary cities is being shaped by a new and powerful set of economic, climate and social changes; violence; disease; and geopolitical forces. Many of these are beyond the management and control of national and local governments. These forces will continue to change the dynamics of African countries, and especially secondary cities. Many of the problems associated with climate change, education, public health, international migration, corruption, and criminal activities will require cooperative efforts at national, regional, and local levels of government to resolve. Devolution or decentralisation will also be critical to developing more effective local responses to some of the problems in secondary cities.

Challenges and change are always difficult to manage; however, they can also create opportunities. Many African secondary cities have good opportunities, provided they are well managed and supported through good policy, management, and development initiatives. How to realise these opportunities is the focus of the final chapter.

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ENDNOTES

- (1) See, Kenya's Constitution of 2010, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Kenya_2010.pdf?lang=en
- (2) Australian Government. (2019). National Landcare Program. <https://www.awe.gov.au/agriculture-land/farm-food-drought/natural-resources/landcare/national-landcare-program>



16

NEW URBAN-AGE AGENDA FOR AFRICA

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The population of African cities is expected to grow by more than 900 million by 2050. Many of these people will live in secondary cities. Secondary cities are a sub-system of the national systems of cities — between primate cities/metropolitan areas and regional towns — and they play an important role in national development. Most are administrative capitals, major industry, or satellite cities of metropolitan regions with populations ranging between 100,000 and 1 million people. However, in countries like Nigeria, some secondary cities will grow very large in the future, with populations exceeding 2 million people.

Most African secondary cities are active, bustling centres of business, logistics, and trade. Many are poor compared to primate cities and the large metropolitan regions, such as Lagos, Kinshasa, and Cairo, which dominate the pattern of national economic and urban settlement. Due to their high household sizes, African secondary cities tend to have low rise housing and be dispersed, but still relatively dense. Some have a rich cultural, musical, architectural, and archaeological heritage and are unique — such as Luxor in Egypt, Stone Town in Zanzibar, and Saint-Louis in Senegal. Like Mombasa in Kenya and Tétouan in Morocco, others are transforming rapidly, becoming more entrepreneurial, competitive, and well-connected.

The purpose of this book has been to explore and understand the causation factors that have constrained the development of African secondary cities. The authors have identified the many challenges, gaps, and shortfalls in urban policy, planning, development, and maintenance approaches and the lack of focus on secondary cities. The importance of secondary cities to national development is only now becoming recognised. Valuable lessons have been gained from the chapter and case studies about the need for improved urban policy, governance, management, human capital capacity, institutional, economic, and regenerative development.

Despite their many problems, all secondary cities have some potential for development. Secondary cities do not have the agglomeration advantages of large metropolitan regions, but most have the population and market size to create the level of scale to become competitive. The key to realising this potential is how to improve city governments' capacity to manage urban environments and urbanisation, and leverage infrastructure, capital, human resources, and technology to enable the cities to be more competitive and operate at a broader scale, beyond local regions and across borders. Many development opportunities for secondary cities have been described in earlier chapters. The first step to unlocking development opportunities is to address the inequities that are currently inherent in that system.

A new approach, therefore, is needed to support the development of national systems of cities that recognise the importance of secondary cities to national development. Secondary cities are critical in facilitating connectivity between large metropolitan regions — with over 65% of Africa's population living in smaller urban and rural areas. Greater balance in the development of the national systems of cities is essential.

The continued growth of large primate city metropolitan regions in Africa is not sustainable. As nations develop, unless secondary cities function more efficiently, improvements to people's livelihoods are likely to be limited to populations living in the very large cities. If the pattern of urbanisation, migration and wealth continue to remain concentrated, there will potentially be severe consequences for national economies, the environment, and populations across the continent. This concentration also poses a significant risk to the economic security of nations if a major shock event hits the primate cities.

This chapter outlines ways secondary cities can maximize future development opportunities, achieve greater equality and sustainability, and enhance their national economy. The focus is on opportunities to adopt a better and more systems approach to the management and development of African secondary cities. This section focuses on spatial economic development models, spatial planning of land-use and infrastructure, the development and management of governance, social, environmental systems, and connectivity. This is followed by a short section on international official development assistance organisations' roles and priority areas for support for secondary cities.

16.1 A New Urban-Age Agenda for Secondary Cities

The world's urban future resides in the development of cities, especially its secondary cities (Bearak & Moriarty, 2021). In 2016 the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, launched the New Urban Agenda, which most countries signed. To date, slow progress has been made thus far with its implementation (Galal, 2018). However, the document's focus was on large metropolitan regions, with minimal recognition of the critical role secondary/intermediate cities can play in the national systems of cities.

As already discussed, central governments across Africa generally have failed to ensure that secondary cities play a more productive role in national development in economic, population and spatial planning policy. In most cases, secondary city per-capita development indicators fall significantly below those of metropolitan regions. The time has come for governments to recognise the vital role of secondary cities in the development of African countries. They must be given a greater focus in national urban, population and economic development agendas and policy and be provided with the resources and capacity to play a more significant role in national development.

Capacitating secondary cities to support the development of a more robust and more dynamic national system of cities and development requires a different way of thinking about policy development and implementation — using a system rather than a sectoral approach — to managing national and local resources.

All cities function through a complex mix of interrelated urban systems and networks. These systems depend on wide-ranging inputs of energy, resources, products, goods and services, people, and decision-making processes to deliver essential economic, social, environmental, personal goods and services. At the secondary city level, the forward and backward linkages within these systems are complex. Historically, national, and local government governance in supporting the production and delivery of a wide range of goods and services has been sector-based with poor integration between systems and poorly managed.

Urban economic development policy for secondary cities development operates vertically and horizontally at multiple levels across the state — from country to individual parcels of land in the case of planning systems. The systems that relate to land may involve legal, economic, social (i.e., health and safety), and logistics supply-chain elements for countries and cities to have well-functioning property markets. How well the elements, states and relationships are linked, and the efficiency of transactions and flows affect whether a business thrives.

16.2 Preparing for a New Age of African Networked Cities

Few African countries have begun the transition to supporting the development of urban systems at the secondary city level. To improve the management and development of secondary cities, better urban governance, infrastructure, land development, investment, service delivery and logistics systems are necessary. A more dynamic, responsive and sustainable approach by secondary cities is needed to attract jobs, better housing and investment. This requires a more systemic understanding by policymakers of the ways systems of cities and urban systems operate at the secondary city level.

African countries need to develop national development and urban strategies that define the role, functions, and types of systems for different sub-sets of cities within national systems of cities (e.g., metropolitan, secondary, and smaller-sized cities). The management of cities these days is shaped less by population size and more by their function within national and increasingly regional trading systems.

Cities no longer function as hierarchical systems of hubs, spokes, nodes and connectors. Technology, particularly the internet, is transforming urban systems from hierarchies to networks. The Internet of things has revolutionized knowledge, production and purchasing. In African cities' management, planning, development and governance, especially the intermediary role of secondary cities, holistic urban systems management are needed to replace many of the older hierarchical and controlling planning and decision-making systems. This applies to all levels of government.

The transformation of urban systems from hierarchies to networks provides greater choice and competition and completely bypasses traditional order. The integration of urban services between local governments leads to wider choices and better quality of services.

16.2.1 Framework for a Systems Approach to Secondary City Development

A change of practice towards a more systems-driven approach is needed to ensure more sustainable development outcomes for African secondary cities. This will be difficult and will require a shift in thinking by policymakers and leaders of government. Most governments and international development agencies have adopted sector approaches to preparing urban development projects for capital works or capacity-building programs. Often, only one agency or department benefits. The flow-on of benefits, information and learning to other agencies involved and responsible for ongoing operation and maintenance seldom occurs.

A 2010 report noted that the World Bank performance failure rate of urban sector projects in Africa was over 25% (Bahl et al., 2013), with project design flaws being a significant issue (Nahashon, 2010). Few governments like to engage in multi-sector projects because they are complicated to design, involve a lot of research and coordination and are challenging to implement. However, the benefits of multi-sector development projects often outperform many single-sector projects (Roberts & Cohen, 2002).

Existing organisation systems, processes, and governance arrangements will not solve many management and development problems affecting secondary cities. A change of governance model is required. Management problems related to climate change, economic development and urban services require greater cooperation, shared funding and inputs arrangements between agencies and departments at multiple levels. These coordination problems can be solved through better coordination and collaborative governance arrangements using a systems approach to problem-solving and the planning, design, implementation and operations of projects and programs.

Lifecycle planning operations for infrastructure and services are essential and should be introduced to all local city governments. Local governments maintain most of the public-built assets, even though the central government might pay for them. This should lead to better-integrated management and ensure inputs/outputs for the planning, development, operation and maintenance of roads, health, education, and other services. 'Whole of government' approaches to planning and budgeting, timing and transfers of responsibilities need to be introduced and procedures defined clearly. This must become a primary focus of change management in secondary city governments and an essential guide of central government funding and official development assistance (ODA).

Examples of well-developed projects that adopted integrated approaches to whole of government planning and operations include Ghana's Strategic Plan for the Greater Accra Metropolitan Development Area, one of the few attempts made (Ministry of Local Government, Ghana, 1992). This was a first attempt at a 'whole of region' integrated plan, but the failure to establish a planning commission (see discussion later) for the region to oversee the coordination of budgets and project implementation led to a very fragmented approach to its implementation. Box 16-1 describes a successfully implemented integrated program for two regions in Sri Lanka.

An urban system consists of a range of sub-systems comprised of many different elements. The performance and operation of secondary cities depend upon the positive interaction of the different elements. If one or more fails or is missing, the impact on the city can be significant. For example, failure in a network of traffic light systems can cause significant traffic congestion and extended travel and delivery times, with resulting additional costs.

BOX 16.1 | The Northeast Local Services Improvement Project (NELSIP)

The Northeast Local Services Improvement Project (NELSIP) 2010-2017 in Sri Lanka (World Bank, 2018) was a multi-sector project involving social, urban, rural and resilience components to support 101 local governments in the war-ravaged north and eastern parts of the country to regenerate the economy of many cities, towns and districts. The goal was to rebuild local government capacity to manage local government finances before embarking on programs to design, develop, contract and implement the construction of a broad range of public buildings and infrastructure projects, revenue and organization reform, operations, and maintenance and one-stop-shop approval services. More than 1,160 projects (mainly infrastructure) valued at over US\$86 million were completed, leading to the improvement of over 1,500 km of road and 63 km of drainage, and the construction of 126 market buildings, 41 local government and commercial offices buildings, 58 children’s playgrounds, 12 new libraries and nursery facilities, healthcare, crematorium, and other community service facilities. Compared to previous sector projects focused on water and sanitation, the economic rate of return on this project was significant.

16.2.2 Framework for Managing Secondary Cities

A systems approach framework to manage and support development opportunities for secondary cities in Africa is outlined in Table 16.1). This approach can also be applied to analyse national urban systems. It is presented here to conceptualise the various elements of managing the development and operation of secondary cities.

Table 16.1 shows six urban systems (top row across) and six functional (first column) groups of activities, which provide a framework for the management of activities to support the operations and development of secondary cities. (These systems and functions can be changed or adapted if desired.) Many connections, flows, and combinations of activities occur across these various networks of urban systems and functions at different levels on a day-to-day and annual operations basis for the management of secondary cities. The table shows a sample of initiatives that secondary cities and adjacent region governments could take to build capacity and support opportunities for development and regeneration.

Well-developed urban systems will enable the facilitation of multiple connections and mobilize resources, skills and technologies in many different places, spaces and times to enable things to be done quickly. Critical to the introduction and development of a systems management approach to secondary cities is the need for careful analysis of the constraints preventing these systems from functioning efficiently. These constraints may be political, skills and knowledge, information, financial, technological or a combination of these. The critical issue for secondary city local governments is to know the most significant constraints to the efficient operation of urban systems and remedy them as a matter of priority.

16.2.2.1 Key Urban Systems

Six broad urban systems support the operation and development of secondary cities. These are outlined below and discussed in more detail later:

Governance systems can be the product of how individuals and institutions (both public and private) plan, organize and manage a city’s public affairs and allocate resources and responsibilities. It includes formal institutions and informal arrangements, the social capital of citizens, and the legal, regulatory, operational and management arrangements necessary to organize and manage the city.

Economic and Finance systems comprise money, land, property markets, employment, investments, valuations and local government financial management.

Built Environment systems comprise the physical, operational infrastructure, utilities, structures, buildings and other tangible assets used by societies for various everyday purposes. They also include hardware, machinery and technologies used to produce different goods and services needed by communities.

Social systems are the structures and mechanisms used in the social structure of society to provide a wide range of personal and social needs. They include the management structures used to produce and provide essential health, education, culture, welfare, emergency, security, law and order services and improve general well-being. Social systems also include knowledge (both formal and tacit), information, communications, media and personal services contributing to social and cultural capital development.

Environmental systems are resources, products and services produced by nature and used in the development and operation of cities. They account for the exchange of materials and influence between cities and their surrounding landscapes. Their focus is on the nature and quality of the physical environment, including urban microclimate, hydrology, vegetation, landforms, coastlines, water, air quality and soils.

Connectivity (flow) systems are the hard and soft infrastructure of networks and technologies associated with all systems that enable the flow of goods, materials, people, livestock, water, energy, waste, data, knowledge and information between geographic locations and between people across space and time. Without the connectivity of these elements, cities could not function.

TABLE 16.1 | Functional elements urban subsystem supporting the development of secondary cities

Systems/ functions	Governance	Economics and Finance	Built Environment	Social	Environmental	Connectivity
Organization and Structure	Collaborative governance Teams-based management	Economic development policies One-stop business centre	The integrated development approval system Public participation	Employment and poverty alleviation Single social services centre	Integrated environmental management	Online information Data exchange E-governance Focus groups
Policy and Strategy	Integrated public policy management Community-based budgeting	Urban financial management Investment Incentives	Integrated strategic planning Public investment plans	Public health and wellbeing	Climate change adaptation Emergency management plans	Support for self-organizing network partnerships Suggestion boxes
Resource Management:	Legal systems and regulation Financial management	Value-added business Co-financing	Building regulation enforcement	Lifelong education and learning Community colleges	Pollution and congestion Forest and land rehabilitation	Public transport apps Share-use ride and logistics apps
Planning and Development	Corporate planning and management	Productivity and competitiveness targets Economic risk management assessment	Housing and shelter strategies Public-private partnership infrastructure delivery	Community services	Environmental health and safety	Communications and information
Capacity Building	Accountability and transparency Human resources management	Research and development Technology and innovation	Development control Citizen science groups	Peace and security Community crime watch Community policing	Cleaner production and industrial ecology Recycling	Communities of interest Diaspora networks Supply chains and dynamics
Resilience and Regeneration	Participatory and inclusive governance Social media networks for disaster recovery	Industry diversification grants City-city trade partnerships	Asset maintenance Heritage conservation Local area energy networks	Human resource development Migrant integration programs	Green economies and design Risk and hazard management	Community support networks Local area support services Community wardens

Source: Author.

16.2.2.2 Functional Groups of Activities Supporting the Management of Urban Systems

The functional activities needed to support the development and operation of urban systems in secondary cities can be grouped or clustered. The efficiency in which these function is affected by governance arrangements, available resources and the capacity of urban systems to support secondary city sustainable development and operations. The various activities and interactions associated with functional elements span many levels of governments, businesses and communities. A convenient way to group these functional activities for organizing the management and development of secondary cities is under the following headings:

Organization and Structure: This group of activities focuses on improving government and governance systems' efficiency and effectiveness by enhancing cooperation and collaboration. The scope of activities could include community and collaborative policy development and services delivery, teams' management, development and operations of regional planning and development commissions, and arrangements for disaster management and recovery.

Policy and Strategy: The focus of activities in this area may involve broad stakeholder support for activities designed to develop local, national, and regional urban policy to support the development of secondary cities. It could include supporting policies to assist with administrative and fiscal decentralization, national policies for logistics improvement, local economic development, city poverty alleviation and climate change adaptation.

Resource Management: Governments are responsible for the management, development and allocation of resources, which include natural, human, environmental, built and financial resources. Managing the allocation and spatial distribution of these resources can significantly affect the operations and development opportunities for systems of cities.



The various activities and interactions associated with functional elements span many levels of governments, businesses and communities.

Planning Development: These include programmatic activities (more than one activity or project) to support the preparation of local city development plans, infrastructure plans, area improvement programs, and management plans for peri-urban areas. The country program strategy could define programmatic activities agreed with the government, conducted at a national and city level. Programmatic activities could include a national program of competitive funding for integrated support packages to help secondary cities manage peri-urban areas, inner-city revitalization, urban renewal areas, or areas impacted by external issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Facilities for bundling projects to include technical assistance, capacity building and finance might be considered part of an integrated assistance package to secondary cities. Such arrangements have been used in Australia (Government of Australia, 2018), the United Kingdom, and India to support capacity building for secondary cities.

Capacity Building: This includes wide-ranging support for activities to improve the urban management, financial capacity and competencies of institutions, chambers of commerce, professional organizations, tradespeople, unions and communities in enhancing knowledge and expertise to develop and manage secondary cities more efficiently and effectively. Capacity building involves the development of infrastructure and network systems to strengthen the enabling environment of businesses, institutions, and public agencies to adopt and increase the use of e-governance, information management, geographic information system (GIS) capacity, and support for operations and maintenance.

Resilience and Regeneration: These could involve activities and projects targeted at specific areas or groups of people living in poverty or suffering from the impacts of disease, disaster or climate change. It may be possible to support programmatic prototype projects for the poor, involving standard housing or infrastructure for multiple

sites in secondary cities. A single, countrywide project could be developed to demonstrate low-cost solutions or approaches to shelter, improve household energy, or display localized construction techniques. For some secondary cities, activities might involve the restoration of buildings and cultural heritage.

Governments could also partner with business and civil society groups to mobilize multi-lateral support and resources for program activities at different scale levels. Multi-lateral activities may also involve developing toolkits and databases, where cities have access to reliable information and best practice models of urban management and the development of secondary cities.

The following sections describe measures that can assist in formulating national development and urban policy and strategies to support the development of secondary cities. These are grouped under the six urban systems described above and shown in Table 16.1 They need to be considered in the context of national urban systems.

16.3 Governance systems

Governance reform relating to the management of urban systems is essential if national systems of cities are to respond to the many changes that will impact their development. Decisions-making by secondary city governments must be done carefully, as each decision will impact the national system of cities and affect the economic development opportunities for other cities and regions that depend on them.

The following are some agenda items related to urban governance systems that will help create new opportunities for the development of secondary cities.

16.3.1 Decentralization of Secondary City Governance

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated a trend whereby many local government functions have been re-centralized – on this occasion to manage the impacts of the pandemic. As soon as possible, an orderly decentralization and devolution of functions back to local government, where day-to-day services are most effectively delivered, must be affected. Secondary city local governments must have clear statutory mandates, greater autonomy, realistic budgets, freedom of choice and control of the agenda for setting the vision and delivering on local development outcomes. Even in single-party states like China (HKTDC, 2021) and Vietnam, regional secondary cities are being given greater responsibility by the central government to shape local development policies and strategies to support national development outcomes, especially endogenous growth.

Central governments in Africa must show greater willingness to decentralize, devolve and empower local government, institutions, business and civil society organizations to fulfil their (mainly) mandatory roles and responsibilities: they must be resourced and capacitated to do so. The lack of empowerment hinders development and engagement in effective partnerships between government, business, institutions and civil society to deliver infrastructure, land, housing, and urban and social services more efficiently than government. This development potential should be unlocked.

A significant body of research shows that the more decentralized countries – those with diverse and more spatially equitable distribution of wealth, production, population and economic activity, coupled with high physical and business connectivity levels – tend to perform best and grow fastest. African countries show significantly greater disparities between large and smaller cities for wealth, production, income, and employment indicators than do advanced economies, like Australia, the United States, and Germany, which have a more equitable spatial distribution of population, wealth and economic activities. The spatial mix and number of secondary cities also provide an opportunity to maintain economic capacity if the primate city/s were hit by disaster or their functional capacity was severely disrupted for an extended period.

The disastrous flooding in Bangkok in 2011 illustrates the significant disruption such an event can have on a national economy (Poaponsakorn & Meethom, 2013). The World Bank estimated that the cost of the flooding event to the Thai economy, in economic and other losses, was US\$46.5 billion (12% of GDP). The impact on the

country and its cities was severe. Thailand was fortunate to recover over the next two years, due to its industrial base, resilience capacity and reserves. Most African countries do not have resources or the capacity to recover as Thailand did, however, if their economic engines (their primary cities) were disrupted severely. The risks associated with high-level primacy are sufficiently high to warrant a change of spatial policy on urbanisation and economic development for most African countries.

16.3.2 Regional Planning Commissions

Planning for urban and peri-urban development of secondary cities is not holistic, spatial, or well-coordinated. Local government agencies and departments prepare development plans, but they seldom involve cross-agency consultation during the annual planning and budget preparation cycle. Horizontal cross-agency planning rarely occurs at the central government level. The lack of this coordination and collaboration weakens horizontal sectoral and spatial budgeting planning and operations, leading to shortfalls in cross-agency budget allocations meant to ensure efficient infrastructure and services delivery lifecycle operations, especially at the local government level. Unnecessary duplication of effort and under- or over-allocation, poor coordination, and use of resources by the three levels of government — especially at the local level — means many essential infrastructure and services deliveries are not performing optimally.

Better integrated horizontal spatial packaging and clustering of budget outlays for the provision, maintenance and recurrent expenditure on assets and systems would reduce costs and help deliver public services more efficiently to support national development (see next section). It would also help the private sector align its investments better to support regional and local development and job creation.

Some African countries, like Ghana, have introduced national planning and regional commissions. The commissions' role is to improve the spatial, horizontal, and vertical inter-agency and government coordination, lifecycle budgeting and funding of public investment in capital work projects and service delivery programmes supporting national development. In addition to national planning commissions, there is a need for regional planning commissions, like in Ethiopia, to ensure better planning, coordination of development projects and programmes between the public and private sectors at the regional level. Regional commissions should be given similar powers and responsibilities as, and report to, the national planning commission.

Regional planning commissions would deliver significant benefits for secondary cities in states or provinces in which they are located (e.g., see HKTDC, 2021). Many secondary cities are state/provincial/district capitals. They would create opportunities to share geospatial data, plans and budgets related to long- and short-term planning, delivery and ongoing operations, and maintenance of local/national/international funded government projects and built assets to support the development of regions and nations. Regional planning commissions could identify cost-sharing arrangements to deliver lower cost, more efficient, effective, and sustainable services, and use public and private sector resources to optimise development efforts.

Planning commissions are models that have been used very effectively elsewhere to ensure governments get value for money from public investments. These investments continue to operate efficiently throughout their lifecycle. Linking multi-agency recurrent expenditure for maintenance of public assets during their lifecycle could quickly become line-items in national and local government budgets. Regional planning commissions would take time and need capacity building to develop. They are a crucial governance instrument needed to decentralise decision-making, responsibility and more coordinated delivery of projects and programs at a regional and secondary city level.

16.3.3 Collaborative Governance for City Development and Management

Worldwide, local governments tend to be very reluctant to share and collaborate on the provision and delivery of infrastructure and urban services. This reluctance is due to concerns about equitability or the benefits of co-investment or co-delivery of services and self-interests. This reluctance to cooperate is particularly challenging for smaller local governments that lack critical resources and find it difficult to operate at scale to meet mandated

obligations to deliver infrastructure and services. Small local governments often are reluctant to support amalgamations or cooperate in fear that they will be swallowed up or dominated by larger local governments. Many have few resources to make a meaningful contribution to improving overall development efforts involving cooperation and collaboration between local governments.

Many countries and cities are engaging in collaborative governance arrangements as an alternative to amalgamation, addressing concerns and supporting planned infrastructure and services delivery and strengthening enabling environments for business and investment. Collaborative governance involves regional networks of local governments working together, pooling, and sharing resources on a wide range of planning, infrastructure, urban and regional services delivery to reduce transaction costs. Central governments can provide incentives to encourage collaborative governance by providing top-up funding and resources to local governments that have signed binding agreements to collaborate and share personnel and resources to deliver local infrastructure and public services more efficiently.

Collaborative governance arrangements between local governments result in collaborative advantage and enhanced competitiveness by enabling a network of local governments to build a critical mass of resources and hard and soft infrastructure needed to support the development of the local economy. Such arrangements create opportunities for secondary cities to develop essential infrastructure to support their development and hinterland regions.

Collaborative governance can provide significant cost savings and improved levels and quality of services at the secondary city and regional levels, particularly in the co-delivery of education, health, emergency services, water supply and waste management services. Co-investment, where a few local governments operate as a network to create a critical mass of resources, infrastructure and services, can result in a sharing of risk and reduced costs that make them more competitive and attractive to investors to establish new industries and services, as well as increased employment opportunities to regional populations.



Collaborative governance involves regional networks of local governments working together, pooling, and sharing resources on a wide range of planning, infrastructure, urban and regional services delivery to reduce transaction costs.

Annex A outlines a collaborative framework advantage for secondary cities, which could apply across African countries. Examples of how collaborative governance involving co-sharing of local government resources could be applied include: co-funding guarantees for infrastructure, asset management, pooling the cost and use of plants and equipment, joint urban and regional planning, and legal and financial management services. Collaborative governance does not involve political restructuring or changing governance arrangements. Its purpose is to ensure more efficient, cost-effective, and value-adding infrastructure and service delivery at the local level.

Collaborative governance operates best by doing simple things, such as ensuring that local governments can pool (or share) the use of resources such as equipment and/or staff. Road-making equipment, for example, can be pooled to facilitate improved road maintenance within several local government districts, instead of each local government purchasing equipment separately and having it idle for significant periods, either because of a lack of funds to purchase fuel, maintenance or because some equipment is not needed all the time. As a result, improvements to road maintenance will see increased benefits in transport logistics and trade. In addition to sharing equipment, matters such as legal, engineering, building control and municipal financial expertise can be provided on an agreed shared basis to more than one local government in the network, ensuring that more local governments have access to higher-level expertise.

An excellent model to start the networking of secondary cities is under development in Rwanda (see Box 16.2). Rwanda is embarking on an ambitious task of developing a network of six green secondary cities. Two key priorities are integrated development planning and management and the development of secondary cities as growth poles, with a focus on green urbanisation and innovation (Box 16.2). In May 2016, the Government of Rwanda, in partnership with the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), launched the National Roadmap for Green Secondary Cities Development in Rwanda (GGGI, 2016). The National Roadmap will support Rwanda’s Green Growth and Climate Resilient Strategy and serve as an implementation tool for the country’s Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS2). A key element of the green cities’ agenda is connectivity around five priority areas of economic transformation for rapid growth.

BOX 16.2 | Rwanda Broadband Secondary Cities Network

Rwanda has taken the lead in Africa in economic development through a model of green city development. The initiative supported by the World Bank and other ODA aims to develop a network of six secondary cities and towns to provide a basis for information and knowledge sharing and services delivery, including education and health services. It is also being used to support green industry development using the broadband network.



Source: Jeong (2014).

The creation of formal regional partnerships between cities and towns under networks or collaborative partnership arrangements offers cities opportunities to identify trade, information and other types of exchange that are mutually beneficial to signatories. Such partnerships can provide opportunities for a network of secondary city local governments to collaborate on climate change, regional transportation, communications and other infrastructure, and the construction of regional community and social services. Sister-city partnerships exist between many African secondary cities; however, they seldom generate many economic and/or social benefits.

16.3.4 Inclusiveness and Participatory Governance

Inclusiveness policy is becoming more widespread in local governments in Africa AND is essential to good-governance practice decision-making. It ensures relevant agencies and organizations, business, and community interests are recognized. Inclusiveness helps build trust in government and supports policy development and implementation, ensuring specific or special interests (e.g., people with disabilities, women and children) are included in decision-making and governance arrangements. Decisions are binding on participating parties and accepted more widely. Inclusiveness incorporates practices of community engagement, communities of practice (Hoosen, 2009), participatory planning and budgeting. It also includes community governance arrangements to maintain neighbourhood infrastructure and buildings, security and street beautification.

However, inclusiveness in secondary cities needs to go beyond consultation — to co-design and implementation of projects and programs of activities with business, institutions and local communities of interest. Many participatory governance processes are highly structured and do not provide opportunities for local innovation, creativity and experience to be incorporated into the local capacity-building process in order to deliver infrastructure and services. Secondary cities need to introduce more self-organised governance processes to deliver on a range of local infrastructure and services. Self-organising arrangements involve local community groups self-organizing to engage in tree planting, waterways management, community parks maintenance, and the building of community facilities they manage. This devolution of responsibility for local and broader regional urban areas to groups and organisations is important, as they are often better equipped to handle these. Such groups can usually call upon virtual expertise in the diaspora to provide valuable inputs into self-organising services delivery and management.

16.4 Economic and Finance Systems

The model of comparative and competitive advantage has driven the economic development of cities and countries for many centuries. However, as the world runs out of easily accessible non-renewable resources and climate change threatens life on the planet, that model is no longer sustainable. A new model of city development is emerging, based on a sharing economy, conservation of resources, green and inclusive growth, inclusion, equitable and sustainable development. This is a model based on collaborative advantage and cooperation where cities, governments, businesses, institutions, and organizations work in somewhat self-organizing systems but under clear guidelines, and using creative ways, to engage in planning, trade, commercialization, logistics, services delivery, and security level access and protocols. These arrangements and policies will vary between countries, cities, and geographic regions.

BOX 16.3 | In brief: Comparative, Competitive and Collaborative Advantages

Comparative advantage is an economy's ability to produce a particular good or service at a lower opportunity cost than its trading partners. The theory of comparative advantage introduces opportunity cost as a factor for analysis in choosing between different options for production. — *This may relate to cheap taxes, land and subsidized infrastructure.*

Competitive advantage refers to factors that allow a company to produce goods or services better or more cheaply than its rivals. These factors allow the productive entity to generate more sales or superior margins compared to its market rivals. — *This can mean applications of skills, technology, logistics, marketing, and innovations.*

Collaborative advantage is the ability to form effective and rewarding partnerships with other organisations, for mutual benefit. Being a good partner is a key corporate asset, or capability, for any business today. And today, this also may go further into collaboration between businesses, government and civil society. — *The focus here is on sharing common use infrastructure and services, joint ventures, alliance, etc., to reduce common transaction cost to business and government.*

Source: Adapted [Investopedia](#), Econlib (2022).

Secondary cities can play a more influential role in the economic development of nations and regions, but changes are needed to national urbanisation and economic and spatial development policies. Four key elements of spatial economic change are outlined below to help secondary cities to realise their development potential. These changes must occur within national spatial economic development policies for countries in the African region.

16.4.1 Urban Economics

16.4.1.1 A Balanced Exogenous and Endogenous Growth Model

Focus on export-orientated development has been a success factor in improving economic growth and development and moving millions of people out of poverty. Globalization and neoliberalist ideology have underpinned the growth model for national development for many decades. However, that model is being challenged in the developed and developing world, particularly due to the lingering effects of the global financial crisis (GFC) and the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, many countries have realized their vulnerability and loss of economic sovereignty due to their heavy reliance on a limited number of countries for trade, especially for the provision of manufactured goods and services.

A global shift led by China is fostering much stronger self-reliance, with support for endogenous growth and strengthening subnational, regional and city development capacity. Countries such as Japan, Korea, and Germany, with declining rates of population growth and ageing populations, are moving towards more capital- and technology-intensive production of manufactured goods and services, which can be delivered efficiently at economies of scale and locally to offset the competitive advantages of low labour costs that were once provided by manufacturing offshore in developing countries. These changes will have significant implications on global manufacturing in the future, as developed countries change the mix of endogenous and exogenous growth policies and move to reshored manufacturing.

African countries aspire to become more industrialised. Many have sought to do this by establishing economic enterprise industry zones to encourage foreign direct investment. However, these have been located predominantly in primate cities, have lacked a well-developed supply chain and logistics infrastructure, and have attracted limited investment in many cases. As noted, the competitive advantage of cheap labour costs, discounting of environmental and social costs associated with unsafe working conditions, and the shift towards more service-driven economies are challenging that dominant growth model for many African countries.

Growing levels of inequality, reliance on consumption-driven domestic growth, and a lack of competitiveness in locally-based manufacturing have significantly constrained development prospects for many African countries. The dependence on an exogenous growth-driven economic development model has underpinned national economic development for many decades. However, this will not create sufficient jobs to meet the demands for employment or significantly change most countries' wealth and consumption patterns. For African countries to develop a more sustainable model of development, national and local governments need to focus on fostering more opportunities for endogenous growth, especially in the services sector, where most jobs will be created in the future.

A balanced national spatial model of economic development that is both endogenous and exogenous is required for African countries. A focus on exporting industries is still important. However, they must recognize there are many opportunities for decentralized endogenous growth and embrace the important role of secondary cities in fostering increased national production, consumption and wealth creation. This calls for a significant policy shift but is crucial to achieving more equitable, inclusive and sustainable development in African economies and national systems of cities.

16.4.1.2 Creation of Green Economies

The transition to less fossil-fuel energy use is essential, focusing on a more circular economy for African cities. The creation of green economies presents numerous opportunities for African secondary cities. Many have the scale and population size to start the transition process. The complete transition to greener secondary city economies will take time, given much of the infrastructure required to support their development will require substantial investment in new infrastructure, technology, and human development and other resources. The focus of green economic development should begin with regenerating existing assets and retrofitting them to stretch their operational life to make them more efficient, with cheap and straightforward technologies.

Promising efforts are being made at a small scale to introduce sustainable technologies into African secondary cities to support recycling, biofuel production and green energy. However, the challenge is scaling up and adapting these technologies and raising the capital necessary to do so. In the interim, the key to scaling up is innovation, leveraging

local innovation, entrepreneurship, and know-how, and building virtual knowledge networks within the national and international expert community and the diaspora. The first crucial step to enable secondary cities to transform their infrastructure and systems to promote the growth of a more circular, greener economy is regeneration.

Ways in which secondary cities can create opportunities to develop greener, more sustainable economies include:

- Develop local area energy networks, including solar, wind, geothermal and biomass local generation sources. This has the potential to create more sustainable jobs and reduce energy costs.
- Introduce applications of industrial ecology by the recycling and reuse of water and wastes, especially plastic products for re-purposing as building materials, street furnishings and consumer products.
- Adopt cleaner production techniques for local industries with small grants for adapting machinery and equipment to use less energy, water, and raw materials.
- Restore, retrofit, re-engineer or replace energy or hydraulically inadequate infrastructure to reduce water, heat, and energy loss.
- Develop local businesses and technical skills to aid the conversion of petrochemical to electrical engines.
- Support regional forestry projects to support timber production, localise production of local furniture, building construction and other wood products.
- Support more diversified regional production of food to reduce the need for imported food.
- Pool equipment, machinery, vehicles, and facilities to achieve savings in energy use and labour efficiency.

16.4.1.3 New National Spatial Model of Economic Development

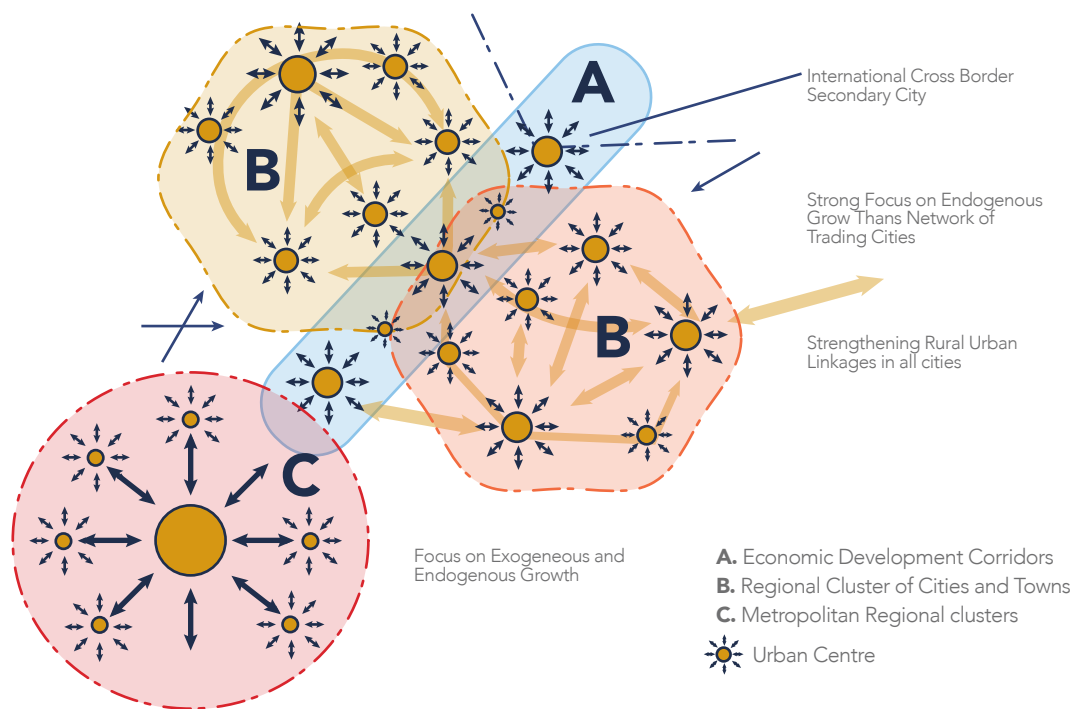
African countries face a difficult choice in managing spatial economic development. Should they continue with the highly centralized model of directing urban and regional economic development policy, allowing primate cities to be the primary drivers of national economic development? Or should there be a significant shift towards a more decentralized integrated national system of cities and regional development, where cities are encouraged to collaborate in competition with the country's largest cities?

Historically, African governments have adopted a more centralized approach to support the economic development of secondary cities to help overcome economies of scale and high transaction cost issues. However, this approach has led to ever-widening disparities, concentrations of wealth and power in the hands of a few, and inequalities in public services. It limits the range of job creation and investment opportunities outside metropolitan regions. However, large urban areas in Africa are experiencing rising externality costs from pollution and congestion. Concentrating so much of national production, political power, and wealth in one or two very large cities also leaves nations highly vulnerable and exposed to risk in the event of a disaster, such as severe flooding or pandemics. More equitable distribution of population, cities and wealth would help mitigate long-term economic shocks, should a major disaster strike a nation's primate city.

This research indicates the need for a decentralised and integrated system of cities and regional development as a new national spatial model of secondary cities economic development in African countries. Three spatial strategies can be applied to support this model, as shown in Figure 16.1. These are:

- A. Economic development corridors.
- B. Regional cluster of cities and towns.
- C. Metropolitan regional clusters.

FIGURE 16.1 | Three broad spatial strategies for enhancing secondary cities development



Source: Author.

Each of the above involves building networks and clusters and enhancing connectivity for secondary cities surrounding metropolitan regions, economic development corridors, and sub-national regions. The principles behind the development of all three strategies are similar. In most countries, a combination of each can be applied, depending on economic geography and population density.

These principles underpinning each of the three strategies involve building a framework to foster the development of:

- Networks of trading-city partnerships
- Frameworks for enhancing connectivity
- A focus on linking value-chains and industry clusters
- Strengthened rural-urban linkages
- The mix of exogenous and endogenous growth
- Growth of competitive sub-national corridors and regional markets.

Figure 16.1 shows the concept for developing the three approaches for collaborative networks of secondary cities. The scale and development of these networks will vary within countries, depending on the nature and size of secondary and associated smaller cities and the willingness of cities to collaborate. Some will become regular, hierarchical, or free-scale networks of cities. The intent is to develop something like “an Internet of cities,” “connected in different ways to maximize choice in accessing goods and services and markets to export local goods and services. Just as the “Internet of things” is changing radically and shaping the global economy emerging, an “Internet of cities” comprising networks of secondary cities and regional economies engaged in trade and other exchanges offers new opportunities to create and develop jobs, industries, prosperity, and greater self-sufficiency that will lead to more sustainable and equitable economic development outcomes for African countries.

There can be some overlap between the three spatial networks of secondary cities, especially between the corridor and regional networks. The economic structures and connectivity arrangements for each spatial framework will be different. Regional networks of secondary cities are likely to develop where a denser network of secondary cities is distant from a large metropolitan region. For example, the Kisumu and Ibadan urban agglomerations could be organized into regional network clusters of collaborating trading towns and cities. Johannesburg, Casablanca,

Alexandria, Addis Ababa, and Lagos could be developed as integrated secondary city clusters with their core primate city economies. An economic development corridor could be developed along the West African coast from Cape Coast to Sekondi-Takoradi or become part of a larger international economic trade development corridor from Abidjan to Lagos.

16.4.2 Urban Finance

16.4.2.1 Local Government Finance Corporations

Secondary cities need greater access to capital to fund infrastructure and essential urban and regional services. Most African secondary cities do not have access to funds in money markets, with borrowing permitted only through national government treasuries. There is a need for competition in local government capital markets. A way to achieve this is by the establishment of local government association funding agencies or corporations. A good model for this is the New Zealand Local Government Funding Agency (New Zealand Local Government Funding Agency, 2022), which has separate legislation (Parliamentary Counsel Office, New Zealand, 2011). Similar funding structures could operate in parallel and provide competition to current lending practices. This funding mechanism should lead to efficiencies in current and future local-government financing arrangements and expand opportunities for domestic pension funds, insurance, and short-term local-government investment in sinking funds.

Local government funding agencies or corporations operate under an arrangement where they collectively raise funds for securing large loans, bills, or bonds, which are then packaged or bundled as a portfolio of loans to local governments for infrastructure and other capital works. Participating local governments guarantee repayments. The model is akin to lending through 'solidarity groups', in this case, local governments. It aligns with the principles of the Grameen Bank (Alam & Getubig, 2010) and Guidelines for Local Governments on Policies for Social and Solidarity Economy (Jenkins et al., 2021). Establishing a local government funding agency could begin with metropolitan and secondary city local governments, which could be expanded into smaller local governments once operating. As a basis for leveraging funds, local government funding corporation should be given an allocation of national value-added (VAT) or goods and services (GST) taxes.

General requirements for establishing local government funding agencies in African countries to expand access to funds for capital works and other development programs would include the following:

- National governments would introduce enabling legislation or laws to establish local government funding agencies. All participating city local governments would be required to
 - Agree to operate as a solidarity lending agency and its conditions of operation
 - Undergo financial audits and be given a credit rating
 - Agree to annual auditing of the agency
 - Agree to a code of conduct for financial management
 - Prepare annual balance, income, and cash flow set of public accounts
 - Establish sinking funds for replacement or rehabilitation of public infrastructure and assets.
- National governments would issue bonds to provide seed capital for local government funding agencies and enable pension funds, insurance, and other investors to buy notes, bills, or lines of credit to agencies.

16.4.2.2 Leveraging Municipal Funds

African secondary city local governments have traditionally competed against each other for access to a limited pool of national funds to support their development and operations. This approach often results in economic and political opportunism and inequities. Secondary cities aligned politically with the national government ideology are more likely to secure funds than those not. The outcome is a disjointed and inequitable flow of funds and resources to secondary and smaller city local governments. Given the limited public funds available to secondary cities, it is essential that local governments that leverage their funds and resources be rewarded with matching funds, especially where funds are made available from international development assistance sources.

Secondary cities must be given incentives to gain access to additional funds that demonstrate improved efforts to increase local revenue and use these to value-add to use and extend existing assets to support productivity and service delivery.

There are opportunities to significantly leverage local government debt capital and grant funding to support the development of secondary cities. Central governments give access to top-up funds to value add for projects and programs where local governments agree to collaborate with surrounding local governments or other secondary cities. Collaborative funding arrangements can significantly improve the multiplier effects of public investment funding in regional transport, water, sanitation, and energy costs. It also helps to reduce operating and maintenance costs. Examples of projects where collaborative funding can benefit secondary cities include developing local area energy networks, sanitation and waste management, water storage and networking, public transport and information, and pooling resources and assets for public sector service delivery.

16.4.2.3 Municipal Financial Management

The key to securing access to finance and leveraging private-sector resources will be improving municipal fiscal health and obtaining creditworthiness. This is defined, in general, by the criteria laid out by credit rating agencies, and it signals to capital markets not only cities’ readiness to receive financing, but, importantly, their ability to manage the funds according to internationally recognised standards. Many cities across Africa, particularly secondary cities, are still far from creditworthy and therefore need to undertake reforms to improve their municipal fiscal health as a prerequisite to tapping into financial resources.

Secondary cities will need to maintain positive balances and deliver sufficient public services to achieve creditworthiness within their total recurrent revenue. At the same time, they also need to have enough budget needs to meet their growing developmental needs, primarily related to infrastructure investment. To do this, secondary cities should consider the following reform initiatives to improve the financial management:

- Reforming and developing an institutional framework that allows secondary cities to:
 - Receive transparent, stable, and predictable inter-governmental fiscal transfers.
 - Raise sufficient own-source revenues and ensure prudent management, including high collection rates.
 - Flexibly adjust their rates and charges to reflect the needs of local contexts.
 - Provide for and strengthen the capital investment planning process.
- Enhancing prudent financial management to ensure:
 - Transparent and accurate accounting systems, with the consideration of moving from cash-based to an accrual-based system.
 - Stable operating and capital budgets and maintaining positive balances.
 - Sufficient cash flows and reserves.
 - A clear overview and prudent management of assets and liabilities.
 - Strong liquidity and debt management.
 - Reduction of off-balance sheet liabilities.

It will be too early, expensive, and therefore unnecessary to undertake a full credit rating for most secondary cities. Rather, internal processes, perhaps with support of national government agencies with more capacity, can undertake an initial municipal fiscal-health assessment to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges and develop an action plan to improve these accordingly.

16.4.2.4 Increased Revenue Capture

Revenue collection from income tax, local government taxes and charges for services and rents across Africa generally is weak. Chapter 6 outlines opportunities for secondary cities to enhance local revenue collection, including improvements to tax maps, rapid appraisal valuation, simplification of tax collection, a fair share of value-added/consumption taxes and the introduction of value capture. There is extensive documentation on improving local revenue collection in African cities; however, investment and technologies, training, and initial data collection are expensive. The role of international assistance in enhancing local revenue collection is crucial. Secondary cities should collectively secure funds for mass training programs, technology, and other capacity building to improve revenue capture, especially from the escalation of land values.

Geographic information systems for land-use, building, property, and infrastructure mapping is becoming more widely used in secondary cities. However, the cost of procuring equipment, training and maintenance is high unless data can be linked to enhancing revenue streams from property and other taxes to pay for ongoing operations. Investment in GIS and management information systems (MIS) and making access to these available from public platforms is an important investment for secondary cities to manage data and information and improve the efficiency of urban services operations.

16.4.2.5 Lifecycle Asset and Risk Management Plans

Local governments must keep an inventory and maintain assets in good repair to support high-quality urban services and economic development. Local government legislation should require asset management plans for all urban areas as a requirement of local government financial and asset management (NSW Government, Australia, 2022). Few secondary cities in Africa can develop these plans; they require central government and international development assistance. Asset management plans are essential for establishing credit rating and defining targets for sinking funds to replace or repair assets in the future.

The practice of using asset management plans (which incorporate current depreciated value) is crucial to long-term capital works and fiscal development planning. In New Zealand, for example, infrastructure plans are prepared for 30 years and contain long-term maintenance, operations, and contingency costs. The value of assets and depreciation are included in corporate balance sheets. Smaller cities and regional councils with limited resources and expertise should consider collaborating to prepare and update asset management, and capital works plans.

I 16.5 Built Environment Systems

Most countries have adopted a sector-by-sector management approach to urbanisation and urban development. This approach often results in piecemeal and sporadic improvements to infrastructure and services. The result is a patchwork of urban infrastructure and service delivery projects that only slightly improve the overall functionality of urban systems and secondary city development. A more systems (holistic and integrated) approach to the planning, management and development of secondary cities is needed at multiple tiers of governance. Currently, there are very few examples of holistic and integrated urban improvement programs in Africa.

The following actions could significantly improve secondary city and regional coordinated planning and development and create development opportunities.

16.5.1 National Development Planning

Most African countries have national development plans. A few have national urban plans. National development plans tend to focus on key sector capital works investment projects and institutional and policy reform programs, which are proposed for the medium and long-term, usually 5–10 years. Few of these plans achieve targeted outcomes. Many include a wish list of projects funded by international development assistance grants and loans.

National development plans need to be more integrated, spatial, and cluster-investment focused. Little value-adding can occur in regional economies if critical supply-chain components of value chains are not adequately integrated into the design of large capital investment projects.

Future national development plans should be designed using more bottom-up approaches, where comprehensive packages of hard and soft infrastructure needed to support strategic industries are built into national activity programs. Secondary cities can play a major role in identifying the regional industries and critical infrastructure needed to support economic growth and development and bundle these into a series of investment activities that need to be funded by public agencies through grants and loans or international development assistance. The use of more systems and clustered approaches to national development planning, along with national and regional investment packages to support urban and regional development can provide a framework for raising capital from public and private sources.

At the secondary city level, preparation of public investment programs (PIP) would significantly enhance investment attractiveness, particularly if there are opportunities for a range of funding agencies to invest in components of significant development projects, such as local area energy networks, transport, warehousing and logistics facilities and construction materials industries. Other co-investment activities that secondary cities could support through PIPs include PPPs for public health delivery, education, markets, and emergency services management. All these activities require multisector input and investment to be built, managed and maintained efficiently.

16.5.2 Integrated Strategic Planning

The need for better planning of secondary cities has been well documented. Some cities have sector master plans for land use, transportation, and infrastructure. There is little evidence of attempts by African cities to prepare integrated sector plans. One of the few attempts was the Strategic Plan for the Greater Accra Metropolitan Development Area in 1992 noted earlier. However, with issues like climate change, bushfires, congestion, economic development, environmental management, housing affordability and homelessness, better integration of sector plans and financing arrangements is needed.

At the national, regional and city level, integrated planning integrates physical, economic, social and environmental sector plan objectives and outcomes. It aims to reduce the complexity and siloed nature of sector planning and decision-making processes to create a more efficient and holistic planning system. Integrated planning is the next step in planning reform in Africa. Some countries, like Kenya, have moved away from master planning to strategic land-use planning. The next step is to commence multi-sector integrated strategic planning, which can be undertaken by state and regional planning commissions (discussed above).

16.5.3 Linking Strategic Planning to Financial Planning and Budgeting

Integrated strategic planning, on its own, is not enough to ensure sustainable development outcomes. It needs to be linked to integrated financial planning of capital works and recurrent expenditure considerations, mainly associated with large public and private sector projects (including PPP projects). Box 164 Auckland Unitary Plan provides a good practice case study of strategic planning linked to financial planning and budgeting. Secondary cities also need to conduct risk assessments of plans and planning policy documents and check development proposals against climate change risk. This will become a conditional element of infrastructure and land-use plans in the future.

BOX 16.4 | Auckland Unitary Plan

The Auckland Unitary Plan, New Zealand, is world-class good practice demonstrating integrated strategic development, finance and budget planning.. This is an advanced economy plan, but many of the principles could be adapted and applied at the secondary cities level in Africa. The Auckland Unitary Plan linking land-use and economic planning strategies to 10-year financial planning budgeting could improve integrated planning throughout local government. New Zealand councils' 10-year long-term plan must be reviewed every 3 years; the 30+ year infrastructure strategy considers the lifecycle cost of public assets. One feature of this system is that the long-term plan is subject to external audit by New Zealand's Office of the Auditor General. African countries could adopt a similar process to ensure that strategic land-use and development plans deliver expected outcomes.

Source: Auckland Council (2021); New Zealand Office of the Auditor General (2022) The lack of integration and alignment between physical land-use, economic, and capital works plans results in a planning system that lacks a cross-checking of impacts and dependencies between sectors plans and decision-making processes. This also applies to national and local government financial plans and budgets, risk assessments and climate change planning.

16.5.4 Infrastructure Development Plans

Infrastructure is crucial to underpin economic and social development and enhance community well-being and quality of life. It encompasses hard, soft, and smart infrastructure. Infrastructure financing, provision, and management will be crucial elements of development strategies and plans for secondary cities and their hinterland regions. Infrastructure projects undertaken should be explicitly linked to the infrastructure priority requirements identified in those plans. Unfortunately, public and PPP major infrastructure projects in secondary cities is characterized by high cost and time overruns. There is a need to reform and improve tendering processes to address inefficiencies/deficiencies in procurement, sub-contracting, industrial relations and the overall management and oversight of project delivery. There is a massive backlog of current long-term infrastructure projects and proposals that need to be reviewed and revised to consider regulatory changes to environmental mitigation and other concerns. Smart integrated infrastructure systems, finance, and the prioritisation of outstanding infrastructure projects will be required.

Smart infrastructure elements should be considered in all aspects of Infrastructure planning for secondary cities. These include:

- Preparation of lifecycle asset management plans, incorporating programmes, priorities, and funding arrangements to maintain, sustain and dispose of public utilities, infrastructure, and assets to optimise their capacity and use to support state and regional development.
- The development of local area energy, water, wastewater, and transport networks.
- Investment in hard and soft infrastructure to strengthen connectivity and efficiency of intra and inter-regional and city networks and systems.
- New modalities and instruments for funding Infrastructure.
- Introducing intelligent transport and logistics systems to support seamless intermodal transfers.
- Water infrastructure, including drought resistance.
- Development of metadata infrastructure.
- Value-added engineering and management processes.

16.5.5 Conservation and Restoration Plans and Programs to Access Green Finance

Restoration and rehabilitation of buildings, infrastructure, plant, machinery, equipment, and degraded land are critical for secondary cities in restoring assets to a safe, efficient and sustainable operational level. Investing in restoring inner-city and historical areas of secondary cities is crucial to restoring capital values of land and attracting investment in the business, commercial and tourism sectors. Secondary cities such as Zanzibar’s Stone Town in Tanzania demonstrate the importance of investing in conservation and building restoration, giving the city UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

The restoration of damaged forest lands, wetlands, and foreshores within and surrounding the boundaries of secondary cities is essential to reducing localised impacts of climate change and environmental damage. The emergence of green international financing to support climate change mitigation will flow through into African cities, providing opportunities for secondary cities located in river catchments to access conservation funding to rehabilitate and restore degraded landscapes and river systems. Secondary cities should prepare for these opportunities by developing climate change investment plans outlining specific capital works, management, and operation arrangements to maintain the quality of restored conservation areas. Some secondary cities will be in the position to benefit from carbon and environmental credits by investing in conservation and climate mitigation programs to restore damaged habitats.

I 16.6 Social Systems

16.6.1 Human Resource Management

16.6.1.1 Skills Development

Most secondary cities lack access to a work force with the basic skills needed to improve the development and delivery of basic urban services and support more productive economic activities. Secondary cities are an important interim step for rural-urban migrants to gain new skills before migrating to larger cities or internationally in search of higher income and better quality of life. The development of para-professional, technical, medical, administrative, and trade skills is crucial to the sustainable development of secondary cities. The key to developing these skills is the establishment of local community colleges, where curriculum design meets the current and future education demands of the economy. Concurrent with this is the need for better networking between education institutions to develop lifelong learning capabilities and link universities and other research institutions to local research and development needs.

The introduction of collaborative partnership arrangements between high schools, technical colleges and universities to provide online learning and education to classrooms in the home is critical for enhancing education skills and knowledge in secondary cities. The model provided in Rwanda could be applied in other countries of Africa. The lack and poor quality of teachers and support capability in secondary cities hinder their development. Countries like Australia offer significant expertise in remote learning that could be applied at low cost to support the development of secondary cities and regions throughout Africa to enable all students to gain more equitable access to high-quality education.

A key focus for secondary cities and regions is the need to enhance literacy and learning skills. Most secondary cities, particularly those located inland, have low literacy and numeracy rates. This severely disadvantages young people and their access to higher education, knowledge and learning. Enhancing basic literacy, numeracy and computing skills are vital to developing more knowledge skill jobs in secondary cities. Secondary city local governments have a crucial role in working with education institutions to build capacity from preschool to high school learning capabilities in national, local and international language skills through community education partnership programs. These should be fostered and encouraged in all secondary cities across Africa.

16.6.1.2 Support for Learning and Knowledge Communities

Developing learning, knowledge and creative skills is one of the most critical investments secondary cities can make. The future economy will become more information and knowledge-driven. Building the hard and soft infrastructure and networks to support this is important. Secondary cities that lack knowledgeable and skilled, educated human capital will struggle to remain competitive, create jobs or be innovative. Therefore, a key focus of secondary city governance must be on creating learning communities where inhabitants can improve their knowledge and awareness and acquire new skills, expertise, and information that applies to local government, business and personal development. Support for developing learning and knowledge communities is crucial to the future economic and social development strategies for secondary cities.

16.6.2 Management of Urbanisation

Migration is a significant factor in the development of secondary cities. Little is yet known about the spatial patterns and internal flows of migrants in the respective jurisdictions, their characteristics, their contribution to local economies and their needs, and especially their housing. Migration to secondary cities is likely to increase, especially in countries like Ethiopia and Nigeria. Most people migrate in search of improved economic opportunities. Migration has net positive benefits for most secondary cities. Migrants often bring new skills, ideas, and capital. They also add to the cultural diversity of the cities. However, many migrants live in ethnic enclaves, which can become prone to illegal activities.

Few African countries have national population policies or plans. Those that do tend not to be very specific about managing migration growth from a spatial perspective. Secondary cities can support high levels of migration, provided land, accommodation, employment and basic community services are available in advance of migrants arriving. Most migrants reside in ethnic enclaves, but few spatial planning documents adequately address the needs of migrant populations. A more managed approach to national urban migration is required by linking national population policy to national urbanisation and economic development policies. These three policy realms should also be integrated at the secondary city level to ensure that local governments can more effectively manage population growth because of migration.

16.6.3 Migrant Support Programs

Secondary cities are a significant recipient of migrants in Sahel regions of Africa; some cities in Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya have large refugee populations. Some of the refugees in these cities have remained dislocated from their homeland for more than 30 years. Many of their children were born in the camps. These children are often considered non-citizens (i.e., not recognised by the host country as a citizen), but have gained languages and adopted customs that enable them to fit more easily into community life and employment. The research and the case study of Kakuma in Kenya (see Box 5-1, Chapter 5) shows there is significant potential to support the development of migrant skills and the capability to contribute to the development of local economies. However, this requires local governments to understand better the value migrant populations can add to the economic, social, knowledge and cultural mix of secondary cities — especially in border regions.

Opportunities exist for secondary city governments and communities, through partnerships, to engage in policies and programs to support greater harmonization and to progressively support multi-culturalism in secondary cities, recognising the importance of diversity and difference. Community partnerships can help stabilize racial conflict, bring peace and understanding to secondary cities near conflict zones.

16.6.4 Immigrant and Diaspora Networks

More than 30% of the population living in secondary cities are migrants. In addition, there is a large diaspora population living in and outside Africa who remit large sums of money back to their local communities. Formal remittance flows to sub-Saharan Africa were recorded as \$48 billion in 2019 (Ratha, 2021), with the figure for

informal flows also high. While making more effective use of remittance funds is important, these same networks can access social capital knowledge, experience and technology that is not available in secondary cities. Emigrants are a significant untapped resource that secondary cities need to leverage to fill skills, knowledge, and information gaps created by low human capital development and migration levels. Secondary cities need to encourage the development of more formalised immigration and diaspora networks focusing on communities of interest linked to finance trade and investment; planning and policy development; technology and innovation, asset management, education, and social services delivery.

16.7 Environmental Systems Management

16.7.1 Localized Responses to Climate Change

African secondary cities are not a significant contributor to climate change but will continue to be very much affected by its impacts. Lack of reliable rainfall, deforestation, changing seasonal weather patterns and warming present significant threats. Secondary cities will have to manage these impacts with little help from the central government. Only the actions of more advanced economies will mitigate the potentially damaging effects of climate change on African countries and cities.

The focus of secondary city government responses to climate change will need to be on localised adaption measures. With limited resources, local governments can collaborate and share knowledge, lessons and ideas with other cities and communities to mitigate climate change challenges. The approach can be self-organising and collaborative (e.g., local groups organizing initiatives with little help or direction from local government). Few secondary cities in Africa have the resources, capacity, or expertise to fund or oversee major projects for climate change adaptation.

Secondary cities can create opportunities to work collaboratively to manage many damaging effects of climate change. Some of these opportunities were discussed in Section 16.4.1.2, Creation of Green Economies. Others include:

- Support community stream and river catchment management to plant trees, building structures and retention basins to slow the velocity of stream flows during heavy rain to reduce the effects of flooding.
- Develop biogas from organic waste to substitute for kerosene and other fossilised fuels used in cooking to reduce CO₂ emission and improve local air quality.
- Introduce community schemes to plant trees in streets and public spaces to create shade, reduce ambient air temperature and absorb carbon.
- Use local materials and traditions to improve house design to improve and insulation of houses.
- Educate and utilise local communities in reducing pollution of waterways.

16.7.2 Localization of the SDGs

A more collaborative approach to river and artesian basin catchment management will also be needed to ensure available resources. For example, water quality along the Niger River will require collaborative action to ensure upstream cities reduce water contamination to reduce downstream water quality and flooding.

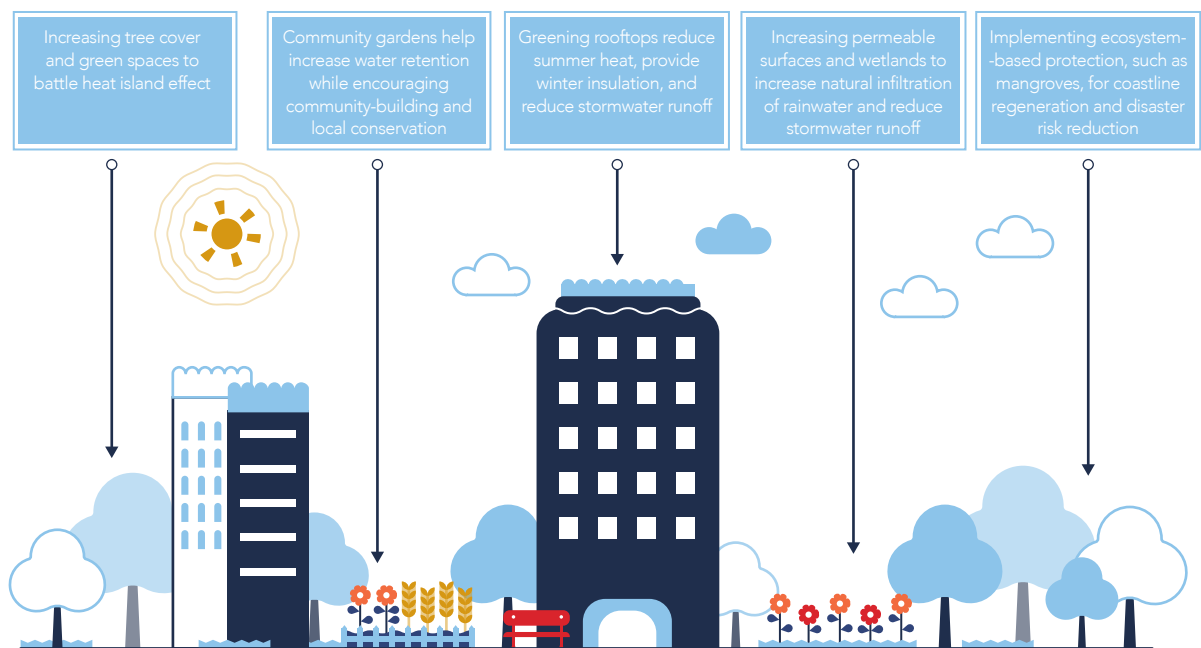
16.7.3 Water Conservation

Access to adequate clean, potable water is a growing problem for secondary cities. African river systems are becoming increasingly polluted, and groundwater reservoirs are depleted. Transpiration rates for dams are very high — many cities of the Sahel region risk running out of water. Secondary cities on the coasts and large river systems will find it increasingly expensive to treat or desalinate water. A high priority for secondary cities should be

water conservation measures to use water more wisely, recycle where possible and reduce pollution. As researchers from the World Resources Institute note, “The loss of natural soils, streams, wetlands and forests impact water replenishment and drainage, making it difficult — if not impossible — for city-regions to cope with water security and other risks like flooding and landslides”(van den Berg et al., 2021).

Climate change, increased migration and poor planning of urban areas will adversely impact an already challenging situation. Researchers from the World Resources Institute have developed simple and relatively inexpensive measures that secondary cities could apply to improve water conservation and reduce transpiration (van den Berg et al. 2021), as shown in Figure 16.2.

FIGURE 16.2 | Nature-based solutions for climate adaptation and water conservation in cities across Africa



Source: van den Berg et al. (2021).

16.8 Connectivity Systems

The future development of secondary cities can be advantaged by strengthening their intermediary roles and functions, enhancing linkages and connectivity between national systems of cities, and enhancing connectivity between secondary cities by building networks of mutual and virtual cooperation. Collaboration is the key to this. It involves setting up the infrastructure for building networks and integrated systems for sharing ideas, information, resources, assets and knowledge through shared systems of interconnected infrastructure. It also includes linking city-to-city economies, adaptive networks of supply chains, and strengthening and improving hub and logistics functions of secondary cities and communications.

Building and maintaining networks that facilitate exchanges of trade, goods and services, investment, visitor travel, knowledge, and education within and between cities and regions is not exclusively the concern of transport, logistics and communications infrastructure services. These services are vital to developing national economies and cities. They must be supported by other soft infrastructure and networks to enhance capacity, capability and connectivity between national systems of cities across Africa. These include building infrastructure for collaborative arrangements for information sharing, integrated regional planning, pooling of capital and regional risk and disaster management — especially along river systems and hinterlands between local government.

The following initiatives need to be carefully considered and public policies prepared by secondary cities to support their development.

16.8.1 Enhancing Connectivity within National Urban Systems

Enhancing connectivity within urban systems is one of the most critical elements of improving the performance and development of secondary cities. Connectivity is concerned with the type and level of connectedness and the capacity of the interconnected people, platforms, systems and applications to facilitate exchange between government, business, communities and individuals. The Internet of things and social media have also given rise to a new dimension of connectivity.

There are, however, significant impediments to connectivity in African countries. First, personal travel and national supply-chain connectivity are inhibited by poor transportation infrastructure. Second, poor local infrastructure and access to reliable supplies and technologies reduce the productivity of product supply chains and value-adding processes. Third, low levels of education constrain connectivity to knowledge, data and information, and computer literacy and inhibit creativity. Finally, connectivity to government services is constrained by the scarcity of reliable information and by poverty and political allegiances.

The following measures can significantly improve connectivity to support the development of secondary cities.

16.8.2 Regional Internet Services

Rwanda has recognised the importance and value of rolling out broadband internet to secondary cities. The internet is the most important platform for connectivity that can help support the development of secondary cities. Roads and infrastructure are important to the production and flow of resources, goods, and commodities; however, future African urban economies will become increasingly reliant on services, especially the internet. The roll-out of broadband and 5G+ networks of regional communications are crucial to improving the competitiveness and performance of African secondary city economies. It should be a high-priority investment across all African countries.

Internet services must also be accompanied by local area energy networks, using alternative energy sources such as solar or wind power, which Africa has in abundance. These networks also have broader applications for secondary cities and regions in facilitating technology such as 3D printing, which can be used in areas of medicine (building prosthetic legs and arms) and for machinery replacement spare parts, building fittings and fixtures, children’s play equipment and toys, and arts and crafts. The advantage is that this technology can use recycled materials to make many useful products at low costs and quickly.

BOX 16.5 | Medical uses for 3D printing technology in Africa

3D printing technology is steadily affecting medical practice in Africa. The most notable intervention is in printing prosthetic limbs and sockets such as the one that a three-year-old Ugandan, Rosaline, received. Rosaline’s prosthetic and socket cost US\$250 – a fraction of the normal US\$5,000 price tag. The process is faster, the prosthetic can be printed in a day, and amputees report a more comfortable fit.



16.8.3 Regional transportation

While regional road, rail, and airline transport networks within and between African countries have improved significantly in recent decades, the majority remain poor. The priority has been to enhance the connectivity of regional city-to-city linkages.

However, feeder roads are also of strategic importance, particularly for improving the quantity and quality of food transportation and reducing the damage and loss resulting from inferior regional road networks. Of critical importance for connectivity are efficient logistics handling facilities. It is vital for secondary cities to improve logistics facilities and services, especially documentation and tracking, as they play a significant role in national supply chains. Logistics facilities impact the efficiency of the flow of goods and services and the performance of national and rural economies.

16.8.4 Connecting Communities of Interest

Civic leadership is crucial to secondary city development. It requires trust, inclusiveness, respect, transparency and accountability between all community sectors and a wide range of decision-makers responsible for the planning, developing, and managing of secondary cities. This can be achieved by introducing community charters as best-practice local government engagement, like that adopted in Scotland (Community Chartering Network, 2018) and provided in a guide produced by Christian Aid (Christian Aid, 2018). In addition, the development of communities of interest linked to trade and investment, together with professional knowledge sharing, and the diaspora offer ways to develop clusters or pools of knowledge as vital resources to support local economic development. They can also lead to substantial development of secondary city human capital.

16.9 A Role for ODA in supporting the development of Secondary Cities

Official development assistance will be essential to support the development of secondary cities. It can provide the catalyst for investment in secondary cities to create a critical mass of infrastructure, human capital, and institutional governance capacity building, improving core services delivery capacity, mobilising, and leveraging resources to develop the local and regional economies. Careful use of ODA funds can help mobilise other government, private and institutional investment, and resources (including the diaspora) to foster resilience, enhance development, and improve the performance and competitiveness of secondary cities. The following is a framework for ODA organisations to target programs and activities that would benefit the development and management of secondary cities.

16.9.1 Defining the Scope and Scale of African Secondary Cities Development Programs

For ODA to effectively support the development of secondary cities, two important matters should be considered when formulating development assistant packages: (i) What is the scope and scale of activities to be considered, and (ii) at what level should these be targeted?

Table 16.2 Framework for scope and scale of ODA activities for African secondary cities development program shows different levels and types of activities in which international ODA agencies, governments, businesses, and communities could engage to support a new urban-age agenda for developing secondary cities in Africa. The first column indicates the level of engagement, i.e., the scale — regional, country, city, local and multi-lateral. The scope of activities is listed (across the top row) under policy and strategy, programs, projects, capacity building, and knowledge management.

TABLE 16.2 | Framework for scope and scale of ODA activities for African secondary cities development program

Scope (horizontal) and scale (vertical) of Activities	Policy and Strategy	Programs Delivery	Projects Delivery	Capacity Building	Knowledge Management
African Regional Level	African regional strategies to promote secondary city corridor economic development	Regional partnership programs with ODA		Regional forums Regional training	Knowledge networks City partnerships
Country Level	Country program strategies for secondary cities Secondary city urban policies Urban green economic development Urban management partnership program	Targeted / programmatic plans and strategies for secondary cities Catalytic programs such as city deals and co-investment in infrastructure	National demonstration projects Shelter housing Energy efficiency Waste recycling reuse	Urban management education and CPD program National urban research centres	National urban forums National knowledge hub
City Level*	Integrated multisector city development and regional development strategies	Future urban development areas. Slum mapping Poverty alleviation Management of peri-urban Urban finance	Programmatic projects Single themed projects Local economic development office Revenue collection Value capture	Institutional capacity Professional Development Local economic development	Urban research institute Population projections Investment prospectus
Local Area Level			Thematic projects	Community partnership building	Community education and awareness
Multi-lateral		Partnership for secondary cities development initiative		Tool kits Funding Best practices guide	Database of best practices

Source: Author

16.9.2 Levels of ODA Support

Five levels of ODA support could be targeted to support the management and development of secondary cities. These are:

Africa regional level: African regions need to be better connected, with support targeted to meet secondary city needs in balancing an intermediary role in national and international trade and development. Urban development and support programs can be developed at a continental and regional level with organizations like the African Economic Community, Economic Commission for Africa, African Development Bank and the World Bank. The organizations listed in Table 16.3 could have a key role in facilitating workshops and programs to support planning to improve interregional connectivity at the regional level. The building blocks to enhancing the economic development corridor and cross-border secondary cities, such as those emerging in western and eastern Africa, involve institutions working to develop cross-border and corridor agreements to free up trade, the movement of people and knowledge exchanges between cities and countries.

TABLE 16.3 | Key regional agencies and organisations which could engage in secondary city development

Key Regional Organizations	Subgroups
Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)	
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)	
East African Community (EAC)	
Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS/CEEAC)	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC)
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)	West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ)
Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	
Southern African Development Community (SADC)	Southern African Customs Union (SACU)
Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)	

Source: Various websites.

Country level: Some countries have developed national urban strategies and programs to support local development, slum upgrading, urban poverty alleviation, and initiatives to support the development of secondary cities. At the country level, ODA support for secondary cities planning and programs, like those in Ghana and Rwanda, are noted as developing a national framework for connecting systems of secondary cities. Developing country-level strategies to support urban sector activities, target support for enhancing connectivity between metropolitan regions, secondary and other intermediate cities, and regional development could help significantly improve supply-chain value-adding and logistics efficiencies in support of national development.

The areas area where national programs for secondary cities would benefit significantly from ODA include:

- **National Urban Strategies:** The Habitat III declaration and SDGs call for stronger national urban strategies. However, these must be part of national development plans and strategies. They need to be integrated with national economic, population, social and environmental plans, and strategies.
- **Institutional capacity building:** Capacity-building activities could include on-the-job training and skill-building activities for local housing and infrastructure construction, improved local government management, and continuing professional education and leadership.
- **Networking and knowledge management:** This might include supporting multi-level networking and knowledge-building of community associations, information systems development at the state and city-wide levels, community education and awareness programs through social media and local radio.
- **A multi-layered and geographic programmed activity is needed involving ODA (and others) support to secondary cities at the country level.** Types of activities that could be considered include:
 - Facilitating urban policy dialogue or mainstreaming national plans, local government budgeting processes and regulatory reforms.
 - Policies that help cities anticipate and plan for urban growth. This can be achieved by creating incentives for local authorities to become more accountable.
 - Increasing revenues for improved infrastructure and service delivery.
 - Defining property rights.
 - Requiring the efficient and transparent management of public land resources.

Cities level: At the city level, ODA support for capacity-building activities for on-the-job training and skill-building activities for local housing and infrastructure construction, improved management of local government, continuing professional education and leadership. Such packages must include provision for enhancing rural-urban linkages, connectivity between regional cities, knowledge sharing and integrating strategic and water catchment management planning where possible packages of assistance should be in the form of regional cluster integrated-development projects with bundled packages of capital funding and technical assistance.

At the secondary cities and urban periphery level, a local government could target improvements in strategic areas of:

- Urban governance.
- Land administration and management.
- Green economic growth.
- Climate change adaptation.
- Quality job growth.
- City inclusion strategies.

Local area level: ODA can be of significant benefit in local area improvements for infrastructure, including local area energy, sanitation, and water networks, housing, conservation, and community development. The latter may involve programs for supporting migrants and refugees to adjust and assimilate into the communities of secondary cities. Local area improvements could also embrace capital works involving community partnerships to build structures for climate change adaptation, the development of community parks and facilities, and monitoring and evaluation of infrastructure to improve maintenance.

Central governments and international development assistance agencies and organizations play a leading role in facilitating local and public policy dialogue. They help to strengthen the capacity of both central and local governments to provide intra- and inter-governmental coordination and urban resource management arrangements. They can also assist donor coordination by providing a framework to align activities involving research and development, learning, news, information dissemination, monitoring and evaluation. Local area programs could include grants for housing repair and improvements.

Multilateral: ODA agencies can leverage funds to value-add to projects and programs by collaborating in activities that are mutually beneficial and feasible to multi-package assistance at a regional, country, and city level. This can be facilitated at the country ODA and donor forum level, in partnership with national and governments.

16.10 Concluding Remarks

Africa's future development and prosperity and the well-being of its people lie in its national system of cities. Despite the fact that the continent is currently a little more than 45% urbanised, most Africans will be born, migrate, and live-in cities by the middle of this century. However, without redress, it is in the large cities where most of the investment, wealth and jobs will occur. National governments need to prioritise supporting the development of secondary and smaller intermediate cities and regional towns, if the imbalance and disparities in the growth and development of national systems of cities are to change.

Secondary cities are home to between 12.5% and 15% of Africa's population, or 27% to 30% of its total urban population, depending on how 'urban' is defined. Many secondary cities are growing rapidly — especially those with populations between 500,000 and 1 million. Those cities support a significantly greater proportion of the population and perform vital intermediary functions for between 40% and 65% of the population living in regional and rural areas, depending on countries. They play a crucial role as logistics hubs and in supporting national and international supply chains to move materials, goods, services and travellers. However, because many are not functioning well, the capacity of secondary cities to help grow and diversify national economic growth, trade and development is constrained.

A new urban age is dawning in Africa, but few countries or cities across the continent can as yet manage its impacts. Africa needs well-developed and functioning systems of cities that will support their national economies and create new jobs. However, its systems need to become more spatially developed and better connected and managed in order to achieve this. The trend of increasing primacy of African cities is a risk. It leads to inequitable spatial distribution of wealth, political power, skills and resources concentrated in a few cities.

The direct consequences of this are likely to be increased levels of migration to large metropolitan regions and some secondary cities; a geographic widening of the gap in terms of income, wealth and access to human services; growing regional poverty; and weaker local and regional economic development and governance. Africa needs a more balanced system of cities, focusing on the sustainable development of secondary cities.

The research presented in this book has added valuable knowledge about the role, functions and development of secondary cities in Africa. It has revealed much about the poor state of urban environments, governance and management of secondary cities in Africa. But it also shows good examples of secondary cities that are doing well. Some have adopted measures such as improved local waste management services, engagement in biomass and clean energy production, recycling and reusing waste, and developing low-cost housing and localized credit facilities to support development. These initiatives are encouraging — but scaling up remains a problem.

A change in the direction of national spatial economic development policy is needed. This change calls for a greater focus on improving connectivity, adopting systems and integrated approaches to national and subnational urban spatial, economic, and social development policy; and improved urban governance, policy, planning, and management. Collaboration, connectivity, and regeneration are three crucial factors in supporting the sustainable development of secondary cities. Local governments have significant opportunities to overcome severe resource shortages, fix infrastructure, and improve poor services delivery through greater collaboration. However, this calls for new and improved urban governance arrangements in secondary cities to engage in collaborative governance to pool and share resources in order to provide and maintain infrastructure, community, and social service delivery.

There is need for a new spirit of optimism on the future development of African secondary cities. African secondary cities face many challenges, but they also present many opportunities. Solutions exist to solve the problems of rapid urbanisation, urban management, and governance in African secondary cities. However, knowledge of these solutions needs to be more widespread, with more cooperative and collaborative efforts for the management of these cities. Secondary cities can take much from best practices examples from other countries that will support their development by introducing collaborative governance models to share resources; exchange information, knowledge, and ideas; and integrate planning, governance, and development approaches that build in more self-reliant, self-organizing communities and local areas network systems. The many initiatives and opportunities identified in this book offer approaches through which African secondary cities can build a secure and prosperous future. These are the takeaway messages from this book.

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A1

**FRAMEWORK FOR
DEVELOPMENT OF
SECONDARY CITES
PARTNERSHIPS**

A new model for business and economic development has emerged since the GFC. This model is based on the sharing economy and collaborative advantage. It is replacing the older competitive and comparative advantage models in regional economic and business development. In the drive for firms to become more competitive, opportunities to reduce business cost margins are limited, except through innovation, investment in new technology, and low labour costs of production. Its focus is to reduce the transaction costs of commonly used infrastructure and services, create a critical mass of firms or enterprises to overcome scale and competition from large competitors, and share product, market, and takeover risks. As a result, businesses and governments are attracted to collaboration arrangements and other partnerships to reduce externality costs and gain better access to knowledge, public infrastructure, and resources. The growth of industry clusters and networks has been identified as a way firms in secondary cities can create collaborative advantage and secure a greater share of national investment in new industries and jobs.

For African secondary cities to grow and develop sustainably, their local economic development policies must guide investing in the right strategic infrastructure and enabling environments that will enable them to become better connected to supply chains, markets and support services. They must have a development framework or plan and governance arrangements to guide the process. This is a valuable lesson gained from the network partnerships for economic development described in some of the cases in the book, *Connecting Systems of Secondary Cities* (Roberts, 2019, p. 106).

Figure A outlines a framework that can be used to guide the process to build the strategic infrastructure to enhance connectivity for secondary cities. Elements of this framework are drawn from the initiative in New Zealand (Allen & Eaube, 2012) and the UK Core Cities initiative in Manchester (Core Cities, 2010, p. 20). There are six basic steps in the framework and three analytical processes.

Step 1: Agreement to Collaborate: This initial step involves three or more secondary cities agreeing to collaborate as a network to support local economic development and trade between them. For this to happen, there must be agreement on specific types of activities that the cities can mutually support to generate competitive advantage and mutual benefit from developing partnership arrangements. The partnership might involve specific industries, clusters, or the provision of public goods and services. This initial process takes time. Considerable effort is necessary to win the confidence of businesses and public agencies in order to collaborate. In secondary cities, interests are often parochial, territorial and myopic — especially if power, position or market share is perceived to be threatened.

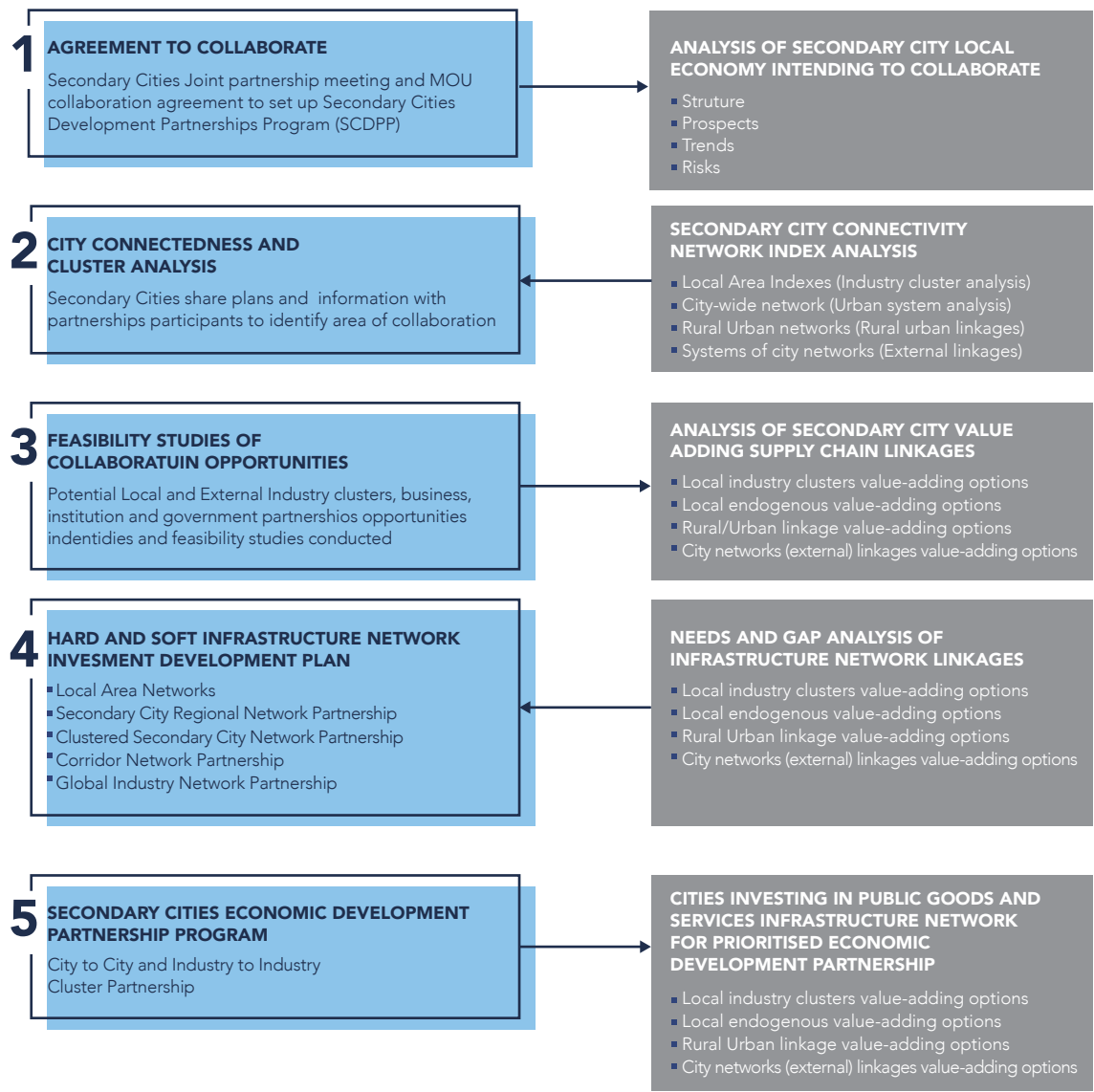
It will take time for local government to understand the advantages of the new collaboration and cooperation model applied to business and local economic development. Unless secondary cities' local governments want to partner, can see the benefits of collaboration and are willing to work towards co-investment arrangements that are transparent for delivering public goods and services, they should not rush into agreements to develop collaborative industry structures and systems for local economic development. However, it is a sustainable governance model that is being used in many developed countries to reduce costs, waste and broaden services to multiple cities by combining resources and purchasing power. Experience in building industry cluster partnerships between competing firms in different cities or geographic locations shows that it takes many years to educate, win trust and gain confidence among stakeholders within local communities so that collaborative approaches will benefit local economic development.

Step 2: City Connectedness and Cluster Analysis: Before African secondary cities can begin to develop infrastructure networks to enhance connectivity and foster trade between cities, there must be a thorough audit of the state, capacity and performance of the local economy and the network infrastructure that supports its operations and developments. Secondary cities engaged in development need to prepare city development strategies. These have a crucial role in identifying the potential of co-investing in infrastructure to support industry and cluster network partnerships that add value to local business and public services. The analysis conducted to prepare city development strategies should identify structure, trends, risk, and prospects and the current strength of connectivity in city networks and connectivity between cities.

This involves the preparation of connectivity indexes for the following:

- Local area indexes (industry cluster analysis).
- City-wide networks (urban systems analysis).
- Rural-urban networks (rural-urban linkages).
- Systems of city networks (external linkages).

FIGURE A1 | Framework for Development of Secondary Cites Partnerships



The information gathered to prepare secondary city economic development strategies (CEDs) is then shared by the partners so that opportunities to start linking development activities between industry clusters and public service providers can be identified. These opportunities provide the platform for further discussion and research on development potential, network infrastructure, and capital goods and services investment needs. Much of the discussion will focus on the strategic infrastructure needed to enable business activities and markets in the respective cities to develop and what essential investment is needed in public goods and services to develop the infrastructure networks to enable the free flow of exchanges.

If cross-border secondary cities and national governments are involved, the process becomes more complex. However, this should not dissuade secondary cities with similar cultural, religious, legal and language systems from agreeing to engage in secondary city-regional partnerships or economic development corridor partnerships. There are good prospects for this to occur in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Step 3: Feasibility Studies of Inter-City Local and External Industry Cluster Partnerships: The sharing of information on respective secondary city local economies will enable businesses, governments and institutions to identify opportunities to collaborate, innovate or share information. This is the concept behind smart cities, where information is shared so that individuals, entrepreneurs and industry groups can identify and assess the feasibility of developing and launching new or adapted products into local and external markets. Experts and research can facilitate these connections. This process may involve cities working collaboratively with firms, industry groups and clusters to develop their private sector partnerships, e.g., food processing, tourism and agricultural machinery.

The importance of intra-city and urban-rural linkage partnership should not be overlooked. Local area networks and production outputs can be significantly enhanced to expand their contribution to a broader industry-secondary city partnership at the regional, corridor, metropolitan, and global levels. This is one of the principles behind developing the European Cluster Collaboration partnership initiative (European Commission, 2014). A valuable example of facilitating opportunities for connecting and collaborating is Joint Venture Silicon Valley, which brings together leaders from business, government, academia, labour and the broader community through initiatives aimed at addressing issues related to climate change, education, transportation, economic development, disaster preparedness, health care, food security and more.⁽¹⁾

Feasibility studies need to be undertaken of industry and public services for which there is agreement on the potential for collaboration and development. Priorities should be determined on what partnerships should be developed. Ideally, an industry or an associate public services partnership, if not both, should be developed, preferably one that is not too complicated—for example, sharing knowledge through joint funding of library facilities to offer e-textbooks to secondary schools. This sharing of knowledge and information would help create confidence in building city-to-city government and business partnerships. The first partnerships will always be a learning experience; therefore, an action-learning (learning by doing) management approach should be adopted as a good practice technique used to promote the development of industry cluster partnerships (OECD, 2004).

Step 4: Hard and Soft Infrastructure Network Investment Development Plans: A crucial step in creating partnerships for building networks within systems of secondary cities is to identify types, arrangements and priorities for their establishment. Studies and research are needed to investigate the nature, scale, and reach of networks needed for systems of secondary cities, as well as the technology for building the hard and soft infrastructure to support many different types of networks and network partnerships, such as the following:

- Local area networks.
- Secondary city regional network partnerships.
- Clustered secondary city network partnerships.
- Corridor network partnerships.
- Global industry network partnerships.

Connectivity measures, such as internet speed, use of mobile phones, availability of public buses and number of passenger trips, etc., produce useful sets of indicators showing the relative strengths, weaknesses, risks, and gaps in soft and hard infrastructure network elements that support industry supply chains and other types of exchange between cities. Assessing collaborative government arrangements can also help identify what public investments are needed to strengthen and develop enabling environments and common-user infrastructure and services. In some cases, collaboration can help to reduce transaction and operational costs of services, such as e-services and compliance and enforcement of regulations, where costs are shared between cities.

Step 5: Secondary City Partnerships Programme: There is no single model that best suits city-to-city collaboration and network development. Some form of agreement or memorandum providing an understanding of collaborative governance arrangements, cooperation areas, and resource sharing to develop and deliver public goods and services and to develop strategic infrastructure networks is essential. It should include raising capital and allocating resources in city budgets involved in a secondary-cities partnership programme. In some cases, the partnership can be strengthened by state/province/district and national governments being party to industry partnerships. Such an arrangement can help provide a guarantee for capital and other resources to develop strategic infrastructure for supporting intercity partnership arrangements. Some capital investment requires co-partnering on finance and risk-sharing. Other investments will be the responsibility of individual government

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ENDNOTES

(1) See, Joint Venture Silicon Valley, <https://jointventure.org/>

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