

QUICK  
GUIDES  
FOR  
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# housing the **poor** in African cities

UN HABITAT  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Cities Alliance  
CITIES WITHOUT SLUMS

8

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT:**  
ADDRESSING URBAN CHALLENGES IN A  
PARTICIPATORY AND INTEGRATED WAY

### **Quick Guide 8: Local Government**

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## **8** LOCAL GOVERNMENT: ADDRESSING URBAN CHALLENGES IN A PARTICIPATORY AND INTEGRATED WAY

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All these contributions have shaped the Quick Guides series, which we hope will contribute to the daily work of policy makers in the sub-Saharan Africa region in their quest to improve housing and access to land for the urban poor.

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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT: ADDRESSING URBAN CHALLENGES IN A PARTICIPATORY AND INTEGRATED WAY

### QUICK GUIDE FOR POLICY MAKERS NUMBER 8

Local government has an important role to play in ensuring that all residents of African cities get access to conveniently situated land, services, adequate housing and the benefits of urban life. Even with resources and capacity constraints, local governments can significantly improve the lives of residents through participatory and integrated interventions.

This guide begins by providing a brief overview of local government in Africa, and the urban challenges (and opportunities) that local government bodies need to respond to. Two key approaches in responding to these challenges and opportunities, and particularly to those that involve human settlements issues, are then introduced: participatory planning and an integrated/ holistic approach to urban development. The guide argues that physical development, economic development and social development need to go hand-in-hand in order for interventions to be effective and sustainable. Some key tools for local governments to use when adopting these approaches are presented, including mobilizing greater financial resources, entering into partnerships with community organizations (and other stakeholders), and the formulation and implementation of holistic city-wide human settlements strategies.

Through developing holistic strategies in a participatory way, entering into partnerships to extend capacity for delivery, and mobilizing additional resources, local governments can ensure that, over time, fewer and fewer households live in inadequate conditions, and, ultimately, that housing and other living conditions for all residents progressively improve. Throughout, it is crucial that urban residents have the space to participate in the development, implementation and monitoring of these strategies.

This guide is not aimed at specialists, but aims to help build the capacities of national and local government officials and policy makers who need to quickly enhance their understanding of low-income housing issues.

## URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN AFRICA

Local governments in Africa generally have severe capacity and resources constraints, for example in terms of staff and finances, and they face major challenges in fulfilling their role as part of an organized system of collective action (involving the individual, institutional, public and private spheres) in the management of the locality's common affairs. It is critical, however, that local governments in Africa be enabled to become key actors in good urban governance – by means of a continuous process, in which different interests are accommodated – if we aim to ensure that all residents of African cities can get access to conveniently situated land, services, adequate housing and the benefits of urban life. Many local government bodies in Africa have managed to tackle their urban challenges successfully through being innovative, and willing to engage with other key stakeholders such as civil society. There has also been significant transformation of local government in Africa in recent decades, with an emphasis on decentralization, combined with corporatisation/privatisation and partnerships with various actors, including communities.



### Colonial and post-independence local government

In most of Africa, urban local government is based on the local government systems established during the colonial era. In the francophone countries of Africa, for example, urban government was established on the French model. The largest cities had elected councils and elected mayors, and were responsible for a significant range of local services. However, immediately on independence, the national governments of countries such as Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire took over control of the largest cities, explicitly because of their financial insolvency and administrative incompetence, but implicitly in order to establish control over potential political opposition<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, in anglophone Africa, elected local councils had been put in place by the end of the colonial period, but their performance fell far short of their responsibilities and growing demands, and their political autonomy and fiscal base were progressively eroded during the 1960s and 1970s. Central governments generally failed to give local government adequate funds or revenue-raising powers, or to ensure that they had sufficient decision-making powers and trained staff to address the urban challenges they faced.<sup>2</sup> For example, local government was abolished in the early 1970s in Tanzania and replaced by direct central government administration (with some decentralisation to regions).

By the 1980s, many national governments were beginning to recognize the importance of local municipal government. Local government was re-established in many countries. In Tanzania, the re-establishment of local government was a direct response

to a number of failures in the direct administration system, including the outbreak of cholera in urban areas.<sup>3</sup> In certain countries the importance of metropolitan government was also recognized, resulting in the establishment of the City of Abidjan in 1980, and a similar body for Dakar in 1983.

In lusophone countries, notably Angola and Mozambique, there was no colonial tradition of elected local government, and several decades of conflict delayed the decentralization reforms that had occurred in the rest of Africa. There has more recently been some move toward the creation of democratic local government, for example the

introduction of elected local government structures in Mozambique for the first time in the 1990s.

Increasingly, governments and international agencies recognized that improved urban management, decentralization and local democracy are interlinked, and during the 1990s there were fresh attempts at decentralization to local government level, linked to state democratization. However, the decentralization of responsibilities to local government was seldom accompanied by the transfer of the resources needed to effectively undertake these responsibilities.<sup>4</sup>

## DIFFERENCES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The status, powers and functions of local government vary considerably across Africa. The nature of local government bodies can range from democratically elected local governments with a variety of income sources and responsibility for delivering a wide range of services, to appointed local governments that depend on national government for revenue and which have only limited responsibilities.

Somalia, for example, represents a continuum of different types of local government bodies:<sup>5</sup>

- In South and Central Somalia there are no local government bodies (although in some places there are civil society initiatives which attempt to fill the gap).
- In the Puntland region there are weak appointed local government bodies.
- In the Somaliland region there are democratically elected and functional local government bodies.

In Egypt, on the other hand, elected and appointed authorities co-exist, in a parallel and linked hierarchy of appointed officials and elected popular councils.<sup>6</sup>

In some cases there are different levels of local government, for example two-tier metropolitan government, as in Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire.

Only in a few countries (e.g. South Africa and Namibia) is local government enshrined in the constitution. In most countries local government is created by central government, and therefore receives its powers and responsibilities from the enabling statutes or decrees.<sup>8</sup> The powers and functions of local government can thus vary considerably. While all local government bodies have at least some responsibility for functions such as urban planning and refuse collection, only some local government bodies have responsibility for important functions such as water supply, roads and electricity (see Table 1 on page 8).



## METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT IN ABIDJAN



In 1980, the Government of Ivory Coast created a two-tier political and administrative structure for the metropolitan area of Abidjan. At the lowest level were ten communes, with elected mayors and councils who had responsibility for local functions such as the administration of markets, allocation of plots for public purposes, maintenance of clinics and primary schools, and the operation of social facilities. The major functions of the upper-tier government were waste disposal and management; sanitation, traffic regulation, road and park maintenance; and town planning. The mayor of the upper-tier metropolitan council was chosen by his communal colleagues. Major utilities such as water and electricity were managed by private, licensed companies.

In 2002 the City of Abidjan was replaced by the District of Abidjan with an appointed governor (appointed by the president for a 5-year term) and district council (two-thirds of the 61 members are directly elected and one-third are selected by the communes). In addition to the original ten communes, the new District of Abidjan also included three sub-prefectures on the urban periphery. The distribution of functions between the district and the communes is the same as it was between the old 'City of Abidjan' and the communes.<sup>7</sup>

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The responsibilities for core functions such as urban planning may sometimes be shared by local government and other levels of government. Many countries rely heavily on centralized agencies to prepare urban and regional development plans. For example, in Egypt the General Organization for Physical Planning under the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Development prepares the master plans for Egyptian cities.<sup>9</sup>

The widely varying powers of local government in different countries are reflected in the proportion of total government expenditure that is spent by local government. For example, local government expenditure forms only 1.3% of total government expenditure in Kenya, while it forms 16.9% of total government expenditure in South Africa.<sup>10</sup>

**TABLE 1: FUNCTIONS OF URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES IN SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES<sup>11</sup>**

Function	Nigeria (local govt. authorities)	Cameroon (local gov- ernments)	Uganda (urban local govt. districts)	Tanzania (urban lo- cal govts.)	Mozambique (municipali- ties)	Mozambique (municipali- ties)
Water supply	—	—	○	●	○	●
Sanitation	○	●	●	●	○	●
Refuse collec- tion/ disposal	●	●	●	●	○	●
Urban roads	—	●	—	●	○	●
Urban rail	—	●	—	—	—	—
Electricity	—	—	—	○	—	●
Housing	—	●	—	●	○	○
Urban planning	○	●	●	●	○	●
Parks & open space	●	●	●	●	○	●
Cemeteries & crematoria	●	●	●	●	○	●
Museums & libraries	—	●	●	●	—	○
Primary health care clinics	●	○	●	●	—	○
Hospitals	—	○	●	○	—	—
Pre-school education	●	—	●	—	—	—
Primary educa- tion	○	—	●	●	—	—
Secondary education	—	—	●	—	—	●
Fire protection	—	—	●	—	—	●
Police	—	—	—	○	—	○
Economic promotion	—	○	—	○	○	○
Tourism promotion	—	○	●	○	○	○

● Sole responsibility for providing service

○ Responsibility for providing service is shared with other levels of government

## CHANGES IN THE APPROACH OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

At the same time as increased decentralization in recent decades, there has been a shift in the way local governments operate. This has been linked to a global shift to privatization, corporatization and public-private partnerships in local government (what is often referred to as the “New Public Management” approach). The implementation of Structural Adjustment Programmes in many countries helped introduce these shifts. In Nigeria, for example, since the 1990s, public services that were previously administered by local governments (such as health centres, primary and secondary schools, water supply, road repairs, the management of public facilities and parks) have to a large extent been privatized.<sup>12</sup> In addition, in many countries in Africa, most urban development and re-development projects are now structured as public-private partnerships.

Even in countries that were not subjected to Structural Adjustment Programmes, such as South Africa, global pressures and trends have resulted in similar changes. For exam-

ple, the City of Johannesburg has been active in restructuring itself, and corporatizing and privatizing service delivery. It now has a network of “utilities, agencies and corporatized entities”, including Johannesburg City Parks, the Johannesburg Property Company, the Johannesburg Tourism Company and Johannesburg Water. There are a number of potential concerns that arise when basic services are corporatized and privatized. The most important concern is that this strategy reduces the potential for cross-subsidization of service charges within the local government budget so as to ensure greater access for poor people to affordable services.

Table 2 shows the key characteristics of the “public-private” model of urban management that became prevalent in Africa during the 1990s.

TABLE 2: THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR MODEL OF URBAN MANAGEMENT<sup>13</sup>

ACTORS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Central government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Political and administrative control of local governments</li> <li>- Limited provision of grants and loans</li> <li>- Emphasis more on coordination"</li> </ul>
Local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formally more decentralized</li> <li>- Provision and maintenance of basic services</li> <li>- Development control; preparation of coordination plans</li> <li>- Limited direct provision of services</li> </ul>
Private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delivery of services: water, sanitation, electricity</li> <li>- Delivery of health and higher education</li> <li>- Urban renewal and housing projects</li> <li>- Public transport</li> <li>- Telecommunications"</li> </ul>
Non-governmental sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased local-level interventions (food for work; upgrading)</li> <li>- Social services provision</li> <li>- Focus on poverty, informal activities and access to credit</li> <li>- Emergency relief to, and rehabilitation of, refugees</li> <li>- Defence of land tenure and civic rights"</li> </ul>

## URBAN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN AFRICA



The urban population of Africa is large, and growing. The total African urban population in 2005 was 347 million<sup>14</sup> and the current average urban growth rate is 3.3% per year.<sup>15</sup> This means that there are more than 10 million people being added to the population of African cities every year. Simultaneously, the proportion of Africa's total population that lives in urban areas has grown from 23.6% in 1970 to 39.1% in 2008.<sup>16</sup> The number of large cities in Africa has also grown dramatically. In 1995 there were 28 cities in Africa with more than a million inhabitants; by 2005 this had increased to 43 cities.<sup>17</sup>

Unlike urbanization in some parts of the world, rapid urban population growth in Africa (with the possible exception of North Africa and South Africa) is largely taking place in countries and regions where there

has not been rapid industrialization and economic development. This has resulted in urbanization in Africa taking on a different form to urbanization in many other parts of the world.<sup>18</sup>

During the 1950s and 1960s, when most of Africa became independent, the western, "modernist" view of cities and "cityness" was dominant. In this view, cities were places where administrative systems, social services and ways of living would "progress" using increasingly modern forms of technology and ways of organizing people and meeting their needs. Modernist Africa thrived after independence, as new national governments saw the cities in their countries as the sites where western ideas of progress and modernity could be implemented.<sup>19</sup> The capitals of the new states grew particularly fast, because government

employment expanded dramatically after independence and attracted services and commercial activity; this in turn inspired more rural-urban migration among the population, who saw the cities as places of economic hope and potential for personal development.

During the 1960s and 1970s, however, African urban populations began to outpace the ability of the economy to provide jobs (which is sometimes referred to as “over-urbanization”), resulting in the rapid growth of slums (e.g. informal settlements). The typical response of governments, at least initially, was to demolish slums, but over time this became more and more unsustainable as a strategy. As local governments became increasingly unable to provide basic services to new urban residents, and sometimes even unable to maintain existing infrastructure, by the mid-/late 1970s many African cities had run into a crisis, linked to the global economic crisis and shift that was occurring at the same time.<sup>20</sup>

In recent decades rural-urban migration has slowed in many countries on the continent, but some African cities have continued to experience accelerated urban migration as a result of civil conflict, as people sought safe havens in the sprawling peri-urban areas of cities such as Kinshasa and Luanda. Nevertheless, whatever the reasons behind the urbanization trend in Africa, the challenge of slums for local government in sub-Saharan Africa is unlikely to fade away, since urban growth rates and slum formation rates are practically the same in the region.

## GROWING INFORMALITY IN AFRICAN CITIES

The net result of rapid urbanization and the inability of the state to manage this has been growing informality in the cities, i.e. settlements and activities which are not regulated by the state in traditional bureaucratic ways. This growth of informality has become the key characteristic of African cities in recent decades. The growth of “slums” is the most tangible manifestation of this growth in informality – more than 50% of the African urban population now lives in slums.

Slums can be defined as areas where residents lack adequate water supply, adequate sanitation, durable housing and/or sufficient living area (i.e. more than 3 people have to share each habitable room). The extent of slums in Africa varies widely – in some countries more than 90% of the urban population live in slums, whereas in other countries less than 20% do so.

TABLE 3: SLUM POPULATIONS IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES<sup>21</sup>

Country	Slum population as a proportion of total urban population (%)	Country	Slum population as a proportion of total urban population (%)
Sierra Leone	97.00%	Burundi	64.30%
Sudan	94.20%	Togo	62.10%
Central African Republic	94.10%	Burkina Faso	59.50%
Chad	91.30%	Zambia	57.20%
Angola	86.50%	Côte d'Ivoire	56.20%
Guinea-Bissau	83.10%	Kenya	54.80%
Niger	82.60%	Republic of Congo	53.40%
Ethiopia	81.80%	Cameroon	47.40%
Madagascar	80.80%	Guinea	45.70%
Mozambique	79.50%	Gambia	45.40%
Democratic Republic of Congo	76.40%	Gabon	38.70%
Somalia	73.50%	Senegal	38.10%
Benin	71.80%	Lesotho	35.10%
Rwanda	71.60%	Namibia	33.90%
Uganda	66.70%	South Africa	28.70%
Malawi	66.40%	Zimbabwe	17.90%
Tanzania	66.40%	Egypt	17.10%
Equatorial Guinea	66.30%	Morocco	13.10%
Mali	65.90%	Algeria	11.80%
Nigeria	65.80%	<b>Total Africa</b>	<b>50.90%</b>

*Note: The table excludes countries for which no data are available.*

## THE NATURE OF AFRICAN CITIES

Evolving big African cities like Lagos and Kinshasa are very different to the western, modernist ideal of a city. They have been described as “great cities with little public transport, chaotic land tenure policies, poor access to remunerative structured employment, lacking in the public spaces that give the citizens of a city at least in modernist parlance a sense of belonging and pride”.<sup>22</sup>

Some people who study urban development have seen this transformation of the African city as a cultural rebirth, as the genuine Africanization of the African city. They argue that African cities have become creative centres where new forms of culture and new types of community associations are emerging. These new forms of community associations play an important role in

African cities. This has led, for example, to Nairobi being described as a “self-help city” and Lagos being described as a patchwork of “self-organization”.<sup>23</sup>

Along with new forms of organization, new cultural forms have also emerged in the cities – new forms of art, of crafts, of music, of writing. African cities are also increasingly playing an important economic role – for example, Lagos has only about 10% of Nigeria’s population but accounts for 90% of Nigeria’s total foreign trade.<sup>24</sup>

It is important to emphasize that African cities are very complex and diverse. For example, the nature of slums differs considerably from city to city (and even within cities), as Table 4 indicates.

TABLE 4: NATURE OF HOUSING DEPRIVATION IN SELECTED AFRICAN CITIES<sup>25</sup>

City	% lacking access to adequate water supply	% lacking access to adequate sanitation	% lacking access to finished main floor	% lacking access to sufficient living area
Cairo, Egypt (2003)	0.01%	10.80%	1.10%	4.00%
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (2005)	0.10%	28.20%	16.60%	35.00%
Nairobi, Kenya (2003)	6.70%	18.50%	12.60%	18.30%
Lagos, Nigeria (2003)	11.80%	23.10%	0.20%	39.20%
Porto Novo, Benin (2006)	23.00%	30.90%	5.70%	27.00%
Douala, Cameroon (2004)	13.10%	24.50%	11.90%	9.60%
Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (2000)	33.60%	17.30%	15.50%	23.60%
Luanda, Angola (2000)	32.70%	31.20%	32.40%	41.60%
Harare, Zimbabwe (2005)	0.80%	1.60%	0.80%	17.50%



## PARTICIPATORY PLANNING TO IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS



How can local governments address the challenges of improving inadequate living conditions and building on the creativity of communities? International experience demonstrates that top-down, single-sector interventions have failed to address complex urban challenges. It has increasingly been recognized that in order to be able to create productive, inclusive, sustainable and well-governed human settlements, it is important that interventions are planned in a participatory way, and that an integrated approach to urban development is adopted.

This shift has been particularly evident with regard to urban upgrading programmes. In the past, urban upgrading programmes focused on the provision of physical infra-

structure, and were often fairly top-down and unparticipatory. More recent urban upgrading programmes have tended to have a more integrated approach and a greater emphasis on community participation.<sup>26</sup>

Participatory planning is important, as urban development interventions are only likely to meet the real needs of residents if the residents themselves, through representation by democratic and accountable community organizations, are able to actively participate in decision-making processes. It is particularly important that women, youth and other marginalized groups are actively incorporated into participatory processes.

## PRECONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The **Habitat II Agenda** describes the essential preconditions for successful participatory processes:

Sustainable human settlements development requires the active engagement of civil society organizations, as well as the broad-based participation of all people. It equally requires responsive, transparent and accountable government at the local level. Civic engagement and responsible government both necessitate the establishment and strengthening of participatory mechanisms, including access to justice and community-based action planning, which will ensure that all voices are heard in identifying problems and priorities, setting goals, exercising legal rights, determining service standards, mobilising resources and implementing policies, programmes and projects. The preconditions for the active engagement of civil society organizations and broad-based participation include:

- **Undertaking civic and human rights education and training programmes**, using all forms of the media and education and information campaigns, to promote a civic spirit and an awareness of civil rights and responsibilities and the means of exercising them, of the changing roles of women and men, and of issues relating to sustainable human settlements development and the quality of life.
- **Establishing regular and broad-based consultative mechanisms** for involving civil society in decision-making in order to reflect the diverse needs of the community.
- **Establishing agenda-setting participatory mechanisms** enabling individuals, families, communities, indigenous people and civil society to play a proactive role in identifying local needs and priorities and formulating new policies, plans and projects.<sup>27</sup>

## PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

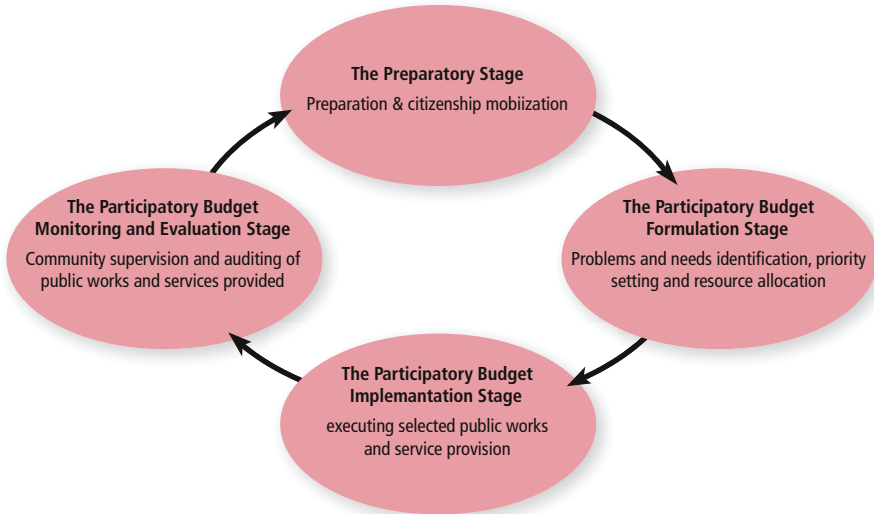
Participatory budgeting is an especially important aspect of participatory planning. The diagram below shows the typical steps in a participatory budgeting process. Each step is discussed in detail below the diagram.<sup>28</sup>

- **Preparatory stage:** This is the design stage of the budget. It involves the distribution of information, the initial discussion of policies and priorities by citizens in their localities, estimation of revenue, establishment of the general resource allocation or budgeting criteria and methodology, putting in place the relevant participatory structures and the

election and establishment of the number of elected representatives. All of this can take six months to one year to accomplish.

- **Participatory budget formulation stage:** This stage is concerned mainly with setting priorities, and allows citizens, directly or through their representatives, to set priorities and decide on investment projects. The stage involves the convening of participatory budgeting committee meetings, and the debating and voting of the budget proposals by the committee or an equivalent institution. This is the phase where the

THE PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING CYCLE



policies and projects that will be implemented by the municipality in the coming fiscal year (or even two years) are discussed. Main activities associated with this stage include coming up with prioritization criteria and decision-making mechanisms for setting priorities.

- Participatory budget formulation stage:** This is the actual problem-solving stage. In dialogue with the participatory budget committee, municipal staff members from various departments prepare technical plans and contracts. At this stage the budget implementation process usually involves the complex process of contracting services or public works that include detailed planning, writing the terms of reference, calls of interest, tendering, tender opening and selection, awarding of tenders, signing of memoranda of understanding with winning bidders and then execution of the projects. Councillors and citizens

involved in participatory budgeting monitor the budget implementations, through on-site monitoring and evaluation of project implementation. This is also done in a participatory way, to ensure that all goes as was planned in terms of physical resources and deadlines. Besides looking at the implementation process, this step helps to adjust the plans, where necessary, and to draw up new strategies, using the lessons learnt and best practices encountered during the course of implementation.

- Participatory budgeting monitoring and evaluation stage:** Local authorities must give periodic budget performance reports to citizens. These reports will state project implementation status and problems encountered. Periodic participatory site visits to inspect projects can also be organized. Community score cards can also be used for monitoring and evaluation.

There are a number of successful examples of participatory planning and budgeting in Africa. The strategic urban planning process in Berbera, Somalia, is an example of participatory planning at a city scale, while the Ki-

tale, Kenya, planning process is an example of participatory planning at a neighbourhood scale. Participatory budgeting has also been successfully used in Mozambique.

### PARTICIPATORY STRATEGIC URBAN PLANNING IN BERBERA, SOMALIA



The city of Berbera has been undertaking a series of steps towards effective and integrated urban development, in collaboration with UN-HABITAT:

- A city profile, undertaken by a team of local experts, prepared the necessary database for the participatory planning process and provided an opportunity to identify and mobilize key stakeholders.
- A city consultation, which built a common vision for the desired future of the city, identified priority needs and related areas for strategic intervention, and reached agreement on the action plans to be implemented and on the roles of the different stakeholders concerned. This process is reflected in the Berbera Urban Pact. The collective vision is for Berbera to be a “dynamic, beautiful, peaceful and modern city of international trade, with intense port and industrial activities, a clean environment, and excellent services and infrastructure”.
- An urban spatial analysis, which gives a basic spatial understanding of the city and highlights challenges and priority areas of intervention in a proposed strategic development plan.
- An action plan, agreed on by the local stakeholders during the consultation process. It includes various projects, such as: the rehabilitation of the Bursade playground as a recreational and educational space for youth and children (construction of sports hall, basketball court, library, classrooms); capacity-building of district councils and other community structures for planning and undertaking development projects; and increasing municipal revenue generation through property registration and taxation.<sup>29</sup>

## PARTICIPATORY PLANNING IN KITALE, KENYA

The majority of Kitale's population (65%) lives in informal settlements, without access to essential services such as water and sanitation. Residents therefore had to use polluted water from springs, and the disposal of domestic excreta in open places was common. Residents were not able to influence decision-making over municipal plans and budgets. The politically-charged atmosphere meant that these processes were rarely transparent, and the projects that went ahead failed to address the needs of the poor.

In response, Kitale Municipal Council and Practical Action (formerly the Intermediate Technology Development Group) formed a partnership in 2001. A participatory planning process was established where, for the first time, needs were jointly prioritized and implementation strategies jointly developed. A systematic scan-survey undertaken during 2001 identified needs for a wide range of services across the whole town. An inventory of all stakeholders was developed to identify potential partners and areas of collaboration. The survey highlighted the three informal settlements in greatest need. In each of these, a participatory neighbourhood planning process produced development and investment plans, and guided the implementation of innovative solutions.

The purpose of the initial participatory planning processes was to ensure that the priorities of the town's poorest residents were adopted as priorities for action, and for allocating resources by the local authority and other public and private sector organizations. This planning process was led by the residents of marginalized settlements, and included a prominent role for women's groups. Practical Action played the role of facilitator in bringing different stakeholders together. The local authority oversaw and coordinated efforts, and allocated money and staff resources to implementing the plans.

Neighbourhood plans formed the basis of the objectives. Top priorities included water and sanitation, income-generation and a footbridge across a steep river gorge. The key strategy was to create and strengthen partnerships for mobilizing resources and expertise, making the plans a reality. Promoting concepts around the theme, 'The Kitale We Want', and raising the profile of the initiative through a widely distributed newsletter helped draw in more partners. The approach represented a transformation from 'business as usual' where the municipality had tried (and failed) to do everything itself. Capacity-building of local communities was an essential component of the strategy, to enable them to participate actively and effectively. Initial actions were carefully planned to demonstrate the benefits brought by finding locally appropriate solutions, thereby encouraging greater investment by others.

The programme was later extended to other informal settlements, and includes a range of small-scale, locally managed interventions. The interventions include:

- Construction of a 70 metre-wide footbridge used daily by hundreds of school children, traders and residents.
- Community-managed water points that provide potable water for more than 65 000 residents, spring protection and water points, and community sanitation facilities.
- Communities who acquired skills in running small businesses now maintain active daily savings and credit schemes.
- Attitudes and behaviours have started to change as a result of the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) programme, through which residents are empowered to monitor water quality and organize environmental clean-ups, and 17 of the town's primary schools participate in the programme.<sup>30</sup>

## PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN DONDO, MOZAMBIQUE

In 1999 the municipality of Dondo in Mozambique initiated a participatory budgeting process. Community Development Councils and Municipal Consulting Councils were established to ensure that civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector would be able to participate in the budgeting process on a territorial or thematic basis. These bodies formulate proposals, based on an assessment of municipal activities and a situational analysis, which are forwarded to the Municipal Assembly for discussion and approval.

The municipality's reasons for adopting a participatory approach to budgeting were:

- It can improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public resources.
- It can promote more sustainable allocation of resources.
- It can promote socio-economic development of communities.
- Citizens should always be part of decision-making processes.

The main successes of the participatory budgeting process in Dondo have been:

- more involvement by residents in finding local solutions for local problems;
- greater responsiveness by the municipality to the concerns of residents;
- more investment initiatives.

The main weaknesses of the participatory budgeting process have been:

- lack of representativity;
- weak understanding of the key issues to be tackled in the process;
- use of the same methodology for different types of problems and target groups.

Dondo Municipality is attempting to overcome these weaknesses through the following:

- raising of public awareness of the participatory budgeting process (using radio, brochures, manuals, etc.);
- increasing internal and external resources for the implementation of the participatory budgeting process;
- liaising with stakeholders regarding how to improve the process.<sup>31</sup>



**ASSESSING PARTICIPATORY PLANS AND STRATEGIES**



Key questions to ask to test how participatory a plan or strategy is include the following:

- Does it give sufficient control to grassroots participants?
- Does it build on existing networks, community processes, customs and norms?
- Does it initiate new networks to include the most marginalized groups?
- Does it focus on community strengths and land systems?
- Does it use representative mechanisms as processes are scaled up?
- Is it clear on objectives?
- Does it contain effective information strategies?
- Does it meet immediate needs and resources so as to avoid participation fatigue?
- Does it invest in the capacity of grassroots participation at an early stage?
- Does it address the need for political support and social transformation?
- Does it adopt minimum standards for participation processes?
- Does it contain accountability for participation and include dispute resolution mechanisms?<sup>32</sup>



## AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT



Internationally, there has been a shift away from a focus on physical development and single-sector interventions towards a broader, more integrated and holistic approach to urban development. This approach has been described as follows: “Urban housing strategies should provide more than shelter... Local housing policy ... is always a housing ‘plus’ policy which involves community development goals, environmental goals, urban transportation and other forms of infrastructure (schools, hospitals, child care, etc.).”<sup>33</sup>

*Integration can mean many things, but the key meaning of an integrated approach to urban development is that physical development should always occur as part of a broader social and economic development strategy aimed at addressing poverty, and there should always be a range of complementary interventions.*

Formulating an integrated set of interventions requires a holistic understanding of poverty and development.<sup>34</sup> The sustainable livelihoods approach, which dates back to the work of Robert Chambers in the 1980s and 1990s, is a useful way of thinking holistically about poverty and development. In terms of this approach, a livelihood comprises “the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from shocks and stresses and maintain and enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, whilst not undermining the natural resource base”.<sup>35</sup>

There are various approaches to supporting livelihoods and addressing poverty. A distinction can be made between three different strategies, all of which are important:

- poverty alleviation (addressing basic needs, such as food, shelter, water);



- poverty reduction (reducing the depth of poverty through the transfer of assets, skills building, provision of employment opportunities, etc.);
- poverty eradication (institutional reforms that increase the political power of the poor).<sup>36</sup>

The essential motivation of an integrated approach to housing is that urban poverty is complex and multi-dimensional, and “single sector interventions cannot sustainably im-

prove the shelter conditions of urban poor households”. Improving shelter involves “building human capital through skills upgrading, strengthening community-based groups (social capital) and facilitating access to credit (financial capital), as well as reviewing regulatory frameworks”.<sup>37</sup>

## INTEGRATION THROUGH COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMMES

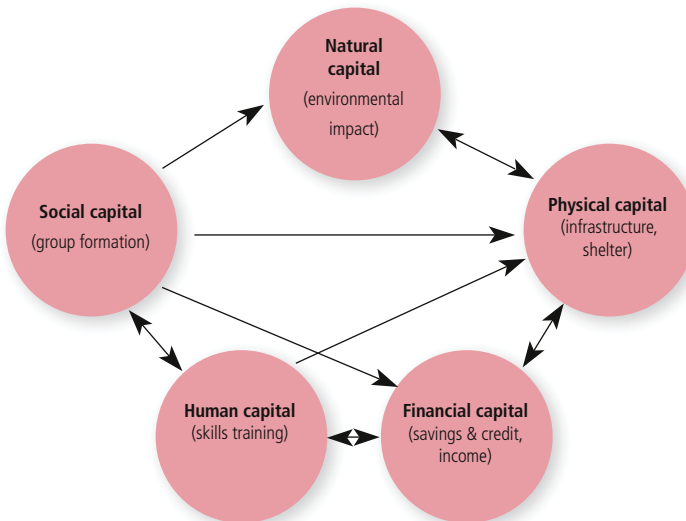
What an integrated approach means in practice is that slum upgrading initiatives need to include a range of complementary programmes that address physical, social and economic development needs. Integrated urban upgrading programmes typically include the following interventions:<sup>38</sup>

- **Physical development:** roads, pavements, stormwater drainage, water supply, sanitation, street lighting, solid waste management.
- **Social/ human development:** setting up neighbourhood and women’s groups, youth activities, forming savings groups, pre-primary education, adult literacy, community health, mother-and-child care.

- **Economic development:** mobilizing community savings, supporting income-generating activities through vocational training/skills upgrading, and facilitating access of small businesses to finance and trade.

The Integrated Urban Housing Development Project in Kenya and India is an example of how these linkages can work in practice. The different parts of the project, and the links between them, are shown in the diagram on this page. The project is described in detail on the next page.

### AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT, BASED ON THE INTEGRATED URBAN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN KENYA AND INDIA<sup>39</sup>



## THE INTEGRATED URBAN HOUSING PROJECT IN NAKURU, KENYA

The Integrated Urban Housing Project in Kenya and India was initiated in 1999 by the Intermediate Technology Development Group to increase the access of low-income households and the poor to adequate, safe and secure shelter. The project was also intended to identify and promote a sustainable shelter delivery strategy for the urban poor, to be adopted by national and local government in Kenya and India. The project used the sustainable livelihoods framework to test whether integrated interventions in the shelter and micro-enterprise sectors could have a long-term pro-poor impact on the livelihoods and overall quality of life of poor people living and working in informal settlements.

The Integrated Urban Housing Project consisted of a range of complementary interventions: the establishment of housing cooperatives to improve shelter and infrastructure conditions; skills training (e.g. business skills) and the establishment of income-generating activity (IGA) groups to stimulate economic activity; and the establishment of savings groups and a revolving loan fund to increase access to finance. The intention was to ensure the sustainability of the shelter and infrastructure interventions through ensuring increased incomes for residents.

An evaluation of the Integrated Urban Housing Project undertaken in 2003 found the following achievements:

- *Group formation (social capital)*: 27 savings groups and 16 IGA groups (with a total of between 200 and 300 members) had been established. An apex body of CBOs, the Nakuru Affordable Housing and Environmental Cooperative (NAHECO), formed to coordinate CBOs in the project settlements, was facilitating their developmental activities, networking, and also savings and access to credit. NAHECO had over 450 members, more than 50% of whom were women.
- *Income generation (human/social/financial capital)*: Technical training was provided to 43 people (28 women and 15 men) while 103 people (44 women and 59 men) received business training. These trainees in turn trained others. Various production machines were granted to IGA groups through NAHECO. Of 20 individuals whose experience in the project was analyzed in February 2003, 68% had an average increase in monthly income of 64%; 55% had taken on more employees; 75% estimated that business volume had increased; and 85% were maintaining savings.
- *Savings and credit (financial capital)*: NAHECO was registered as a savings and credit organization and links to finance institutions were made for 27 savings groups. The NAHECO revolving fund had disbursed 12 business loans and 7 housing loans, and 20 loans had been obtained from finance institutions independent of project support, at the time of the evaluation.
- *Shelter (physical capital)*: Five housing cooperatives had been formed, and one group of tenants had been able to purchase land on which they were planning to develop housing. Six communal loans had been obtained from the NAHECO revolving fund. More affordable alternative technologies had been effectively demonstrated, and approximately 185 dwelling units had been built, as well as over 80 toilets. Health and hygiene awareness training was being conducted. Water and sanitation appraisals were carried out in collaboration with the Nakuru Municipal Council, and three community-based water and sanitation committees were established to monitor service provision.<sup>40</sup>

## MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR HOLISTIC HUMAN SETTLEMENT STRATEGIES



Local government needs to have holistic, multi-faceted, realistic and implementable human settlement plans to ensure that, over time, fewer and fewer households live in inadequate living conditions, and ultimately that living conditions for all residents progressively improve. Such a plan needs to be developed in a participatory way, with real participation by civil society organizations. In order to be able to implement such a plan it is essential that the local government body (i) mobilizes increased financial resources to increase and enhance delivery, and (ii) mobilizes additional resources and capacity for delivery through partnerships with community organizations and other stakeholders.

### Holistic city-wide human settlements strategies

It is important for local governments to have holistic city-wide human settlement strategies which have been developed in a participatory way, and which can guide the

actions of the local government (and other stakeholders) in working towards common goals. Holistic human settlement strategies need to provide for a range of actions at different scales which attempt to tackle urban challenges in an integrated way, and need to facilitate the provision of housing, services, facilities and better living conditions at scale. The content of such as strategies should include:

- spatial planning/ transport planning and land use management to ensure that all residents are able to have access to economic opportunities, community facilities, recreational amenities and so on, within a safe and healthy living environment;
- ensuring access to land;
- ensuring access to basic infrastructure and services;
- facilitating community-based production of housing.

Many of the Habitat II Agenda recommendations in this regard are still relevant and important (see pages 27–31 in this guide). The Grand Housing Development Programme in Addis Ababa (page 31) and the human settlements programme in Kigali

(page 32) are two examples of successful strategies that have addressed a number of urban challenges at scale, and resulted in a meaningful improvement in living conditions.

## THE HABITAT II AGENDA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONTENT OF INTEGRATED HUMAN SETTLEMENTS STRATEGIES



Key issues that integrated human settlements strategies need to address include: spatial planning, transport planning and land use management to ensure that all residents are able to have access to economic opportunities, community facilities, recreational amenities, and so on, within a safe and healthy living environment; ensuring access to land; ensuring access to basic infrastructure and services; and facilitating community-based production of housing. The Habitat II Agenda, to which many countries in Africa are signatories, has many use-

ful recommendations with regard to these issues.<sup>41</sup>

### **Spatial planning/ transport planning and land use management:**

- Develop integrated land information and mapping systems (114a). This will form the basis for spatial planning.
- Institutionalise a participatory approach to sustainable human settlements through the development and support of strategies and mechanisms that en-

courage open and inclusive dialogue among all interested parties, with special attention to the needs and priorities of women, minorities, children, youth, people with disabilities, older persons and persons living in poverty and exclusion (113l).

- Develop and support the implementation of improved land management practices that deal comprehensively with competing urban land requirements for housing, industry, commerce, infrastructure, transport, green spaces and forested areas, taking into account the need for spaces for everyday activities – for playgrounds, parks, sports and recreation areas and areas suitable for gardening and urban agriculture (113h).
- Establish, as appropriate, structures for the enforcement of land management laws and regulations in order to make enforcement and appeals more efficient and effective (114b).
- Develop, with the participation of all interested parties, comprehensive and environmentally sound land use strategies at the local level (114d).
- Coordinate land use and transport

planning in order to encourage spatial settlement patterns that facilitate access to such basic necessities as workplaces, schools, health care, places of worship, goods and services, and leisure, thereby reducing the need to travel (151b).

- Provide or promote an effective, affordable, physically accessible and environmentally sound public transport and communication system, giving priority to collective means of transport with adequate carrying capacity and frequency that support basic needs and the main traffic flows (115e).

### Ensuring access to land:

Prepare comprehensive inventories of publicly held land and, where appropriate, develop programmes for making them available for shelter and human settlements development, including, where appropriate, development by non-governmental and community-based organizations (76c).

- Apply transparent, comprehensive and equitable fiscal incentive mechanisms, as appropriate, to stimulate the efficient, accessible and environmentally sound use of land, and utilise land-based and other forms of taxation in mobilising



financial resources for service provision by local authorities (76d).

- Develop and implement land information systems and practices for managing land, including land value assessment, and seek to ensure that such information is readily available (76f).
- Make full use of existing infrastructure in urban areas, encouraging optimal density of the occupation of available serviced land in accordance with its carrying capacity, at the same time ensuring the adequate provision of parks, play areas, common spaces and facilities, and plots of land for home gardening, as appropriate (76g).
- Consider the adoption of innovative instruments that capture gains in land value and recover public investments (76h).
- Consider the adoption of innovative instruments for the efficient and sustainable assembly and development of land, including, where appropriate, land readjustment and consolidation (76i).
- Promote awareness campaigns, education and enabling practices regarding, in particular, legal rights with respect to tenure, land ownership and inheritance for women, so as to overcome existing barriers (78b).
- Develop regularization programmes and formulate and implement such programmes and projects in consultation with the concerned population and organized groups, ensuring the full and equal participation of women and taking into account the needs differentiated by gender, age, disability and vulnerability (78d).

*(See Quick Guide 3 on Land for more information about what local government can do with regard to ensuring access to land.)*

## Ensuring access to basic infrastructure and services:



To safeguard the health, safety, welfare and improved living environment of all people and to provide adequate and affordable basic infrastructure and services, governments at the appropriate levels, including local authorities, should promote:

- the supply of and access to adequate quantities of safe drinking water (85a);
- adequate sanitation and environmentally sound waste management (85b);
- adequate mobility through access to affordable and physically accessible public transport and other communications facilities (85c);
- access to markets and retail outlets for selling and purchasing basic necessities (85d);
- the provision of social services, especially for underserved groups and communities (85e);
- access to community facilities, including places of worship (85f);
- access to sustainable sources of energy (85g);



- environmentally sound technologies and the planning, provision and maintenance of infrastructure, including roads, streets, parks and open spaces (85h);
- a high level of safety and public security (85i);
- the use of a variety of planning mechanisms that provide for meaningful participation to reduce the negative impacts on biological resources, such as prime agricultural land and forests, that may arise from human settlements activities (85j);
- planning and implementation systems that integrate all of the above factors into the design and operation of sustainable human settlements (85k).
- To ensure more equitable provision of basic infrastructure and service delivery systems, governments at the appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:
  - work with all interested parties in providing serviced land and in allocating adequate space for basic services as well as for recreational and open spaces in the development of new schemes and the upgrading of existing ones (86a);
  - involve local communities, particularly women, children and persons with disabilities, in decision-making and in setting priorities for the provision of services (86b);
  - involve, encourage and assist, as appropriate, local communities, particularly women, children and persons with disabilities, in setting standards for community facilities and in the operation and maintenance of those facilities (86c);
  - support the efforts of academic and professional groups in analyzing the need for infrastructure and services at the community level (86d);
  - facilitate the mobilization of funds from all interested parties, especially the private sector, for increased investment (86e);
  - establish support mechanisms to enable people living in poverty and the disadvantaged to have access to basic infrastructure and services (86f);
  - promote dialogue among all interested parties to help provide basic services and infrastructure (86h).

### Facilitating community-based production of housing:



- Promote self-built housing within the context of a comprehensive land-use policy (74a).
- Integrate and regularize self-built housing, especially through appropriate land registration programmes, as a holistic part of the overall housing and infrastructure system... subject to a comprehensive land-use policy (74b).
- Encourage efforts to improve existing self-built housing through better access to housing resources, including land, finance and building materials (74c).
- Develop the means and methods to improve the standards of self-built housing (74d).



- Encourage community-based and non-governmental organizations in their role of assisting and facilitating the production of self-built housing (74e).
- Facilitate regular dialogue and gender-sensitive participation of the various actors involved in housing production at all levels and stages of decision-making (74f).
- Mitigate the problems related to spontaneous human settlements through programmes and policies that anticipate unplanned settlements (74g).

*(See Quick Guide 2 on Low-Cost Housing for more information about the role of local government with regard to ensuring access to housing.)*

### GRAND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Addis Ababa has a housing backlog of about 350 000 housing units, and this is estimated to be growing by about 60 000 per year. The unemployment rate is estimated at 40%.

The Addis Ababa city government decided to address the issues of housing and unemployment through an integrated human settlements programme that will provide housing, infrastructure and facilities to low-income residents while simultaneously creating jobs and stimulating economic growth.

The housing programme is largely funded by the city government's income from the leasing out of land. Partner organizations include GTZ, Missions of Charity and the Addis Ababa Credit and Saving Associations Union.



The housing units are medium-density, i.e. blocks of flats, ranging from studio apartments to three-bedroom apartments. The new settlements are mixed-income and mixed-use and include a range of social facilities.

The housing units are allocated by lottery. Thirty per cent of housing units are reserved specifically for women-headed households and the other 70% of units are randomly allocated (to both men- and women-headed households). Higher priority has been given to women so as to help them with the acute economic problems they are facing and to improve their role and capacity in society. Residents allocated housing units are expected to pay 20% of the total amount in advance, and the rest is paid in instalments.

After the first three years of the programme, more than 30 000 housing units were complete or under construction. More than 900 new micro-enterprises were participating in the construction and building materials manufacturing, and about 40 000 jobs were created. By February 2009, 36 000 housing units had been transferred to residents and a further 43 000 units were planned (80% of which were already under construction).<sup>42</sup>

## HOLISTIC HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME IN KIGALI, RWANDA

With a new government in place after the devastating experience of genocide, Kigali faced the problem of reconstruction while at the same time striving to provide services to its citizens. Initially, the top priority of the new government was to secure the city and resettle those who were uprooted during the genocide, while settling disputes arising from illegal uses and occupation of land. Because of that focus, most of the services offered by the city were neglected, giving rise to growing mounds of garbage, stretched water and sanitation facilities as well as dilapidated road networks and a dysfunctional public transport system.

Because of these problems, the city authorities, with the support of the national government, embarked on an integrated programme from 1998. This programme had a number of components, including the following:

**Slums improvement:** The long-term objective of the city council is to reduce the existence of slums within its boundaries. This is being done in a twofold manner – building improved houses for the slum dwellers or improving the living conditions of those whose slums are not removed.

**Beautification of streets and pavements:** One area that won the enthusiastic support of the local population was the decision to have residents plant trees on both residential and commercial plots. It is common practice in Kigali to find a well cared-for tree outside buildings. In tandem with this was the decision to have building owners build pavements between the building and the main road. Those not keen on the pavements are given the option of planting trees and having a mini-garden next to their houses.

**Public transport:** Like most cities in the developing world, Kigali was faced with the problem of public transport. The rickety taxis operating there contravened all safety requirements, thus leading to accidents which caused injuries and, in some cases, death. The idea was to streamline the operations of these public transport vehicles so that commuters would not only reach their destinations safely, but that the interests of other road users would also be taken into consideration. Towards this end, cooperative societies were formed to be in charge of public transport. Every small section and zone formed their own association which took charge of public transport, while the motorcycle taxi operators (known locally as motos) were also organized into groups and zoned for easier operation. It is here that a lot of demobilized soldiers were absorbed.

**Garbage collection:** To deal with the runaway garbage problem, the city council decided to form associations whose members were tasked with the responsibility of collecting and looking for environmentally sound ways of disposing of the garbage accumulated in their areas. The women sweep the streets and collect the garbage, which is taken to a central place. There it is sorted out and the biodegradable items are used to make fuel bricks for cooking fires. The rest is taken to a garbage dump on the outskirts of the city.<sup>43</sup>

## MOBILIZING FINANCIAL RESOURCES

One of the biggest problems for local government in Africa is inadequate financial resources. In order to be able to address urban challenges, local governments need to ensure that they have sufficient financial resources from a range of sources. Direct user charges are a major source of revenue, and designing tariff structures so that there is cross-subsidisation of the poor is one way of ensuring that services can be provided for all (for example, by charging those who use a large amount of water or electricity at a higher rate per unit than those who use a small amount). It is also possible to ensure a small free amount of services (for example, the minimum amount of water required for basic health) to poor households through cross-subsidisation.

In addition to direct user charges (e.g. charging for water provision), the main potential sources of local government revenue are:

- transfers from central government
- property tax
- loans.

These different revenue sources are discussed on pages 28–30 of this guide.

Table 5 compares revenue sources for three countries in Africa. As can be seen, the revenue sources available, and the importance of various revenue sources, varies considerably from one country to another.

TABLE 5: SOURCES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE IN SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES<sup>44</sup>

Type of revenue	Percentage of total local government revenue		
	South Africa	Kenya	Uganda
Property tax	16.80%	15.60%	0.00%
Other taxes	2.80%	5.90%	2.10%
Transfers from central government	24.90%	32.80%	91.30%
Other forms of revenue (e.g. user charges)	55.40%	45.80%	3.80%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

## Transfers from central government

Revenue-sharing systems, through which central governments transfer funds to local governments, are intended to assist local governments to fulfil their functions. Transfers from central government can be broadly categorized as unconditional (general purpose) or conditional (specific purpose).

- Unconditional transfers have no conditions attached to their use; funds can be spent on any local service. In some cases, unconditional transfers are given on a per capita basis; in other cases, the amount of the transfer depends on a formula which might take account of the expenditure needs of the municipality, the size of its tax base, or other factors.
- Conditional transfers have to be spent on specific expenditures, for example, housing, roads, or some other local service.

Government transfers are still the most significant revenue source for local governments in most countries in Africa (for example, central government transfers form more than 90% of local government revenue in Uganda). This is not ideal, however, as an over-reliance on transfers from central government can restrict the autonomy of local government, and thus limit its ability to allocate resources to the needs that the local population identifies as most important.

## Property tax

Property tax is an important tool for raising revenue at the local level. Property tax is also often used to shape urban development patterns. In addition, some countries are turning to land value capture taxes to capture revenues from increased land values arising from government actions (e.g. installing infrastructure).



Property tax is historically associated with local government, partly because real property is immovable, i.e. unable to shift location, and partly because of the strong connection between the types of services funded at the local level and the benefit to property values. Property taxes are levied by local governments in most countries in Africa, but generally do not provide a significant proportion of revenue. For example, property tax forms only between 15% and 17% of local government revenue in Kenya and South Africa, compared to between 37% and 39% of local government revenue in Australia and Canada.<sup>45</sup>

To implement a property taxation system, up-to-date information is needed. Ideally, a land information system such as a cadastre needs to be developed. This is essentially a database that records all the properties in a city, registering each property's size, usage and occupancy. The example of property registration in Berbera (see page 35 of

this guide) shows how a GIS property survey to facilitate property taxation can be done quickly and cost-effectively, thus allowing local governments to raise revenue that can be invested in public works and services.

In many African cities the majority of residents live in unplanned settlements. The example of the Lusaka City Council ground rent project (see page 37 of this guide)

demonstrates how, through participatory processes, revenue can be collected from unplanned settlements to ensure that the municipality can provide basic services to these areas. In this case, the Lusaka City Council acted in partnership with local community organizations, who received a portion of the collected revenue for local community-based development projects.

### THE PROPERTY REGISTRATION PROCESS IN BERBERA, SOMALIA

Until recently, Berbera Local Council in Somalia relied on outdated and incomplete paper-based land records, and only a portion of the properties in the municipality were in the land register and property tax roll. Together with UN-HABITAT, Berbera Local Council has developed a Geographic Information System (GIS), with the primary objective of providing the required information on property location and characteristics to improve the property taxation system, the municipality's urban planning processes and service delivery.



The property survey consisted of three main steps:

- acquisition of a geo-referenced high-resolution satellite image;
- on-screen digitizing of the image to create a map showing all buildings and other features such as main roads, rivers, the airport, etc.;
- verification of the spatial database in the field and the collection of data about the characteristics of each property, using pre-programmed handheld computers.
- The property database combines geo-referenced spatial data and the property's attributes, including the following key data:
  - physical characteristics of the property (size and use of plot, sizes and uses of structures, building materials used for structure, access to infrastructure);
  - names of owners and occupants (occupants are often different from the owners of the property);
  - number of residents.

The database is linked to a digital photograph of each property. These photographs help staff to verify the database and facilitate communication with the owners and occupants of the properties.

The property survey for the Berbera GIS project was completed in January 2008.<sup>46</sup>



### Development charges

Many local governments around the world levy charges on developers (known as development charges, levies and exactions) to finance the growth-related capital costs associated with new development or re-development. These charges are levied for works constructed by the municipality, and the funds collected have to be used to pay for the infrastructure made necessary by the development. Development charges are appropriate to finance infrastructure in areas experiencing new growth.

### Loans

In some countries, loans from municipal loan funds or from financial institutions can be used to fund the capital cost of major infrastructure projects. Borrowing to make capital expenditures permits municipalities to spread the costs over a long period of time. This means that those who benefit from the facility (the users over the next 20 or so years) will also pay the costs through taxes and user fees. The main disadvantage of borrowing, from a municipal perspective, is that potential revenues are dedicated to debt repayment and are thus not available for other uses. When the costs are spread over time, a significant portion of local budgets becomes a fixed obligation and debt charges can constrain local fiscal flexibility.

## GROUND RENT PROJECT IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

One of the biggest challenges facing the Lusaka City Council is the lack of adequate resources for service provision. Although the central government is obliged by law to provide grants to local authorities in lieu of property tax, this does not normally happen. Instead of relying on central government funding, the council has taken a new approach to raising funds to finance its activities.

The new approach, through the Ground Rent Project initiated in 2004, entails working with residents in low-income settlements to participate in mobilizing resources for development. Although it was mandatory for property owners in legalized unplanned settlements and sites-and-service areas, where about 70% of Lusaka's population lives, to pay ground rent to the local authority, most residents refused to pay the rent due to lack of development in their settlements. Through the project, the council was able to sign a memorandum of understanding with each and every Residents' Development Committee (RDC) in the 26 settlements where the project was implemented.

### Allocating ground rent revenue

Initially, the council proposed that 25% of the ground rent revenue be retained by the community for developmental projects. This proposal was not supported by some community leaders. A counter-proposal of retaining 40% of the revenue (35% for developmental projects in the community and 5% for covering administrative costs incurred by the RDCs) was eventually accepted by the council. Revenue collections from payment of ground rent increased considerably after the implementation of the project. The revenue raised by the project is shared between the council and the community and is largely spent on developmental programmes in the settlements and on service provision. Key challenges being addressed include inadequate waste management, insecure land tenure, poor sanitation, lack of clean water and poor road infrastructure.

### Creating a land information system for the city

Although it was established that about 70% of Lusaka's population lives in unplanned settlements, there are no proper records of property ownership, land use, social services and socio-economic activities in the settlements. Lack of information has affected the billing system and undermined confidence in the system. The council therefore intensified its land tenure initiative, which is aimed at establishing a land information system for the whole city. Another problem was that illegal development and lack of security of land tenure in some settlements meant that the council could not collect ground rent. The land tenure initiative addressed this through providing security of land tenure to residents of unplanned settlements.

### Working with democratically elected leaders

An additional problem was the absence of democratically elected RDCs in some settlements. This made it difficult for the council to work with residents. The council therefore facilitated elections in such settlements in order to help put in place democratically elected community leaders to coordinate and facilitate developmental programmes.



**Results achieved by the Ground Rent Project:**

- There was an increase of 400% in monthly ground rent revenue collections a year after the project's inception in 2004.
- Communication between residents and the council has improved. In particular, the identification of priority developmental activities has improved as a result of better coordination and cooperation between RDCs and the council.
- There has been some service provision in the unplanned settlements.
- The quality of governance at community level has improved with financial support from the project. This is seen from the stability of the tenure of elected leadership of the RDCs. In the past, many RDCs would be dissolved before completing their tenure of office due to internal conflicts and poor leadership. In addition, the capacity of the communities to manage local projects has improved.
- Community ownership of projects has led to a decline in vandalism.

**Lessons learned:**

A number of lessons have been learned from implementing the Ground Rent Project:

- Local authorities need the support of the communities in income generation for developmental purposes in the city. Community involvement and participation at all levels of the project are critical, as without community support a community project cannot be sustained.
- Communities are willing to pay for service provision if they see the benefits. Before introducing new initiatives in the communities, the council invites the community leaders to a roundtable discussion where community benefits are clearly identified and commitment to realizing those benefits is made by the parties.
- Political support both at the community level and the national level are necessary when introducing new initiatives in communities.<sup>47</sup>

## PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

In many African countries, municipalities have turned to the private sector to deliver and fund public sector services through public-private partnerships. A principal advantage of these partnerships is that they relieve municipalities of the financial responsibility for up-front capital costs and allow them to build facilities without incurring municipal debt. The operation of facilities and programmes by private operators reduces municipal operating expenditures

and may enable additional revenue to be collected.

Partnerships with other stakeholders (e.g. community organizations) can also be a way of mobilizing additional capacity and resources. The partnership of the Nakuru Municipal Council in Kenya and a local community organization is an example of a successful municipal-community partnership which resulted in a real improvement in service delivery.



## MUNICIPAL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR WATER SUPPLY IN NAKURU, KENYA

Nakuru is a city in Kenya with a population of more than 400 000. It has been experiencing rapid growth. Access to water became a serious problem, resulting in a severe cholera outbreak in 2000. Community representatives subsequently advocated for water kiosks in areas within a short walking distance that would be accessible to low-income residents. This would provide a reliable source of clean water to those individuals who previously were forced to use unmonitored water sources.

The Nakuru Municipal Council then approached the international community with a proposal to fund the implementation and construction of five water kiosks in low-income areas. Components of the project included training and awareness-raising, the construction of water kiosks, pipe connection to the kiosks, operation and maintenance, and documentation of the activity. The council worked closely with a community-based organization, the Naroka Greeners Self Help Group. This group identified the community's needs, and worked to sensitize its members on environmental issues such as safe liquid waste disposal, safe water use and proper water management. The group also provided labour to dig trenches where the water pumping network would be laid, and was in charge of managing the water kiosks. The council provided technical expertise, and sold water in bulk to the Naroka Greeners who in turn would sell the water at a retail price. During 2005, the group averaged nine to ten employees and the annual turnover was about US\$17 000, with a surplus of about US\$6 000.

Key elements of the process included:

- participatory community planning;
- capacity-building of the community-based organization to ensure proper management of the water kiosks;
- inclusive governance to ensure that the management of the initiative is more diversified and sustainable;
- internal and external resources that were linked and leveraged.

The project benefited the community in many ways. Firstly, it provided access to clean water and thus reduced the risk of diseases associated with poor sanitation. Secondly, the time spent by women walking in search of water was significantly reduced, freeing up time for other productive activities. Thirdly, the water kiosks created employment opportunities for a variety of community members. Lastly, the water kiosks generate revenue for the municipal council through the sale of safe and reliable drinking water to industries.

Nakuru's experience shows the importance of a strong integrated approach and the use of stakeholder consultations in the decision-making process.<sup>48</sup>

## GUIDELINES FOR MUNICIPAL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Many lessons have been learned from pioneering attempts at municipal-community partnerships, and local governments can learn from these lessons what it takes to create a successful partnership of this kind:

- **Clear objective:** A clearly stated objective, agreed upon by all relevant parties, is crucial to the success of the partnership.
- **Clear definition of responsibilities/legal agreements and contracts:** Contractual relationships between the key role players need to be established, with the roles, responsibilities and authority of the partners clearly outlined. Tasks need to be identified and allocated.
- **Business plan:** It is preferable that a business plan be prepared.
- **Institutional set-up:** The appropriate institutional structure for the partnership must be considered. The more successful partnerships have involved specific structures (e.g. a trust or not-for-profit company) that have responsibility for driving the project. Where a separate legal structure is not feasible or desired, it is useful to establish a dedicated unit through staff-secondment etc., or a fairly powerful working group or committee, to ensure that the project does not become lost in the general bureaucracy.
- **Community involvement – participation vs. representation:** It is important to define the stakeholders and how and what their participation and involvement is. Communication with the community needs to be a two-way process whereby community stakeholders are provided with information, as well as providing input from their perspective.
- **Vision:** Having a shared vision of the ultimate goals of the project is very important.
- **Innovation:** An innovative, experimental and flexible approach, to overcome bureaucratic hurdles and implement a new way of thinking about problems and solutions, is invaluable.
- **Capacity issues:** All parties need the capacity to participate as equals, and to monitor the project effectively. A well-resourced NGO, other government body or parastatal can assist. Where skills are lacking, it is important that skills transfer and capacity-building of the under-resourced partners take place.
- **Monitoring:** The performance of the financial, administrative, supervisory and reporting systems needs to be monitored and, where appropriate, amendments made.
- **Evaluation:** Milestones should be established for preparing funding proposals, securing funding approval and submitting progress reports to stakeholders, and for evaluating the project.
- **Champion of project:** Having a project champion is beneficial – either a funder, key political figure, or ward councillor.



## GUIDELINES FOR MUNICIPAL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (CONTINUED)

- **Effective Board:** An effective Board is critical. Board members must be skilled and understand their obligations and responsibilities. They must have the trust of key stakeholders. Representation does not necessarily lead to, and may inhibit, effective governance. Capacity-building of Board members is important when necessary.
- **Communication:** Ongoing communication between all partners, key stakeholders and the community is essential.
- **Focus:** A focused project, both in terms of geographic location and overall mandate, tends to be more successful.
- **Accountability:** Accountability issues need to be made clear, e.g. identifying those to whom the partnership is accountable – funders, the community, local government, etc.
- **Mandate:** The project needs an explicit, documented financial, funding and public mandate. This needs to specify both process and product, with identified outcomes and measurable targets.
- **Funding/financial considerations:** The project must have access to finance in a manner that allows flexibility. It is important to have the management tools and systems to plan and manage funding and cash flow effectively.
- **Sustainability:** Consideration needs to be given to means of sustaining the project. Capital expenditure will be wasted if funds for staffing and maintenance are not ongoing. This should be built into the business plan.
- **Political considerations:** It is important to separate the political from the operational. An effective contract, spelling out the respective roles of politicians, officials etc. is very useful. Political buy-in from politicians and the community is extremely important.<sup>49</sup>

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## WEBSITES

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- Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) [www.clgf.org.uk](http://www.clgf.org.uk)
- Municipal Development Partnership (MDP), a partnership for the capacity-building of local government in sub-Saharan Africa. [www.mdpafrica.org.zw](http://www.mdpafrica.org.zw)
- Shack/ Slum Dwellers International (SDI), an international network of federations of the urban poor. [www.sdinet.org](http://www.sdinet.org)
- UN-HABITAT, United Nations agency for human settlements. [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)
- UN-HABITAT Best Practices Database in Improving the Living Environment. [www.bestpractices.org](http://www.bestpractices.org)
- United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA), an association of municipalities and national/ regional local government associations in Africa. [www.uclgafrica.org](http://www.uclgafrica.org)
- World Bank Institute, the capacity-building arm of the World Bank. [wbi.worldbank.org](http://wbi.worldbank.org)



The pressures of rapid urbanization and economic growth in Africa have resulted in increased evictions of the urban poor from their neighbourhoods. In most cases they are relocated to peripheral areas far from centres of employment and economic opportunities. Over 500 million people now live in slums and squatter settlements in Africa and this figure is rising.

Local governments need policy instruments to protect the housing rights of the urban poor as a critical first step towards attaining the Millennium Development Goal on significant improvement in the lives of slum-dwellers by 2020. The objective of these Quick Guides is to improve the understanding by policy makers at national and local levels on pro-poor housing and urban development within the framework of urban poverty reduction.

The Quick Guides are presented in an easy-to-read format structured to include an overview of trends and conditions, concepts, policies, tools and recommendations in dealing with the following housing-related issues:

(1) **Urbanization:** The role the poor play in urban development (2) **Low-income housing:** Approaches to helping the urban poor find adequate housing in African cities (3) **Land:** A crucial element in housing the urban poor (4) **Eviction:** Alternatives to the destruction of urban poor communities (5) **Housing finance:** Ways to help the poor pay for housing (6) **Community-based organizations:** The poor as agents of development (7) **Rental housing:** A much neglected housing option for the poor (8) **Local government:** Addressing urban challenges in a participatory and integrated way.

This Quick Guide 8 provides a brief overview of local government in Africa, and the urban challenges (and opportunities) that local government bodies need to respond to. The guide shows how physical development, economic development and social development need to go hand in hand in order for interventions to be effective and sustainable. Some key tools for local governments to use when adopting these approaches are presented.

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More information can be found on the website [www.housing-the-urban-poor.net](http://www.housing-the-urban-poor.net)

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