



## Improving Service Delivery in Uganda's Secondary Cities

Uganda is one of the least urbanised countries in Africa with barely 17 per cent of its population living in cities. Over 60 per cent of its urban residents are concentrated in inadequately serviced settlements. Uganda's urban growth rate suggests that by 2025 its urban population will triple, which can potentially contribute to more service delivery and housing shortages.

In order to proactively manage the country's rapid urbanisation and improve living conditions for the urban poor, the Government of Uganda, together with its development partners, launched the *Transforming the Settlements of the Urban Poor in Uganda (TSUPU)* programme in 2010.

The Cities Alliance is supporting TSUPU through its Country Programme framework, an ambitious approach that seeks to align multi-stakeholder development efforts. TSUPU emphasises dialogue-building between the national government, local governments and communities. Investment is mobilised with the goal of inclusive planning and improved service provision in secondary cities.

### Dialogue, Community Voice and Partnership

As part of TSUPU, a national policy framework is being developed to address the country's growing urban challenges. City-level inclusive strategies and plans are also being formulated and implemented. The capacity of local governments to provide improved services to the urban poor is being strengthened along with mechanisms to proactively engage citizens in governance.

To mobilise city residents, small community projects – such as paving, sanitation or the construction of a community centre – are being executed. Funded by community development funds, they resolve immediate service delivery needs and generate investment. These projects also help engage residents in a dialogue with local authorities around issues of development standards, land

**Project:** Transforming Settlements of the Urban Poor in Uganda: A Secondary Cities Support Programme (TSUPU)

**Partners:** Government of Uganda, Local governments of 14 secondary cities, the Urban Authorities Association of Uganda (UAAU), Makerere University, Cities Alliance, Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI), UN-Habitat, the World Bank

**Duration:** 2010 – Ongoing

and service charges while fostering notions of active citizenship.

The Programme also supports the training of Uganda's next generation of urban planners. Makerere University is actively engaged in the urban planning process by developing a national framework and providing knowledge support to secondary cities. In addition, internships with SDI/ACTogether and local authorities help planning students build practical skills.

TSUPU also focuses on building the institutional capacity of support partners like the Urban Authorities Association of Uganda (UAAU). The Programme supports the municipal association in its efforts to lobby and advocate on behalf of secondary cities to ensure that issues relevant to local governments permeate into national policy.

While TSUPU's initial activities were focused on five secondary cities – Arua, Jinja, Kabale, Mbale and Mbarara – it has now expanded to include nine additional cities.

**“It is about fighting slums and not slum dwellers and fighting poverty instead of fighting the poor.”**

*Daudi Migereko, Minister of Land, Housing and Urban Development*

The ultimate objective is to develop the Programme into a national initiative through the systematic sharing of experiences and lessons with local governments.

### A Leader in Proactively Managing Urbanisation

In a country that traditionally focuses its resources on rural development, TSUPU is credited with placing urban issues high on the government agenda. By actively engaging with the national government – specifically the Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development – and identifying the key messages it needs to highlight, TSUPU empowers the government to efficiently allocate its limited resources to city projects that need urgent attention. Despite being one of the least urbanised countries in rapidly urbanising Sub-Saharan Africa, Uganda’s efforts have paved the way for other countries in the region to learn from Uganda and take steps towards proactively managing urbanisation.

In a short span of time, TSUPU has fostered a culture of trust, dialogue and strong partnerships between the national government, cities and communities. It has helped overcome the traditional disconnect between key stakeholders, enabling cities to start the journey towards becoming effective service providers and lead the urban growth process. Through national and municipal level forums, an intensive dialogue on issues like settlement and land zoning is in place. The forums provide a platform for both levels of government to engage effectively with each other and with communities.

For local governments struggling to find practical approaches city development that respond to ground realities, TSUPU provides a wealth of useful planning tools. For instance, the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM), a land rights recording tool developed by the Global Land Tool Network of UN-Habitat and implemented in partnership with SDI, enables local governments to gain a better understanding of local demographics and service delivery gaps. For communities, the mapping and enumeration process helps residents attain formal recognition of their residential address, thus promoting their right to the city.

Angella Newumbe, a Community Development Officer at the Mbale Municipal Council and local TSUPU coordinator, highlights how the process of enumeration and mapping under the STDM helps planning:

“Interactions with household members enable us to establish problems or come up with baseline information to address critical issues that enhance service delivery by the Municipal Council.”

Local slum dweller federations supported by TSUPU are mobilising communities to participate in local settlement planning and development. Today, communities are able to better understand the importance of the urban planning process, reduce land encroachments and are willing to pay for service delivery. Communities are also beginning to understand land zoning and its impact on future infrastructure investment. This has positive implications for the proactive management of urbanisation in Uganda.

### Lessons Learned So Far

Prior to TSUPU, urban programmes in Uganda were characterized by *ad hoc*, isolated projects and a duplication of effort with dispersed good practice. TSUPU has demonstrated that greater impact can be achieved by shifting towards longer term programming with a focus on a coherence of efforts and convergence of good practices. This is a result of intensive efforts in relationship and partnership building by the Cities Alliance.

The activities underpinning TSUPU were conceptualised without a preset agenda and emerged from a structured dialogue process and discussions with all stakeholders. Project partners consulted with the national government, cities and communities and asked them to identify their needs. As a result, there is a widespread acceptance of and political support for TSUPU across Uganda. There is also a strong sense of ownership for Programme activities and outputs at all levels. This, and the trust that is now emerging between slum dwellers and local governments, no doubt contributes to the Programme’s ongoing success.

#### **TSUPU contributes to the objectives of the Cities Alliance by:**

- Promoting coherence in efforts to improve the lives of the urban poor
- Promoting partnerships between the national government, local government and communities to address difficult issues
- Leveraging significant budget allocation