

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA AND SDGS IN LIBERIA; TOWARDS A NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

Second National Urban Forum Report

26th November 2019 - Monrovia City Corporation, Monrovia



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The National Urban Forum was made possible through technical and financial support from the Cities Alliance under the framework of its' Liberia Country Programme, the support of the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme Partners

Acronyms

EPA:	Environmental Protection Agency
FEPTIWUL:	Federation of Petty Traders and Informal Workers Union
FOLUPS:	Federation of Liberian Urban Poor Savers
GoL:	Government of Liberia
HfHI:	Habitat for Humanity International
MIA:	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MCC:	Monrovia City Corporation
MDAs:	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
NDCs:	Nationally Determined Contributions
NHC:	National Habitat Committee
NUA:	New Urban Agenda
NUF:	National Urban Forum
NUP:	National Urban Policy
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCC:	Paynesville City Corporation
PPP:	Public Private Partnership
TST:	Technical Support Team
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat:	United Nations Human Settlements Programme

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Executive Summary

With the support of development partners, the Government of Liberia is in the process of developing a participatory National Urban Policy (NUP) to support its National Vision to move Liberia to middle-income status by 2030. The ongoing development of the policy is part of a broader endeavour to support poverty reduction through integrating urbanisation into national development policies and developing sustainable and resilient Liberian cities. This process was launched by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at the first National Urban Forum in 2015. Since then, the NUP process has become a tool for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Target 11. The NUP development process began with the feasibility phase and is currently in the diagnostic phase. The diagnostic phase will analyse issues identified during the feasibility phase with in-depth analysis with a view to informing the subsequent formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of the policy.

Developing the NUP for Liberia is expected to involve the coordination of the work of different sectors, establish incentives for more sustainable practices, and spur a balanced system of cities and towns through strengthening urban-rural linkages and equitable resource allocation. This will not only help reduce urban and territorial disparities within and among regions, but also promote institutional collaboration and policy coherence.

This report documents the key outcomes of discussions held during the second National Urban Forum (NUF) for Liberia in Monrovia on 26th November 2019. Participants agreed that the deliberations from this Forum will be integrated into the ongoing National Diagnosis Report. This report summarises the inputs from various speakers and participants gathered through high-level panel discussions, stakeholder roundtables, plenary meetings, question and answer sessions and written comments. The report presents how the Forum engaged government officials, local government officials from all parts of Liberia, women's groups, youth groups, slum dwellers, street vendors and petty traders, regional government representatives and actors on the environment and climate change. This Forum report also presents the

preliminary policy recommendations formulated for further analysis in subsequent stages of the development of the NUP.

Over 123 organisations were involved in implementing the Forum, which had more than 250 participants. These participants were drawn from international development partners, national government, local governments, civil society, academia, youth groups, women's groups, slum dwellers, petty traders, community leaders, academia and the disabled. It entailed a high-level dialogue, presentations on national urban policy and seven roundtable discussions on thematic areas and their contribution to NUP. These roundtables involved discussions on the youth, women, petty traders, slum dwellers, environment and climate change, local authorities and regional governments, and their involvement in the development of the NUP.

The discussions at the Forum underscored the need for more participation in the policy process. As there has been very little, if any, planning in urban areas in Liberia, more measures were identified as necessary to provide adequate support at national and subnational levels, particularly on urban planning, land use and management. The report summarises several recommendations that emerged from the Forum such as adequate urban laws and regulations to guide urban development, new governance structures, review and update the current planning instruments, implementation of the 2018 Local Government Act, urgent needs to enhance the capacities (human, financial and technical) of local authorities (especially beyond Greater Monrovia), creation of economic opportunities especially for the youth and women, strengthening partnership amongst urban actors and stakeholders to address issues such as basic urban services and infrastructure, housing and informal settlements. A communiqué was adopted at the end of the meeting, committing participants to support the NUP process in Liberia and champion the development of the NUP.

The NUF received positive feedback based on the feedback forms, with over 80 percent of participants having been satisfied by the event.

Liberia National Urban Forum: A Platform for Dialogue and Action for National Urban Policy

Background on the Urban Context in Liberia: Key Highlights

By 2008, 47% of Liberia's population of 3.5 million people was urban, with an annual urban population growth rate of 4.7%. This proportion was far ahead of most sub-Saharan African countries. It is currently estimated that the country has approximately 4 million, where more than half of the population (2.1 million) resides in urban areas. The urban population is projected to grow in the future.

Monrovia, the capital city of Liberia, has experienced the greatest impact of urbanisation in Liberia. The civil strife of the 1990s expanded the population of the city to more than 1 million by 2010, largely due to greater security and access to relief services. More than 40% of Liberia's urban population now lives in the Greater Monrovia area. Unplanned urbanisation has resulted in the proliferation of slums, with an estimated 70% of Monrovia's population currently living in informal conditions.

In Monrovia as well as the other secondary cities in Liberia, poor or non-existent enforcement of building and planning codes has resulted in unplanned development and environmental degradation, with direct consequences on human health and safety. Congestion and uncontrolled development have led to the lack of basic urban services for more than half of Monrovia's residents. The fragility of Liberia's cities was exposed by the Ebola outbreak that devastated urban populations, especially the vulnerable populations in Monrovia's slum communities.

The government has in recent years addressed

many urban governance issues through legislation and policy. Since 2012, the government has embarked on the implementation of a *National Policy on Decentralisation and Local Governance*. The policy seeks to progressively bring planning and decision making closer to the people by devolving political, administrative and fiscal authority to local governments. The Local Government Act (2018) is part of the implementation plan for decentralisation and provides for an inclusive and participatory system of governance through the decentralisation of political, administrative and fiscal governance to elected local government bodies including municipal authorities. The National Housing Policy (2014) recognises rapid urbanisation and poor urban infrastructure as the major causes of the housing deficit and recommends incremental creation of basic services infrastructure, slum upgrading, and prevention strategies, among other initiatives, to improve the housing situation in urban areas.

Urban governance in Liberia did not give policy and legal frameworks a priority in the past, thus making local authorities across the country largely unable to respond to urbanisation challenges effectively. Aside from policy and legal gaps, Liberian cities and towns cannot plan for future urban growth due to low capacity and poor resources endowment for planning and implementation. This has resulted in low productivity, low investment and limited development, a situation that is more pronounced in secondary cities.

Liberia National Urban Policy Process

The development of a NUP is a coordinated effort by government in collaboration with key domestic and international stakeholders. This provides the best opportunity for achieving resilient and sustainable urbanisation processes. By linking sectorial policies, connecting the global agenda with national, regional

and local government policies, and strengthening urban, peri-urban and rural linkages through integrated territorial development, the NUP seeks to provide a coherent vision and a sustainable national urban strategy for Liberia. A NUP is defined as follows.

A NUP is a coherent set of decisions derived through a deliberate, government-led process of coordinating and rallying various actors for a common vision and goal that will promote more transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development in the long term. Evolution of National Urban Policies: A global Overview (Cities Alliance & UN-Habitat, 2014)

The NUP for Liberia is expected to set the framework that will coordinate the work of different sectors, establish incentives for more sustainable practices, and contribute to the emergence of a balanced system of cities and towns by strengthening urban-rural linkages and encouraging equitable resource allocation. This will not only reduce urban and territorial disparities within and among regions, but also promote institutional collaboration and policy coherence towards the achievement of the Liberia National Vision 2030.

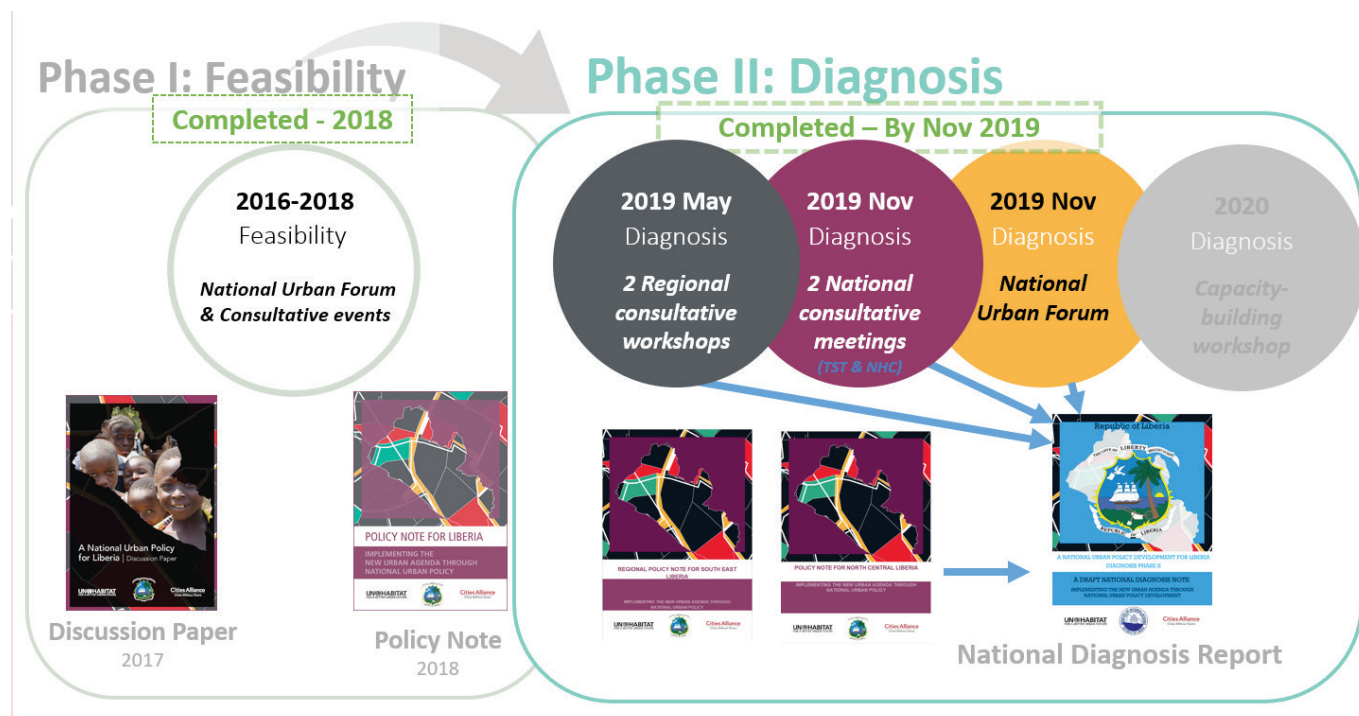
In 2013, through the Department of Urban Affairs in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) the Government of Liberia (GoL) initiated the process for the development of its National Urban Policy (NUP). The ongoing technical support provided by UN-Habitat to the GoL in developing a NUP is part of a broader endeavour of the Cities Alliance Liberia Country

Programme that aims to reduce poverty and foster sustainable and resilient Liberian cities.

The NUP process in Liberia is anchored in close partnerships with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Habitat Committee (NHC) for Habitat III and beyond, the Technical Support Team (TST) for NUP, and partners of the Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme.

In 2017, the Feasibility Phase I of the project was completed. The outcomes of the Feasibility Phase (Policy Note for Liberia and the Discussion Paper) provided the context for the urban challenge analysis presented in Diagnosis Phase II, which has been operational for two years from mid-2018 to mid-2020.

Figure 1: The NUP Process and outputs in Liberia



Source: UN-Habitat (2019)

Phase III, on Formulation, will take place at a later stage and will focus on the drafting and validation of the NUP with stakeholders. This will have pilot demonstration

projects to showcase the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Policy.

The National Urban Forum

A National Urban Forum (NUF) is used as a platform to advance the agenda for sustainable urbanisation in Liberia. The second Liberian National Urban Forum held on 26 November 2019 in Monrovia was convened by Cities Alliance, UN-Habitat and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Forum brought together urban stakeholders including government, civil society, slum dwellers, women, youth, the disabled, local authorities and local citizens, as well as development partners, to discuss key urban issues affecting Liberian society.

The first National Urban Forum took place in 2015 to initiate National Urban Policy activities. This was the second National Urban Forum in Liberia, organised in a series of forums aimed at developing the Liberian National Urban Policy. The Forum had the following four objectives.

- Introduce stakeholders to the NUP process in Liberia and inform participants of the progress and achievements made, upcoming actions and ways of being involved in the process.

- b) Provide a platform for Liberia County Programme partners to provide inputs into the NUP process in Liberia, seek further commitments in pending NUP activities, and establish partnerships to foster a close working relationship to facilitate the full development and implementation of the NUP.
- c) Provide a platform for review and appraisal by stakeholders of outputs of the NUP process (the revised regional notes and the national diagnostic note).
- d) Seek inputs from key interest groups (slum dwellers, women, youth, street vendors and local authorities) on the Diagnostic Phase of the NUP programme.

The National Urban Forum (NUF) took place in the ballroom of the Monrovia City Corporation, on the theme: ***Implementing the New Urban Agenda and SDGs in Liberia-Towards a National Urban Policy: Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) for sustainable urbanisation in Liberia.*** The Forum was attended by national and local government officials and a diverse pool of Liberian citizenry, state actors as well as non-state actors from national and sub-national levels. The Forum attracted over 250 participants and emphasised the importance of actors combining efforts to ensure the prosperity of cities and human settlements in Liberia.

Forum Agenda

The forum was divided into seven sessions. All sessions adopted a participatory format, with key speakers and audience members participating in all discussions. The Forum moderator was Mr. Jimmy N.C Bokay, the Director of the Regional and Sectoral Planning Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Republic of Liberia. The Forum included a plenary opening session, a high level discussion panel, a stakeholder roundtable, presentations, a stakeholder group discussion, and was wrapped up with concluding remarks. The full agenda can be found in *Annex 1*.

Figure 2: Mr Jimmy Bokay, the Forum Moderator



Forum Participants

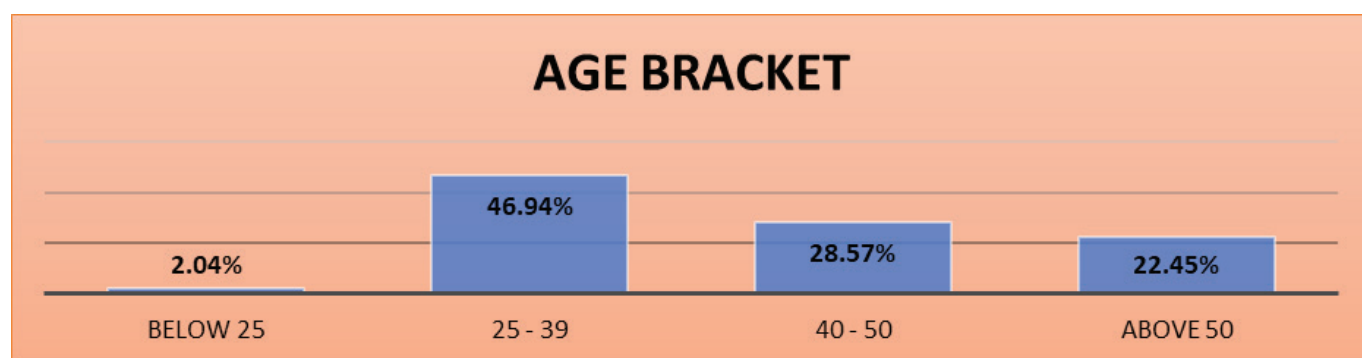
Figure 3: Forum Participants Registering Attendance



There were over 250 Forum participants from 123 institutions (see communiqué and participants list in Annex 2 and Annex 3). Seventy-five participants (30%) were women. Forum participants included government ministers, mayors, senior experts, development partners, United Nations agencies, civil society, private sector, academia and research institutions, intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations.

The Forum included representatives from seven youth groups, with 48% of the participants below 40 years. The age profile shown below shows that the Forum was attended by participants between 25 and 50 years, with 22% above 50 years.

Figure 21: Forum Participants age profile

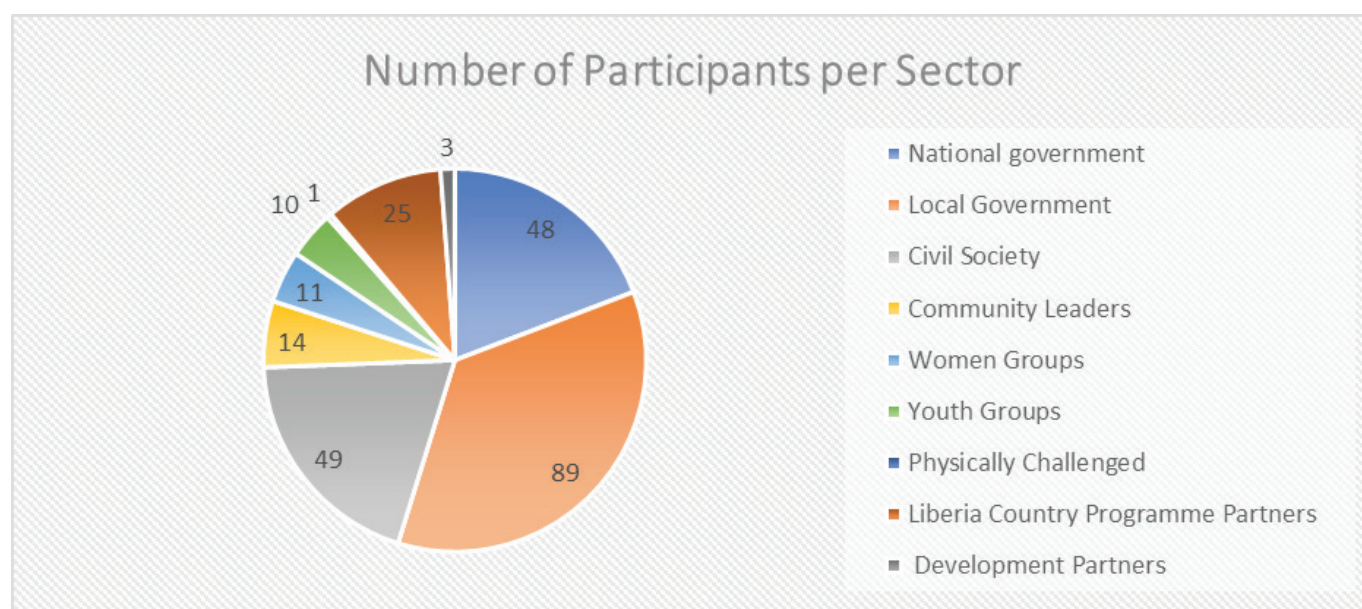


Source: UN-Habitat (2019)

Local government representatives constituted the largest group of participants (89 in total), together with the national government, civil society and Liberia Country Programme partners. The disabled

and development partners working in Liberia had lower scores, showing the need to involve them more in subsequent NUP activities so as to ensure inclusivity and enhance participation.

Figure 4: Forum Participants per sector



Source: UN-Habitat (2019)

Forum Speakers

Speakers at the Forum included the Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Deputy Minister for Administration at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Cities Alliance Director, Cities Alliance country programme manager, the

Mayor of Monrovia, City Manager for Paynesville City Corporation and a UN-Habitat representative. It was moderated by Jimmy N C Bokay, the Director of the Regional and Sectoral Planning Unit, Ministry of Finance & Development Planning, Republic of Liberia.

Forum Preparation, Promotion and Publicity

a) Newspaper announcements

Before and after the NUF, newspaper announcements were used as a tool to share information about the NUF and to inform the public of the upcoming NUF. The newspaper publications were accessible to the public in both print and online versions. This allowed for the wide dissemination of the NUF throughout Liberia.

Mr. Nketsia also stated that there is a National Urban Forum (NUF) scheduled for November which is expected to attract more than 250 participants from across the country for a more interactive, participatory and inclusive national dialogue on urban space (reported in *Frontpage Africa*).

Links to the newspaper reports can be accessed here:

1. 'Ministry of Internal Affairs, UN-Habitat Initiate Development of 'Comprehensive' National Urban Policy': <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/news/ministry-of-internal-affairs-un-habitat-initiate-development-of-comprehensive-national-urban-policy/>
2. 'Liberia to Craft National Urban Policy': <https://allafrica.com/stories/201911270961.html>

3. 'UN-Habitat, MIA, Underscore Importance of Liberia's National Urban Policy': <https://www.liberianobserver.com/news/un-habitat-mia-underscore-importance-of-liberias-national-urban-policy/>
4. 'Liberia to Craft National Urban Policy': <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/news/liberia-to-craft-national-urban-policy/>

Actual newspaper reports can be found in *Annex 4* of this report.

b) Social media

The NUF was promoted through the Liberia NUP Facebook page and the Urban Policy Platform Twitter handle, using the hashtags #LiberiaNUP and #LiberiaNUP2019. The pages are accessible on the following links:

A National Urban Policy for Liberia (Facebook):

<https://www.facebook.com/A-National-Urban-Policy-for-Liberia-301829020419558/> and

National Urban Policy Platform (Twitter):

https://twitter.com/PLG_UNHABITAT

Figure 5: Social Media poster for the NUF



c) Banners, fliers and brochures

Banners, fliers and brochures were produced and printed for the Forum. They were also disseminated online, by email and on social media posts to reach

a wider audience. Banners were displayed at the conference venue and fliers and brochures were presented to all Forum participants.

Figure 6: Event publicity materials (banners onsite)



Source: UN-Habitat (2019)

d) Breakfast radio talk show

Figure 7: Mr. Remy (Centre), Mr William Cobbett (Left) and Mr Francisco Lopez (Right) taking part in a radio talk show



The morning talk show took place on Tuesday the 25th of November 2019 on Truth FM, located in Paynesville, Liberia. UN-Habitat was represented by Mr. Remy Sietchiping, leader of the Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit, and the National Urban Policy Consultant for Liberia, Mr. George Nketsia, while Cities Alliance was represented by Director, Mr William Cobbett and the country programme manager, Mr Francisco Lopez. The one-hour live radio discussion covered issues of urban development and the growth of cities in Liberia. The talk show took place prior to the Forum that promoted and mobilised Liberians to attend the Forum and give inputs into the National Urban Policy process by participating in various fora.

'... cities have the capacity to lift countries out of poverty. Historically, industrialisation and urbanisation have lifted countries out of poverty. Urbanisation is this important to the development of Liberia, if used properly'

Mr William Cobbett - Cities Alliance

'The National Urban Forum will bring together a variety of stakeholders to come together and start shaping the future of cities and human settlements, both big and small. What is considered today as a small settlement will be a city tomorrow. Stakeholders need to appreciate the ongoing transformation and be able to shape a common vision that they want in future'

Mr. Remy Sietchiping - UN-Habitat

'We need to have a consensus on how to achieve sustainable urban development in Liberia, and we are bringing all stakeholders together to craft relevant policies such as the National Urban Policy that seeks to achieve this goal'

Mr Francisco Lopez - Cities Alliance

'The local Government Act that has been passed sets minimum thresholds for areas to be declared cities: population; basic infrastructure; and local laws. Some areas called cities do not qualify to be called cities. UN-Habitat and Cities Alliance can help the government to entrench devolution and a proper criterion for designation of city status of cities in Liberia'

Mr Festus Dapa - Caller from Duport Road, Liberia

The full interview recording can be accessed online on <http://urbanpolicyplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Audio-Message-Liberia-NUF-2019-Remy-ColbertWilliam-Nketsia.mp3>

Forum Sessions

Session I: Opening Session

This session consisted of *Welcome Remarks* by the Mayor of Monrovia City Corporation, *opening remarks* from the conveners: Ministry of Internal Affairs (Hon. Famater Roesler – Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs), Cities Alliance (William Cobbett - Director),

and UN-Habitat (Mr. Remy Sietchiping – Chief, Policy, Legislation and governance Section), and a *Keynote Address* made on behalf the President of Liberia by the Deputy Minister for Administration in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Hon. Johnson Momolu.



Monrovia today faces numerous challenges, such as solid waste management and transport, and there are many gaps in planning and managing the city. We hope that these issues will be addressed through the National Urban Policy'

Hon. Jefferson Kojee, Mayor of Monrovia City Corporation



'The National Urban Policy will provide a framework to address social issues, basic needs, environmental issues and climate change effects on our country'

Hon. Famater Roesler - Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs



'It is about time that we all take proactive steps to ensure all of us buy into and own this policy, so that future city ordinances are easier to implement.... We must respect all outcomes of the policy; therefore, this is the reason we all need to be part of its making'

Mr. Stephen Ziah - City Manager of Paynesville



'This Forum is meant to provide a platform where we shall discuss a national policy framework on urban areas... Liberia fits into the global efforts to tackle urban issues by Cities Alliance, the OECD and UN-Habitat in Africa, Asia and Latin America. As Cities Alliance, we look forward to this engagement. The keyword I would like to leave for us is 'national'! This policy means a lot for the small and medium cities, aside from Greater Monrovia.'

Mr. William Cobbett - Cities Alliance Director



'The National Urban Policy for Liberia is not only a city policy but a *national* policy that should ensure that all urban issues in Liberia are accounted for. During the scoping phase, concerns from all regions shall be understood to appreciate how urbanisation is changing and how it can be incorporated in the design of the policy. What has not been covered in our previous engagements should be covered in today's discussion.'

Mr. Remy Sietchiping – UN-Habitat

1. Session Highlights

Liberia, like many developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, was facing several urbanisation challenges. The Liberia country programme had been active in Liberia for the last 5 years, and it sought to address urbanisation challenges facing the country, with the national urban policy being one of the key outcomes of the programme. The urban policy is a countrywide endeavour that seeks to ensure that the full positive impact of urbanisation is realised in large, small and medium cities in Liberia. As part of the UN-wide 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the NUP process gives Liberia a platform to attain and achieve sustainability through the SDGs and the NUA, to achieve solutions and transformation in urban areas.

A national urban policy for Liberia would provide a platform to address social issues affecting Liberians in urban and rural areas, basic needs and livelihoods in human settlements and to ensure that environmental issues and climate change are addressed as the country becomes increasingly urban. In addition, the NUP being developed aims to give strategic direction on how urbanisation should be organised in urban centres in Liberia, such as Paynesville and Monrovia. These would benefit from a strategic policy document that addresses their pressing urbanisation challenges and guides the growth of urban areas. The NUP process had received support from GoL and key partners.

Key partners and stakeholders, such as local authorities, indicated a willingness to support the NUP process in Liberia. These included Cities Alliance, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, UN-Habitat, Monrovia City Corporation and Paynesville City Corporation. Partnerships with key institutions leading the NUP process are pivotal to improving urban areas in Liberia. In particular, it is important for the whole process to provide government support through the Ministry of Internal Affairs to ensure the development objectives of the government and development partners are achieved.

The National Urban Forum provided a platform to develop a framework to transform Liberia for the benefit of all and to expand collaboration, incorporating diverse opinions that are solution-oriented and transformational. The Forum was an important milestone, reaching deep into the process of mainstreaming urbanisation in Liberia's process of national development. This will take place through the development of a comprehensive national urban policy. He argued for a shift in mind-set so that stakeholders think on a nation-wide scale and in the interests of the country as a whole, rather than simply catering to specific group interests.

2. Session Takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Points to Note

1. Urbanisation in Liberia should be harnessed in order to achieve positive socio-economic progress for the country, drawing lessons from the urbanisation experiences of other countries. Urban areas generate the majority GDP for most countries around the world.
2. Partnerships are crucial for the development, implementation and monitoring of the NUP.
3. Participation across all sectors and stakeholders is crucial to ensure inclusion of all Liberians in the NUP process.
4. Policy is an important tool that emphasises small and intermediate cities in Liberia.
5. The implementation, monitoring and evaluation framework of the policy is structured during the formulation phase.
6. Since its inception, the GoL has offered crucial support to the NUP process, which is key to the completion of the policy. Further, partnerships with key partners in the policy process have improved access to information and improved its dissemination.
7. The NUP will be used as a tool to implement the SDGs and NUA in Liberia.

Session II: Keynote Address and Official Opening



Hon. Momolu Johnson presented the Keynote Address on behalf of the President of the Republic of Liberia.

‘As the government, we would like to assure you that we remain committed to the development of this important policy, which seeks to bring dynamism to urbanisation to contribute to a better future for our human settlements in Liberia’

Hon. Momolu Johnson - Deputy Minister for Administration, Ministry of Internal Affairs

3. Session Highlights

Urbanisation is a key driver of development in Liberia. However, urbanisation in Liberia is also a source of challenges that need to be addressed, such as inadequate transport and lack of connectivity, mushrooming informality in the economy and urban poverty. It is envisioned that The NUP will provide a sustainable framework to improve the urban environment in the country. The Government of Liberia is taking ownership of the NUP process

and is also adopting a participatory approach to urban planning issues. For instance, the passage of the Local Government Act of 2018 is a catalyst for strengthening the local legislation framework towards achieving sustainable urbanisation in Liberia. The Forum provided a special platform to engage and recommend solutions for sustainable and resilient Liberian cities.

4. Session Takeaways for National Urban Policy

Points to Note

1. Since 2015, the GoL has made efforts to address urbanisation challenges. The development of the National Urban Policy is part of these efforts in order to work towards sustainable urbanisation
2. The Forum provides a good platform to engage, discuss and make suitable policy recommendations that will forge a way forward towards achieving sustainable Liberian cities.
3. Liberia has several challenges in its urban areas, such as slums. The effort of every citizen is needed to tackle the challenges facing urban areas.

Session III: High Level Roundtable

This session was dedicated to hosting a high-level panel discussion on the ***Importance of a National Urban Policy in the Sustainable Development of Liberia***. The panel consisted of government ministers and representatives of partners to the Liberia Cities Alliance Country Programme. It comprised of Hon. Famater Roesler, Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Hon. Momolu Johnson, Deputy Minister for Administration in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Hon. Abubakar Bah, Assistant Minister for Urban Affairs in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Mr William Cobbett of Cities Alliance, Mr. Stephen Ziah from Paynesville City Corporation, Mr Abraham Garneo from Monrovia City Corporation and Mr Remy Sietchiping from UN-Habitat.



Figure 8: A panellist giving views at the High Level Roundtable



Source: UN-Habitat (2019)

‘There is a need to develop a National Urban Policy for Liberia that will promote urbanisation with a key focus on all cities in Liberia, serving as a working tool at the local and national levels. Currently, Liberia is not a well-planned society as the majority of the population lives in informal settlements, because of the existence of unplanned urban areas and a lack of connectivity between Liberian regions... The NUP for Liberia will lead to more transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development in the long-term’

Hon Abubakar Bah - Assistant Minister for Urban Affairs

5. Session Highlights

A National Urban Policy can assist Liberia in achieving sustainable development objectives in the following ways.

- i. Across the world, ***cities have historically been engines of socioeconomic development***. Urbanisation has been at the centre of realising national development objectives in many countries, with most developed countries having harnessed the benefits of urbanisation to realise broader national socioeconomic growth.
- ii. ***Environment and climate change*** are critical factors to take into account in urbanisation plans. A NUP provides a platform for integrating environmental and climate change issues into the broader sustainable development of Liberia.
- iii. Cities are hubs for ***social interaction***. Several communities and cultures can have opportunities to interact, which fosters exchange of knowledge and ideas. They can be used to initiate changes and provide solutions to communities in the urban fabric and adjoining rural hinterlands.
- iv. The policy process has the ***power of engagement*** in urban areas and is likely to institute more fundamental changes. The NUP process is participatory, and this is likely to contribute to the acceptance, and adaptation, of the policy by local people. A Liberian NUP will help mainstream urban affairs into national development, through the involvement of not just the government, but all development partners and citizens. The strong commitment of all stakeholders is needed to focus on the transformation and mainstreaming of the interests of key partners in the NUP in order to ensure subsequent ownership of the policy.
- v. The policy can be used to contribute to the ***eradication of poverty***. This can be achieved by addressing key challenges in society and using people as agents of transformation and empowering them so that *no one is left behind*.
- vi. To achieve the widespread impacts of the NUP hoped for, the government and development partners to focus on ***all*** Liberian cities. Once the National Urban Policy is finalised and approved, it will allow the government and its partners to develop some of the country's least developed regions, addressing the social and economic disparities and youth empowerment challenges at the national level.
- vii. The NUP will enable the government to prioritise development in the country and provide various public facilities needed to unlock national development
- viii. The NUP will also guide national and local governments in formulating enabling laws and regulations that can be implemented at the local level to facilitate urban management in Liberia.

6. Session Takeaways for National Urban Policy

Points to Note

1. A NUP for Liberia could lead to more transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development for the long-term.
2. A NUP for Liberia can lead to a better redistribution of national resources using spatial plans to inform investment decisions.
3. Cities are crucial for socio-economic development if well harnessed, and a NUP provides a coordinating framework that could lead to sustainable urban practices that in turn shape urban growth. Subsequently, the NUP can be a useful tool for poverty eradication in Liberia.
4. Environmental matters should be addressed in the NUP, to contribute to a more sustainable urbanisation and overall development process.

Session IV: Presentations

7. Promoting sustainable urbanisation through the Cities Alliance Country Programme in Liberia

Figure 9: William Cobbett (left) and Francisco Lopez (right) make a presentation on the Liberia Country Programme



This session included two presentations by William Cobbett and Francisco Lopez from Cities Alliance. The presentations focused on promoting sustainable urbanisation through the Cities Alliance Country Programme in Liberia. It highlighted the partnerships formed, the collaboration between stakeholders and the strengthening of their capacities in the process of urbanisation in Liberia

Session Highlights

The Liberia Country Programme has adopted a multisectoral approach, aimed at creating a multi-stakeholder platform that will encompass many development needs in key sectors of the Liberian economy such as solid urban development, municipal services and civil society activities. The stakeholders in the Country Programme comprise community leaders, national and local governments, women, youth, slum dwellers and street vendor groups. There had been projects conducted to improve local infrastructure, community welfare such as in Westpoint, improve solid waste management and improve access to livelihoods in Monrovia and Paynesville.

Currently, there are three factors contributing to growth of cities: (1) natural population growth; (2) rural-urban migration; (3) expansion from rural to urban. Informal, unplanned and incremental growth is a growing reality in Liberia that needs to

be addressed through policy to ensure that small and medium-sized towns develop sustainably. A framework is needed to operationalise this planning need and build relationships to ensure resource and capacity gaps are addressed early. The NUP provides a key framework to achieve this. The Forum presented an opportunity to further build consensus on essential national development priorities from relevant stakeholders and enhance the discussion on urban policy development in Liberia.

Going forward, local authorities also need to develop the capacity to administer themselves and directly give services to citizens at the local level. The NUP also needs to enhance inclusiveness by recognising that:

- a) cities of all sizes need to be incorporated in the policy process as no city is too small;
- b) all settlements need to be included in the policy: both urban and rural;

- c) all citizens need to be included, even the urban poor;
- d) international best practices will be

incorporated in the policy-making process and measures will be designed to reach the national level.

8. NUP Development Process for Liberia

Figure 10: Mandy Mui (left) and John Omwamba (right) from UN-Habitat making a presentation



The second presentation highlighted the NUP development process for Liberia, the outcomes of the feasibility and diagnostic phases and ways forward. The presentations were meant to keep all Forum participants informed of the progress made and provide a pathway for those interested in getting more engaged in the policy process.

Session Highlights

The feasibility phase of the NUP in Liberia started in 2015 and was completed in 2017, where the main products can be found in the Discussion Paper and Policy Note. The Discussion Paper was validated at a National Urban Forum in Monrovia, and subsequently adopted in the Cabinet. This paved the way forward for the second diagnostic phase of the NUP process beginning in 2018 and expected to be completed in May 2020. The diagnosis phase seeks to gain in-depth understanding of all issues flagged as important for Liberia's urbanisation, and will finally lead to policy proposals made at the end of the phase, in a Diagnosis report.

The Diagnosis Phase of the National Urban Policy included drafting regional diagnosis notes for the North Central and South East regions of Liberia. The regional notes consisted of regionally relevant data

analysis, which was meant to situate the national analysis at the regional level. It was noted that the North Central region had the highest population in Montserrado, while the South East region had the biggest landmass in the country, with over a third of the country's national area being comprised in the South East region. Regional consultation workshops were held in Foya, for North Central, and Harper, for South East A and B to review and validate the regional notes. All inputs from the feasibility and diagnosis phase, including the deliberations of the Forum, were used to compile a National Diagnosis Report that will be reviewed and validated later at a validation workshop. As a way forward, all stakeholders will be invited to provide inputs at the Forum. The review of these policy documents and other activities are designed to improve the policy making process.

Session Takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Point to Note

- The NUP needs to devise mechanisms for developing the capacity of local authorities, especially small and intermediate cities, to improve local urban administration and governance.

Session V: Stakeholder Roundtable Discussions

This session consisted of discussion guides that were meant to lead participants to identify the challenges and opportunities affecting urbanisation in the specific thematic areas and then provide the most pragmatic solutions to those challenges. The discussion sought to engage key interest groups (e.g. slum dwellers, women, youth, street vendors, superintendents and local authorities) as well as to consult the North West and South Central regions that had not been included in the regional workshop sessions conducted in May 2019. This is meant to further increase the participation across all the region in the NUP process. Presentations were made after the group discussions which consisted of seven break-out groups composed of six thematic focus areas and the regional groups as follows:

1. Women;
2. Youth;
3. Local governments;
4. Slum dwellers;
5. Street vendors;
6. Environment and climate change; and
7. North West Region and South-Central Region representatives.

1. Women's inclusion in Urbanisation

Figure 12: Women Group discussion



'Women! ... together we are one!'

A slogan adopted by women in the Forum session, indicating that they were all routing for unity of purpose in tackling urban issues affecting them.

Challenges facing women in urban areas and recommendations for action

The challenges that particularly affect women in the urban space, potential workable solutions and

opportunities for improvement are highlighted below.

Challenges	Recommendations for Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Lack of women's involvement and participation in local government and decision making. (ii) Little financial empowerment of women. (iii) Domestic violence against women, girls and children. (iv) Cultural barriers that make women feel and be perceived to be inferior to men. (v) High rates of illiteracy among women in Liberia, thus the majority to homesteads and rural areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Break cultural barriers that marginalise women. (ii) Empower women to be more vocal on urban development issues. (iii) Promote resilience through livelihood empowerment, so that they become self-reliant and improve the economy. (iv) Conduct capacity building and personal development among women to boost confidence and improve their participation in urban development discourses.

Session Takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Points to Note

1. To enhance women inclusion in urban affairs, the NUP should create more opportunities for women to participate in urban development and governance and increase women's awareness of their roles in urbanisation, making provisions for women's participation in urban administration and governance and for the promotion of gender equality in the urban space.
2. The NUP should address capacity gaps by suggesting provisions that will facilitate adult literacy in urban areas and enhance training and skills development for women, thus enabling them to access new knowledge and livelihood skills and opportunities for scholarly advancement.

2. Youth Participation in Urbanisation

Figure 13: The Youth Group Engaging in a discussion



The Liberian youth are available for all NUP activities when they are asked to be involved. Youth affairs should be mainstreamed to the NUP to ensure improved access to education, information, livelihood opportunities and key partnerships that will strengthen the youth in urban and rural areas.

Challenges facing youth in urban areas and recommendations for action

The challenges and recommendations identified by youth groups are summarised below.

Challenges	Recommendations for Action
<p>(i) It is estimated that only between 10-15 percent of the youth have been engaged in the NUP process in Liberia due to structural challenges in the process to involve the youth. This creates the risk that their priorities will not be fully reflected in the final NUP .</p> <p>(ii) Over 80% of the youth are available for capacity building and vocational skills development, yet they do not have access to relevant opportunities.</p> <p>(iii) The youth experience limited access to safe drinking water, sanitation, household solid waste management, health care services and electricity, all of which are important to creating economic opportunities that promote socio-economic development.</p> <p>(iv) The youth face limited access to quality education, skilled training and livelihood empowerment initiatives targeting the youth and information. They experience poor security, especially in urban areas, and an unreliable transportation system in the country that hampers mobility and potential access to economic opportunities.</p>	<p>(i) The youth ought to be involved in all NUP processes and activities as members of the formulation team and as key decision makers. This would substantially mainstream youth interests in future NUP recommendations.</p> <p>(ii) There should be measures to improve access to quality education and information so as to promote youth empowerment and employment.</p> <p>(iii) Efforts should be made to improve access to urban infrastructure and basic services, such as access to safe drinking water, healthcare, water and sanitation, solid waste management and electricity for young people.</p>

Session Takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Points to Note

1. The NUP should mainstream youth participation in urbanisation by engaging them in the urban policy processes.
2. The policy should address capacity gaps by pronouncing provisions that will facilitate education and vocational training in urban areas for young people, to enhance training and skill development for youth and in this way expose them to new knowledge and livelihood skills and opportunities.
3. The policy should facilitate the improvement of infrastructure and basic services in urban areas, so that urban dwellers (including women, youth and children) have access to a better quality of life and access to livelihood opportunities due to improved infrastructure and basic services. This would enhance the urban economies of cities and towns.

3. Slum/Informal Settlement Dwellers

Figure 14: Participants engaging in a discussion on issues affecting informal settlements in Liberia



This interest group consisted of slum dwellers and representatives from various townships, the Federation of Liberian Urban Poor Savers (FOLUPS), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and a Habitat for Humanity International representative.

The presentation ended with a call for slum dwellers to take the initiative in improving their living conditions using the message:

'We got a problem? We are the solution!'

The majority of Liberian towns and cities such as Paynesville, Bentol, Robertsport, Tumanburg, Monrovia, Cestos and Kakata have informal urban settlements. To address proliferation of informal settlements in Liberia, the following points were identified as elements to contribute to the eradication of informal settlements in Liberia.

Vision for a Liberia free from informal settlements

- Well-planned and laid out settlements;

- Areas with reduced incidence of teenage pregnancy;
- Clean and green urban communities/townships;
- Settlements with improved educational facilities;
- Settlements with improved access to basic services (e.g. roads, electricity, sanitation);
- Urban communities free of health hazards;
- Communities with improved road connectivity; and
- Settlements that engage more public private partnerships to improve the state of infrastructure and housing in informal settlements.

Challenges facing informal settlements in Liberia and recommendations for action

The following were identified as the major challenges and possible solutions to informal settlement issues in Liberia.

Issues/Challenges	Recommendations for Action
Inadequate shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest or provide access to improved and affordable housing • Increase access to employment opportunities so that slum dwellers have financial ability to build better housing • Develop and implement housing guidelines and building ordinance guidelines to guide housing development
Poor state of WASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to safe drinking water • Invest in improved and affordable community health centres • All households must have operational toilets • The government should provide financial support to improve WASH infrastructure in informal settlements • WASH related ordinances and regulations must be implemented to ensure compliance in informal settlements
Drug Abuse/misuse in informal settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitate drug addicts in informal settlements • Institute stricter laws and regulations against drug and substance abuse • Increase policing in ghettos where drug abuse occurs
Increasing instances of common health challenges such as malaria, diarrhoea, typhoid, high blood pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake regular community clean-ups in informal settlements to rid them of disease-causing agents • Provide potable water to informal settlement dwellers • Reduce access to contaminated food in informal settlements • Improve access to health facilities through the construction of more health centres • The government could consider providing free healthcare to common ailments in health facilities • Opportunities should be availed to slum dwellers to encourage physical exercise and address sedentary lifestyles
Poor infrastructure networks in informal settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve drainage and sanitation networks in informal settlements to facilitate passage of storm and grey water • Improve road connections in slums to improve connectivity and circulation of people, goods and services • Improve access to basic services in slum areas, such as electricity, roads, schools, health facilities, water and sanitation

Session Takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Points to Note

1. The NUP should aim to improve informal settlements in Liberia by creating a platform for accessible and affordable housing for urban dwellers, access to urban basic services such as water, sanitation, transport and mobility and electricity and incremental upgrading of existing informal urban settlements, including improvement of housing, provision of infrastructure and clean-up.
2. Proper urban planning can help reduce slum proliferation by establishing mechanisms for approving development through urban planning and zoning guidelines and development control.
3. Proper urban planning and management is crucial in handling public welfare, such as providing social facilities, ensuring public safety and promoting healthy urban environments, as was evident during the Ebola crisis. Urban areas such as Monrovia were most affected.

4. Street vendors

Figure 15: Street Vendors and Petty Traders discussion group



In Liberian cities, most urban areas are comprised of street vendors because it is an income generating activity in which many low-income households are engaged. Street trading is informal, unregulated and not permitted by city ordinances in Liberia, which creates conflicts between city authorities and local street vendors

To manage the welfare of street vendors, improve their trading prospects and improve their economic status, a number of challenges and solutions were identified (listed below).

It was observed that:

1. Half of the employed population is engaged in street vending. Street vendors contribute to easing access to basic goods and services for consumers and street markets provide a ready market for such goods.
2. The relationship between street vendors and local government has benefitted from the signing of a MOU between the Federation of Petty Traders and Informal Workers Union (FEPTIWUL) and the city governments of Monrovia and Paynesville. The signed MoU has led to the following improvements.
 - a) Formal recognition of street vendors by national and local government.
 - b) Organised placement of street vendors along city streets using demarcations.
 - c) Market protection by local authorities.
 - d) Abolition of sting operations/raids on street vendors by the authorities.
3. If well managed and harnessed, street vending has a potential of generating revenue for local governments

Challenges faced by street traders/petty traders in Liberia and Recommendations for Action

Challenges	Recommendations for Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Street vending has a low level of public safety. (ii) It leads to the congestion of city streets by vendors. (iii) Street trading is a major contributor to clogging of sanitation and storage facilities due to poor waste disposal. (iv) Relocation of street vendors to new working areas often generates conflicts with authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Conduct capacity building exercises for street vendors on appropriate conduct in street trading to ensure these activities become more sustainable (ii) Economically empower street traders to elevate their business engagements and have more permanent business trading practices (iii) Include street traders as part of national and local decision making in urban development issues (iv) Create a platform for collaboration with national and local government agencies to facilitate rather than disenfranchise street trading e.g. the MoU between the FEPTIWUL and Monrovia City Corporation (MCC) (v) Street vendors have a potential of contributing to the local and national economy if their activities are well-structured and managed (vi) The government should create mechanisms of transitioning from informal trade to more formal modes of trade in Liberia

Session takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Point to Note

In overall urban management, the urban policy needs to address matters of informality and integrate petty traders and street vendors in the overall urban development matrix. This should include measures to mainstream their activities in the overall urban economy and to upgrade informal practices to be formally recognised and supported by the authorities. This should also include constant consultation with street traders and their involvement in key urban decision-making fora.

5. Local Government Officials

Figure 16: Local Government Officials Group discussion



This group consisted of city mayors, governors, township commissioners and county superintendents in Liberia.

The local government officials reported that there is substantial potential to increase local revenue collection if they are empowered, and if more clarity on revenue collection jurisdictions at the local level is provided.

Local administration called for revenue sharing with local unions that collect fees and levies within their jurisdictions (such as transport, market and sport unions).

The key challenges, proposed solutions and potential opportunities were identified as below.

Challenges facing local authorities in Liberia and Recommendations for Action

Challenges	Recommendations for Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Limited allocation of resources to local authorities by the national government due to limited fiscal decentralisation in local government administration. (ii) Insufficient and in most instances, lack of urban basic services in local authorities; especially outside Monrovia and Paynesville. (iii) Lack of urban planning in cities at the local level due to limited capacity. (iv) Ineffective city ordinances that do not assist local urban administration. (v) Lack of coordination in local city administration; city majors, commissioner's chiefs and superintendents do not synergise to create administrative synergies. (vi) Delay in implementation of local government Acts (2018) that could have assisted in streamlining local government administration. (vii) Inadequate inclusion of local city mayors in land administration at the local level, leading to disputes over land use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Make available more financial support from the national government to secondary and intermediate cities in Liberia to help improve capacity to deliver services to cities (ii) Provide capital and logistical support to tackle local issues such as solid waste management (iii) More investment by national government in roads to improve local connectivity within and between local authorities (iv) Encourage local retention of financial benefits for local resources produced within the areas covered by local authorities through mechanisms such as sewage collection, which can empower local authorities (v) Place more emphasis on the implementation of policies and laws at the local level (vi) Have minimum standards to designate city status in Liberia, instead of basing the status on population and political or administrative functions. This will include a set of basic urban services that should exist before a place is declared a city (vii) Provide more support to local authorities to conduct city planning through financial and technical assistance. As a minimum, all cities should have an urban planner. (viii) Review local city ordinances and city regulations to ensure there is a coordinated local administration framework and create awareness about ordinances and regulations to households to improve compliance.

Session takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Points to Note

The NUP should therefore address the following issues.

1. The capacity of local authorities to manage urban development in all Liberian cities needs to be bolstered through financial support from the national government and capital and logistical support from all partners. This will equip local urban management to provide services provision and facilitate the strengthening of technical capacities, for example enabling access to professional planners.
2. Regional development will be boosted, and regional cooperation enhanced with better transport and connectivity for all areas in Liberia.
3. The legal and policy framework needs to be redrafted in order to reflect local planning needs, such as requirements for designating urban areas (cities and towns) and local planning standards and regulations.

6. Environment & Climate Change

Figure 18: The Environment and Climate Change Group Discussion



The environment and climate change group reported on ongoing initiatives on the environment and issues concerning climate change in Liberia.

Existing and ongoing initiatives

The environment

- i) The GoL collaborates with development partners such as UNDP for coastal defence and protection. UNDP has implemented interventions in Buchanan, West Point and planned another project in Greenville.
- ii) The GoL has endorsed the Blue Ocean Initiative which seeks to mainstream sustainable ocean management in Liberia.
- iii) The GoL has created the Coastal Management Unit with the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy to manage coastal areas.
- iv) The GoL joined the Green Climate Fund (GCF) climate action partnership that will bring in resources and expertise to tackle environment challenges in Liberia.
- v) The GoL has developed a Climate Investment Plan for climate adaptation under the National Adaptation Project to enable sustainable climate interventions that are implemented in Liberia.
- vi) The Weah for Clean City Campaign seeks to clean up Liberian cities at the initiative of the President.
- vii) There is a proposal for the development of a modern landfill site in Cheesmanburg
- viii) Private sector players are to be involved in solid waste management (e.g. using community-based enterprises, small business and public private partnership arrangements).
- ix) There is a need to increase awareness on proper solid waste management practices in urban areas of Liberia.
- x) Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) has been introduced, mainly in rural communities, to improve the local state of sanitation.
- xi) A policy document on National Solid Waste Management has been prepared.

National Disaster Management

- i) There is an existing National Disaster Management Policy already managed by the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA).
- ii) A One Health Platform has been established. This seeks to create effective responses to health emergencies.
- iii) There is a National Disaster Risk and Resilience Strategy for Liberia administered by the NDMA
- iv) The government has set up a National Early Warning and Emergency Centre to enable informed responses to potential emergencies.

Challenges related to the environment and climate change in Liberia and Recommendations for Action

Challenges	Recommendations for Action
(i) Flooding in some low-lying areas of the country and coastal erosion in coastal counties.	(i) Activation of the Multi-Trust Fund for Disaster Management.
(ii) Deforestation due to subsistence farming, charcoal burning, logging and mining.	(ii) Elimination of the practice of shifting cultivation which contributes to deforestation.
(iii) Destruction of wetlands.	(iii) Implementation of measures to stop/curb illegal mining.
(iv) Inadequate awareness and/or education on environmental conservation and climate change.	(iv) Elimination of unsustainable hunting of wild animals.
(v) Difficulties in mobilising co-financing. Many development partners require co-financing project commitments from the government. However, the government's limited revenue is already stretched. Due to this lack of capacity of the GoL to co-finance, the country loses out on many projects that could benefit local communities.	(v) Increasing awareness of proper waste management.
(vi) Limited resources to handle solid waste and urban health related disasters and emergencies in urban areas (for example, the Ebola crisis).	(vi) The National Disaster Risk and Resilience Strategy should be operationalised by all sectors working on the environment, climate change and disaster risk management.
(vii) Inappropriate solid waste management practices in urban areas such as uncontrolled waste disposal and lack of landfills in rural areas and secondary cities.	

Session Takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Point to Note

The NUP should mainstream environment and climate change matters in its development and implementation. These should form part of the monitoring and evaluation phase of the NUP. As urban development influences climate related impacts, such as presence of heavy industries in urban areas and pollution, that is rampant in urban areas, this ought to form an overarching principle in the NUP. In this way sustainability measures will be reflected in all policy interventions, so as to achieve the overall aim of sustainable urbanisation for Liberia.

7. Regional Representatives of North West and South Central regions of Liberia

Figure 17: Discussion among Regional Representatives



These Regional Representatives were consulted because North West and South Central regions were not included in the regional consultation workshops in held in May 2019 in North Central (Foya) and South East (Harper) of Liberia.

Their inclusion in the roundtable discussions ensured that the regional representatives made direct inputs to the NUP process using regional context analysing, to highlight the opportunities, challenges and recommended actions for NUP consideration.

A rapid analysis of the state of major issues in the cities represented revealed the following issues.

Challenges related to the North West and South Central in Liberia and Recommendations for Action

Challenges	Recommendations for Action
<i>Urban Population</i>	
(i) In all urban areas of the two regions, more than half of the population is comprised of the youth, whose majority is unemployed.	(i) Urban authorities should seek to improve proper access to economic opportunities, leveraging urban land use planning
<i>Land Use</i>	
<p>(i) In all cities, more than half of the land is privately owned, leading to difficulties in administering effective land use by public entities.</p> <p>(ii) Most landowners in urban areas lack land ownership documents (e.g. title deeds) landowners.</p> <p>(iii) There are instances of abandoned land in some local authorities and this hampers development as authorities cannot make decisions over absentee ownership.</p> <p>(iv) Some land is converted into dumping grounds for solid waste, leading to public nuisance and health hazards within cities.</p> <p>(v) There is no coordination in land administration at the local level.</p> <p>(vi) There is illegal sale and acquisition of land in some local authorities which creates ownership conflicts.</p> <p>(vii) Some landowners are unwilling to yield their land to some priority land uses (either by sale or by acquisition).</p> <p>(viii) The laws and regulations underpinning land administration and land use in urban areas are weak.</p>	<p>(i) Local coordination in land use, ownership and administration is necessary to address issues hampering urban development in towns and cities.</p> <p>(ii) The legal and policy framework governing land use needs to be reviewed to assess its coherence with national urban policy, and any gaps, in order to achieve well-coordinated land use.</p>
<i>Housing</i>	
<p>(i) All urban areas in Liberia reported limited supply of housing and in most instances, the quality of housing was poor, with limited service provision.</p> <p>(ii) Laws, policies and regulations on housing are weak in Liberia.</p> <p>(iii) Local housing in major regional urban centres is in a poor state, such as in Tumanbury, Cesstos, Kakata, Robertsport, Bentol, Paynesville and Monrovia.</p>	(i) Efforts need to be made to improve access to affordable housing for all Liberians. This could be through legal and policy measures, and capital interventions, such as facilitating access to affordable building technologies.
<i>City Plans</i>	

Challenges	Recommendations for Action
(i) Urban areas in Liberia are growing without plans. It was noted that the few with plans do not implement them.	(i) The towns and cities of the regions need proper plans and these need to be implemented to improve the urban landscape.
<i>Infrastructure and Basic Services</i>	
(i) In the major urban centres of the two regions, infrastructure development was recorded to be inadequate to serve the needs of local urban populations. Electricity and water supply were absent in most urban areas (e.g. Tubmanbury, Cesstos, Kakata and Bentol). Academic facilities are present in all urban areas and in good condition.	(i) There should be deliberate measures to invest in basic infrastructure in urban areas.
<i>Urban economy</i>	
(i) All Liberian cities reported the predominance of informal trading activities, with street vending forming the majority of economic activities. Rural production, such as farm produce, also dominated local economic activities, with a few towns having commercial trade in shops and other activities such as extraction of minerals.	(ii) Urban management in the towns of these regions need to implement measures that will improve access to economic opportunities by promoting economic activities in both the urban and rural spaces of Liberia, so that informal activities can be formalised.

The following table provides a quick overview of access to urban infrastructure in major Liberian cities.

Table 1: State of Infrastructure and Basic Services

	City	Electricity Supply	Water Supply	Health Care	Education Facilities	Solid Waste Management
	Tumanbury	No	No	Poor	Good	Poor
	Cesstos	No	No	Poor	Good	Poor
	Kakata	No	No	Poor	Good	Poor
	Robertsport	No	Yes	Poor	Good	Poor
	Bentol	No	No	Poor	Slightly Good	Poor
	Paynesville	Slightly	Slightly	Fair	Good	Fair
	Monrovia	Slightly	Slightly	Fair	Fair	Fair

Source: NUF Discussion (2019)

Session takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Points to Note

1. Urban policy should leverage the young urban population of Liberia to promote economic development, by creating a conducive atmosphere for economic activities in urban and rural areas that will create jobs and expand economic activity.
2. The legal and policy framework governing land use needs to be reviewed to assess its coherence with national urban policy. Any gaps in local land use coordination, land ownership and administration should be identified and addressed to achieve well-coordinated land use.

Media Interviews

Figure 19: Hon. Momolu Johnson (right) and Remy Sietchiping (left) taking part in a media interview



To gain further insights from the participants, Forum organisers conducted brief media interviews for key stakeholders attending the Forum providing their views on urbanisation in Liberia and policy expectations. The interview responses by Forum participants are reflected in *Annex 7*.

8. Session Takeaways for the National Urban Policy

Points to Note

1. Effective implementation of the NUP is central to its success.
2. Small and intermediate towns and cities have capacity gaps that need to be addressed by policies.
3. Participation in all phases of the NUP process is required for ownership purposes.
4. The NUP was an important platform for all stakeholders to discuss urbanisation issues in Liberia, and the outcomes should be reflected in the NUP.
5. The GoL remains committed to supporting the NUP process until its completion.
6. Policy implementation calls for resources from all stakeholders and partners; government interventions alone are not enough.

Session VI: Closing session

9. Declaration of the Second Liberian Urban Forum 2019

The Forum culminated in a Communiqué that was widely welcomed. This reflected the discussions, deliberations and objectives of the Forum. It was presented to the participants by Hon Famater Roesler, Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs as a joint or consolidated statement by the Forum convenors. The Communiqué committed all Forum participants to support the NUP process and other urbanisation initiatives in Liberia. There were 123 institutions represented in the Forum which included over 250 participants.

Forum participants agreed on the following resolutions.

- a) Ensuring the NUP supports the implementation of *Liberia's Vision 2030* and the *Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development for Liberia*.
- b) Using the NUP to situate the SDGs, NUA and the Paris Climate Agreement in the local context.
- c) Supporting and promoting the NUP as an instrument for socio-economic development and achieving prosperous, resilient cities and human settlements in Liberia.
- d) Calling on national and local governments and development partners to lead in enhancing the role of women in developing and implementing the NUP.
- e) Calling for political support to ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement for an effective urban policy in Liberia.
- f) Furnishing the NUP development team with the required information to improve the quality of analysis in the development of the Liberia NUP.

- g) Advocating for systematic strengthening of the technical and financial capacities of local governments to engage in the NUP and urban development.
- h) Committing to champion the NUP cause in local communities and relevant organisations.
- Forum participants endorsed the Communiqué as a concluding resolution document for the Forum and agreed to continue the work based on the commitments that were made. The Communiqué is annexed to this report for reference (see *Annex 4*).

MONROVIA COMMUNIQUE		
<i>National Urban Policy For Liberia</i>		
Venue: Monrovia City Corporation, Monrovia, Liberia. Date: 26th November 2019		
PREAMBLE	A CALL TO ACTION	OUR COMMITMENT
<p>Under the Joint Facilitation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and Cities Alliance;</p> <p>WE, over 250 participants of the <i>Third National Urban Forum</i> held at the Monrovia City Hall on 26th November 2019, with representation from Government of Liberia Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Civil Society, Local Governments, Academia, County Officials, Greater Monrovia District representatives, Development Partners and the Private Sector fully participated in all Forum sessions;</p> <p>WE recognise the responsibility bestowed upon us as stakeholders in the development of the National Urban Policy in Liberia;</p> <p>WE took note of the progress made so far in the preparation of the diagnostic report and the consultation outcomes for South Central and North Central regions;</p> <p>WE discussed the priority issues to be considered in the urban policy development process particularly for youth, women, local authorities, slum dwellers, petty traders and climate change;</p>	<p>WE believe that the National Urban Policy needs to focus on the needs and potential of all Liberian cities and human settlements, large and small;</p> <p>WE shared our respective views on the desired National Urban Policy for consideration and recognised the need and importance of developing a National Urban Policy for Liberia;</p> <p>WE underscore the importance of a National Urban Policy to support the transformative Liberia's Vision 2030 and Pro-poor agenda for Prosperity and Development for Liberia;</p> <p>We are committed to using the National Urban Policy as a means to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Climate Agreement and the New Urban Agenda;</p> <p>WE are committed to promote and support the inclusive National Policy Initiative for a mindset change that would lead to social and economic development for prosperous and resilient cities and human settlements in Liberia;</p> <p>WE call on national and local government, and all development partners, to recognise the leadership role of women in promoting new urban policies;</p>	<p>WE will actively engage in the policy development process to ensure adequate political will, meaningful stakeholder engagement for effective coordination and shared vision of future urban development in Liberia;</p> <p>WE commit to furnish the National Urban Policy development team with relevant information that will improve the quality of analysis and improve the development of a NUP for Liberia;</p> <p>WE will advocate for the systematic strengthening of local capacity and financial resources in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluating the Liberian National Urban Policy;</p> <p>WE commit to be champions for the National Urban Policy in our respective local communities and jurisdictions;</p> <p>WE are grateful to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, UN-Habitat, and Cities Alliance for taking leadership on the National Urban Policy Programme for Liberia.</p>

10. Parting Shots: Plenary Feedback

The participants were also asked to provide their feedback on the Forum's plenary on urbanisation in Liberia. Some of these perspectives are listed below.	
Name	Comment
Kula Fofana - President, People's Foundation Africa and Former Assistant Minister of Youth and Sports	There is a lack of proper planning in Liberian cities, therefore development cannot be tailored to local communities which are experiencing unique local challenges. There is a need to ensure proper demarcation of all cities and have proper plans to guide urban development.
	Cities are unsafe for women and other vulnerable groups such as the youth, the poor, and the disabled. Gender-based violence is most prevalent in cities. It is imperative that urban spaces are safe spaces for women and other vulnerable groups.
Mose Massah - Programme Specialist at UNDP	The environment is now a key issue in national development, and should be prioritised. Destruction of the environment and climate change can impact all sectors and the progress they have made over the years. Future planning and development should be linked to climate change, the environment and disaster risk management policies to ensure that environmental issues are fully acknowledged and addressed in all national development.
	In Liberia, about 32% of the population are young students. The educational sector should be represented in the policy making process. Students should be included in all NUP events and activities, in order for their insights to be captured during the development phase.
Hon. Maima Kamara - city Mayor of Sanniquelle City Corporation	The disabled community should be included in all NUP activities and be part of subsequent Forums.

11. Closing Remarks

The Forum organisers expressed their appreciation to all participants who attended the National Urban Forum, particularly those who travelled from the other regions outside of the Greater Monrovia. William Cobbett acknowledged the passionate presentations from the various groups and the engaging sessions by participants at the NUF. He observed that the quality of discussions is relevant to the Liberian society at large and reflect the reality of issues captured by the Forum. He highlighted the support of Cities Alliance and the high level participation of GoL, with three Ministers, Governors, Mayors and other high-level delegates at the Forum. Mr. Remy Sietchiping appreciated the commitment and support from the technical team from Cities Alliance, UN-Habitat, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Country Programme partners that were involved in preparing for the Forum. He urged all participants to remain engaged throughout

the process and promised that all observations and recommendations from the Forum will be used to inform the Liberian NUP.

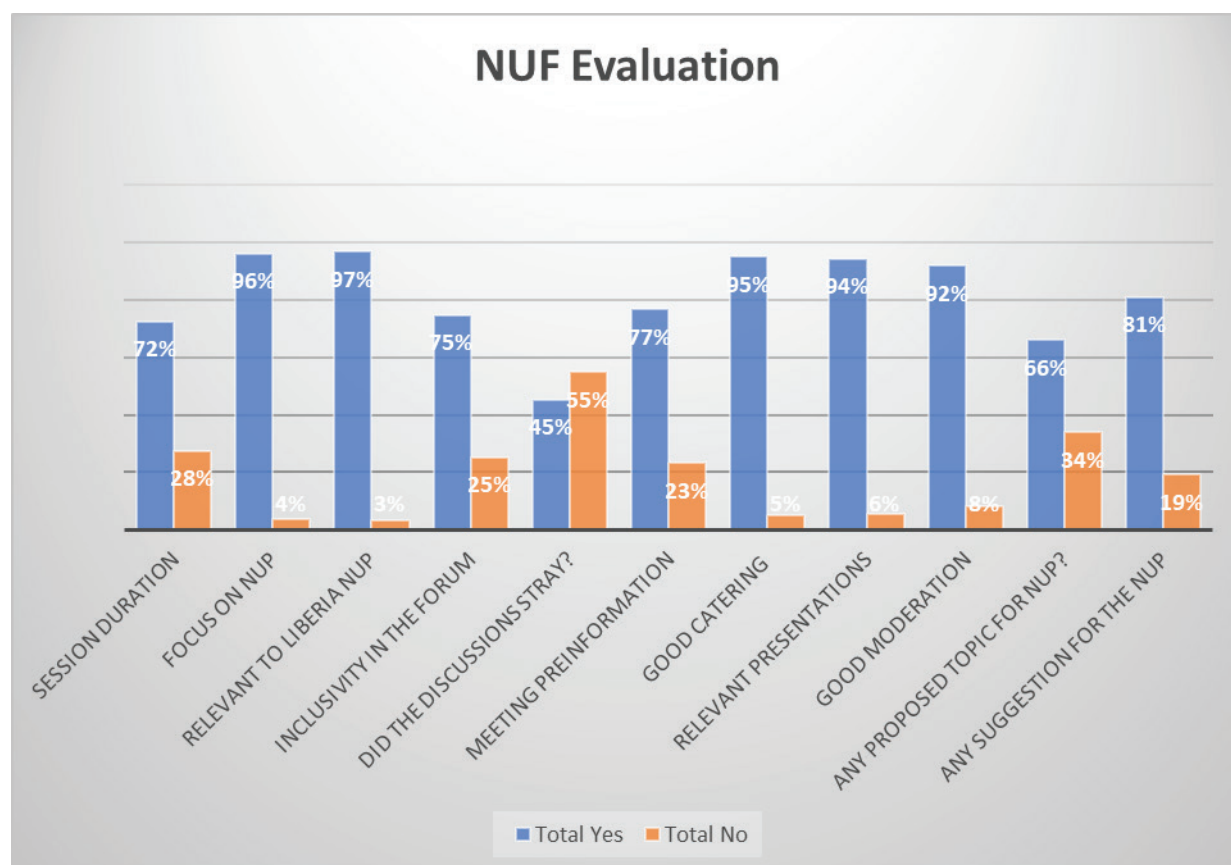
Abraham Garai from MCC observed that key issues relevant to small and intermediate cities were addressed in the Forum. He urged the local authority representatives outside the main cities to take measures to ensure development occurs sustainably in their cities by observing issues such as proper solid waste management, climate change issues, charcoal burning and rubber tapping. Finally, Hon Momolu Johnson, closed the Forum by thanking everyone for their participation, its partners, the partnership with the Government of Liberia to ensure a better environment, and expressed his hope for everyone to champion the NUP process moving forward.

12. Forum Evaluation

Towards the end of the Forum, evaluation forms were handed to the participants to gather their reaction towards the Forum and their assessment of its success. From over 130 completed forms collected, it

was clear that 80 percent of Forum participants found it to have satisfied its objectives. This was equivalent to almost half of the participants. The summary of responses is shown in the Figure below:

Figure 22: NUF Evaluation responses



The responses illustrate a positive assessment of the Forum, where the majority of the participants thought that the time for each Forum session was well managed. Nonetheless, some believed that there was not enough time for each of the Forum sessions to discuss topics in more depth.

Almost all participants felt the Forum focused on the core NUP themes, and the sessions and content were tailored to the Liberian NUP context. Although three quarters of the participants felt the Forum was inclusive, they stated that more time was not needed for more people to contribute and ask questions. It was suggested that longer side events could be used for future Forums. Two thirds of the participants agreed to having received information prior to the Forum that was helpful in discussing the NUP topics.

Suggestion for National Urban Policy

Based on feedback from participants, the NUP team should consider the following points.

All Forum presentations were relevant to the NUP process and the moderation of the Forum was well done with strict time management by all participants.

Some suggestions that should be incorporated for future Forums include:

- a) Allocate more time for the NUF, as it was experienced that one day is not enough to cover all of the topics in depth.
- a) Rotate the venue for the NUF to facilitate equal participation. The next NUF could be held outside Monrovia.
- b) It would be beneficial to hold more NUFs for further engagement of stakeholders.

Points to Note

1. The policy should be more participatory by having more engagement of community members, youth and legal practitioners, and more involvement of stakeholders outside Monrovia.
2. Incorporate more information on people who are disabled within the NUP.
3. Dedicate more attention to health within the NUP.
4. Give more emphasis to food security in the NUP.
5. Incorporate measures to realise united cities, instead of competing local authorities.
6. Information on ICT needs to be incorporated into NUP as an enabler of economic development.
7. Apart from including the youth, children need to be engaged in the policy dialogue for Liberia's NUP.

13. Social Media Impressions

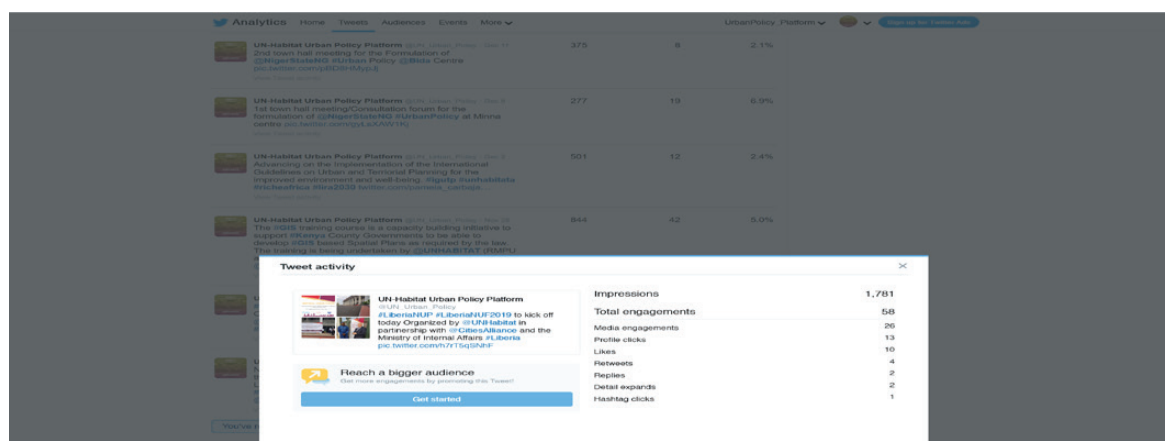
Various views were expressed by Liberians on social media posts, with many being positive about the NUP development process.

Figure 23: Captions of NUF posts on Facebook: impressions, and commitments



Source: A National Urban Policy for Liberia Facebook Group (2019)

Figure 24: Sample post impressions on the Forum on Twitter



Source: Urban Policy Platform Twitter Handle (2019)

Gbarngawoe E. Seyboe, a meeting participant commented online, 'The forum was so rewarding. Knowing challenges and strengths from different cities.'

Social Media was therefore a useful tool that was effective in reaching out to the Liberian social media community.

14. Forum Outcomes

The Forum had the following objectives.

- a) Introduce stakeholders to the NUP process in Liberia and inform participants of the progress and achievements made, upcoming actions and ways of being involved in the process.
- b) Provide a platform for Liberia Country Programme partners to provide inputs into the NUP process in Liberia, seek further commitments in pending NUP activities, and establish partnerships to foster a close working relationship towards the full development and implementation of the NUP.
- c) Provide a platform for review and appraisal by stakeholders of outputs of the NUP process (the revised regional notes and the national diagnostic note).
- d) Seek inputs from key interest groups (slum dwellers, women, youth, street vendors and local authorities) on the Diagnostic Phase of the NUP programme.

The Forum sessions achieved the prime goal of bringing urban stakeholders together to discuss the national urban policy for Liberia. The following outcomes were achieved.

1. Forum participants were introduced into the NUP process and appraised on the progress achieved so far, with more participating

institutions such as FAO and UNDP offering to support the process through access to institutional information.

2. Participants adopted a Communiqué as part of their commitment to support the NUP process; from formulation, to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
3. Forum participants had an opportunity to look through the NUP outputs prepared so far, such as the Discussion Paper, Feasibility Note and the two Regional Diagnostic Notes. They also received additional materials on the NUP process in Liberia, aimed at deepening their knowledge of the process of developing the policy.
4. Feedback and inputs to the NUP process for Liberia were sought from over 250 participants attending the NUF from 123 institutions working in Liberia. During the Forum, participants were directly involved in discussions in roundtables and through plenary feedback and question and answer sessions, giving all participants an opportunity to contribute to developing the Diagnosis of the NUP for Liberia. The groups involved included the GoL, slum dwellers, women, youth, street vendors, local authorities, academia, civil society and the disabled.

Summary and Conclusions

The second Liberian National Urban Forum was successful with the Forum objectives being fully met. The Forum also had a diverse group of participants and stakeholders. The Forum provided a platform to brief all participants about the NUP process in Liberia, including on the achievements, progress and way forward. It provided a platform for key interest groups in the Liberian Country Programme to be included in the NUP process, increasing participation for key stakeholders in the process. These stakeholders include the slum dwellers, street vendors, women, youth and various local authority representatives from across Liberia. Presentations were made by participants who highlighted the critical importance of Cities Alliance and UN-Habitat by introducing activities of the Country Programme and the NUP Programme, an in-depth orientation of the NUP process, the achievements made and the pending activities. The Forum ended with the adoption of a Communiqué by the participants, presented by the Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs and endorsed by all participants and stakeholders to support the NUP process in Liberia.

Based on the results from the Forum, more participation should be incorporated into the policy process and issues focused on environment and climate change, children and youth, women and the disabled in the NUP process and ancillary activities should be included. Due to little or no planning within the urban areas in Liberia, more measures are needed to ensure planning is instituted at all levels of land use and management, particularly outside Greater Monrovia. This could be better achieved if there are firmer laws and regulations to guide urban

development. New structures should be constructed, and current planning instruments should be reviewed and updated. The existing Local Government Act (2018) should also be implemented. Capacity gaps were identified in the local authorities, with more resources concentrated in Greater Monrovia. These resources should be improved through financial, human and technical capacity development. In the development of the NUP, it was emphasised that it is important to ensure that environmental issues were mainstreamed to the local level.

Due to the key characteristics of Liberia, a country that is undergoing a rehabilitation process from a long war, post-conflict challenges as well as recovering from Ebola and an economic crisis, there is a strong imperative to create new partnerships and sustain old ones with the key actors involved in urban affairs. This is to ensure there is sufficient capacity and strong support for the implementation of urban development initiatives, especially for local governments and state MDAs. Most urban areas in Liberia are critically lacking urban basic services and infrastructure and this needs to be tackled quickly. The status of the city should be based on the establishment of a basic minimum scale of urban infrastructure and basic services. To enhance the urban economy, it is important to create a favourable urban business environment and more economic opportunities for urban dwellers. Housing was also noted to be a concern of many citizens who are living in informal settlement conditions. The government was urged to adopt different financial mechanisms to lower housing costs and engage PPP arrangements to achieve adequate housing for Liberians.

Annexes

Annex 1: Forum Agenda

NATIONAL URBAN FORUM: PROGRAMME

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA AND SDGs IN LIBERIA: TOWARDS A NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

Moderator	Jimmy N C Bokay: <i>Director, Regional & Sectorial Planning Unit, Ministry of Finance & Development Planning</i>
08:00 – 09:00	Registration & Breakfast
Session I	Opening Statements
9:00 – 9:30	Mayor of Monrovia – <i>Welcome Remarks - Hon. Jefferson T Kojee / MCC Rep – Abraham Garai</i>
	Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs – <i>Hon. Famater Roesler</i>
	Mayor of Paynesville – <i>Hon. P. Belcher Taylor / PCC Rep – Stephen Zahn</i>
	Cities Alliance – <i>William Cobbett</i>
	UN-Habitat – <i>Remy Sietchiping</i>
Session II	Keynote Address and Official Opening
9:30 – 10:00	Deputy Minister for Administration, Ministry of Internal Affairs - <i>Hon Momolu Johnson</i>
Session III	High Level Panel Discussion
10:00 – 10:30	Ministers Present, Director Cities Alliance, PCC mayor, MCC mayor, UN-Habitat Rep
10:30 - 10:45	Group Photograph and Water Break – Brief Media Interviews
Session IV	Presentations
10:45 - 11:15	Promoting Sustainable Urbanisation through the Cities Alliance Country Programme in Liberia – <i>William Cobbett and Francisco - Cities Alliance</i>
11:15 – 12:00	NUP Development Process for Liberia – <i>John Omwamba and Mandy Mui - UN-Habitat</i>
12:00 - 12:15	Q&A
Session V	Round Table Sessions
12:15- 13:30	Stakeholder Roundtable Discussion - <i>Moderator</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. North West Region Representatives 2. South Central Region Representatives 3. Women 4. Youth 5. Street Vendors 6. Local Authorities/Devolution 7. Slum Dwellers 8. Environment and Climate Change

13:30 - 14:30	LUNCH
Session VI	Presentations
14:30 -15:45	Group Presentations (<i>Roundtable Discussion Feedback</i>) – Moderator, Group Coordinators
Session VII	Way Forward and Closing Session
15:45 - 16:00	Communiqué on the NUP in Liberia – <i>Hon. Famater Roesler</i> : Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs
16:00- 16:30	Wrap up and Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities Alliance – William Cobbett • UN-Habitat – Remy Sietchiping • PCC Representative – Stephen Zahn • MCC Representative – Abraham Garai • Minister of Internal Affairs - Hon. Varney A. Sirleaf
16:30- 17:00	Tea Break and Networking Session

Annex 2: Forum Participants List

NATIONAL URBAN FORUM REGISTRATION LIST

THEME: IMPLEMENTING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA AND SDGs IN LIBERIA- TOWARDS A NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

Venue: Monrovia City Hall

Date: November 26, 2019

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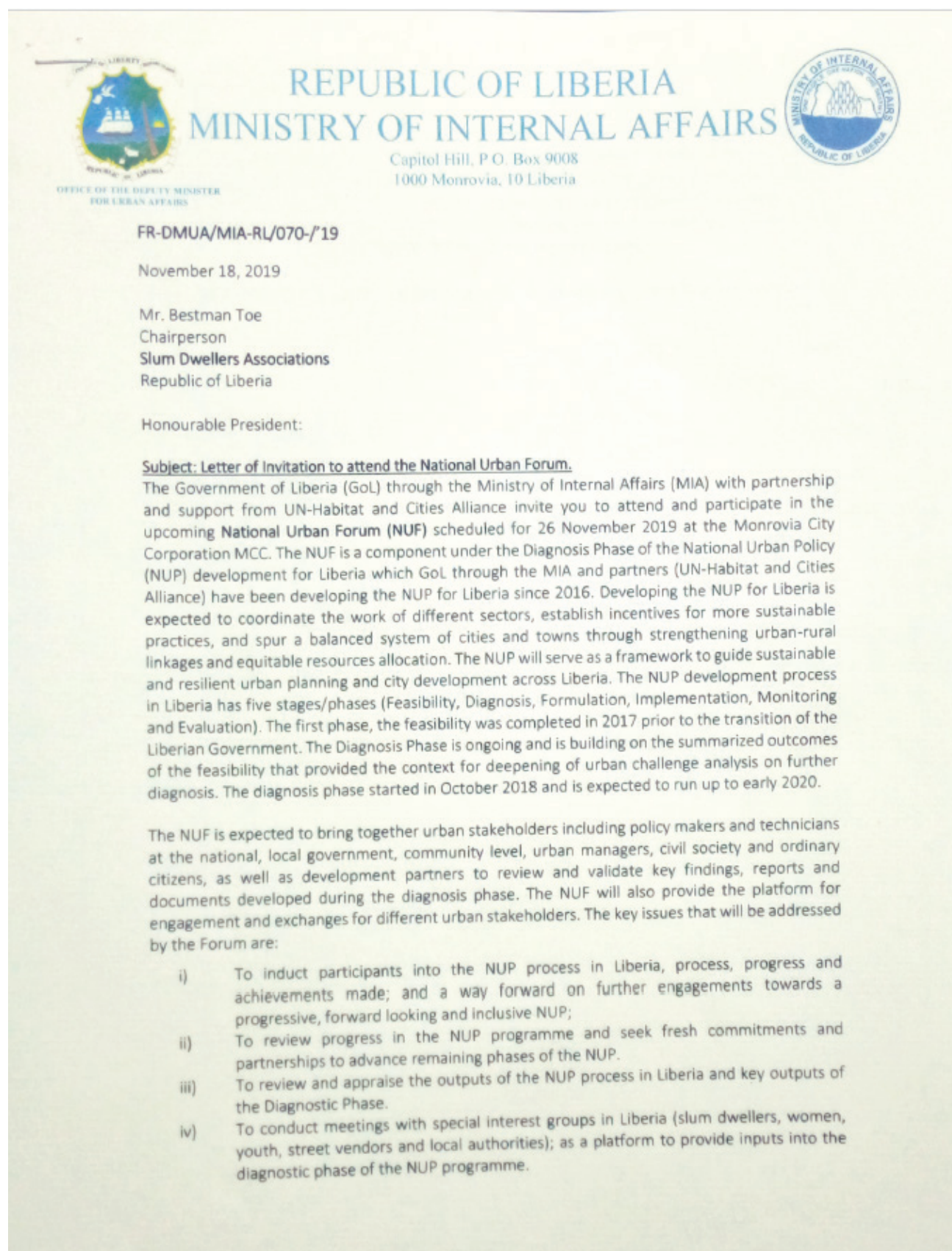
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	Marie Varney	FOLUPS	CO-Chair	F		
	Noa Doyah	FOLUPS	G-Secretary	F		
	Amelia Massaquoi	FOLUPS	Financial sec.	F		
	Deborah Zarboe	FOLUPS	Asst. Chair	F		
	Jerry Paye	YMCA	Pj Coordinator	M		
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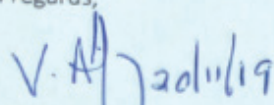
Annex 3: Forum Invitation Letter



The NUF is very significant to the development process of the NUP for Liberia and participation of all parties is very essential by which the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Chair of National Habitat Committee (NHC) and Technical Support Team (TST) through the Department of Urban Affairs is honoured to again invite all NHC and TST members (two representatives from each member institution) to the NUF, of which your institution is part. *Please see attached concept note, draft agenda and other supporting documents for the National Urban Forum.*

Whilst looking forward to your cooperation, please accept the sentiment of my profound gratitude.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'V. A. Sirleaf', followed by the date '2011/19'.

Hon. Varney A. Sirleaf
Minister of Internal Affairs

Annex 4: Forum Communiqué and Thank you note



THIRD LIBERIA NATIONAL URBAN FORUM THANK-YOU NOTE - MONROVIA

The Ministry of Internal Affairs, UN-Habitat and Cities Alliance would like to thank all of you, who attended the Third National Urban Forum at the Monrovia City Hall on November 26th, 2019. We thank you for the good, and vibrant discussions on the Liberian National Urban Policy, and we look forward to engaging more in other platforms to keep the conversation going; towards the development of a locally responsive urban policy. We hope that your engagements will lead to a sustainable and resilient policy framework for urban development in Liberia.

We thank everyone for bringing their expertise and experience to the Forum, and for engaging in constructive, fruitful and open discussions. We specially thank all stakeholders that attended from government ministries, departments and agencies, development partners, civil society, academia, private sector, youth, women, street vendors, local governments and climate change and environment practitioners.

Going forward, we look forward to more engagements as we develop the policy, and kindly request that we all commit ourselves to the letter of the communiqué that we adopted at the Forum. The communiqué is attached below for your reference.

MONROVIA COMMUNIQUE

National Urban Policy For Liberia

Venue: Monrovia City Corporation, Monrovia, Liberia. **Date:** 26th November 2019

Under the Joint Facilitation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and Cities Alliance;

WE, over 220 participants of the *Third National Urban Forum* held at the Monrovia City Hall on 26th November 2019, with representation from Government of Liberia Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Civil Society, Local Governments, Academia, County Officials, Greater Monrovia District representatives, Development Partners and the Private Sector fully participated in all Forum sessions;

WE recognize the responsibility bestowed upon us as stakeholders in the development of the National Urban Policy in Liberia;

WE took note of the progress made so far in the preparation of the diagnostic report and the consultations outcomes for South Central and North Central regions;

WE discussed the priority issues to be considered in the urban policy development process particularly for youth, women, local authorities, slum dwellers, petty traders and climate change;

WE believe that the National Urban Policy needs to focus on the needs and potential of all Liberian cities and human settlements, large and small;

WE shared our respective views on the desired National Urban Policy for consideration and recognized the need and importance of developing a National Urban Policy for Liberia;

WE underscore the importance of a National Urban Policy to support the transformative Liberia's Vision 2030 and Pro-poor agenda for Prosperity and Development for Liberia;

We are committed to using the National Urban policy as a means to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Climate Agreement and the New Urban Agenda;

WE are committed to promote and support the inclusive National Policy Initiative for a mindset change that would lead to social and economic development for prosperous and resilient cities and human settlements in Liberia;

WE call on national and local government, and all development partners, to recognize the leadership role of women in promoting new urban policies;

WE will actively engage in the policy development process to ensure adequate political will, meaningful stakeholder engagement for effective coordination and shared vision of future urban development in Liberia;

WE commit to furnish the National Urban Policy development team with relevant information that will improve the quality of analysis and improve the development of a NUP for Liberia;

WE will advocate for the systematic strengthening of local capacity and financial resources in the development, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Liberian National Urban Policy;

WE commit to be champions for the National Urban Policy in our respective local communities and jurisdictions;

WE are grateful to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, UN-Habitat, and Cities Alliance for taking leadership on the National Urban Policy Programme for Liberia.

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

National Government

1. Ministry of Internal Affairs
2. Ministry of Public Works
3. Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
4. National Housing Authority
5. National Disaster Management Agency
6. Environmental Protection Agency
7. Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services
8. John F. Kennedy Medical Center
9. Liberia National Police
10. National Legislature
11. Civil Service Agency
12. Liberia Institute of Public Administration
13. Governance Commission
14. National Social Security and Welfare Corporation

Local Government

15. Monrovia City Corporation
16. Paynesville City Corporation
17. Bentol City Corporation
18. Greenville City Corporation
19. Harper City Corporation
20. Robersport City Corporation
21. Pleebo City Corporation
22. Barclayville City Corporation
23. Kakata City Corporation
24. Cestos City Corporation
25. Fishtown City Corporation
26. Voinjama City Corporation
27. Sanniquillie City Corporation
28. Foya City Corporation
29. Gompa City Corporation
30. Kolba City Corporation
31. Zwedru City Corporation
32. Zorzor City Corporation
33. Gbarnga City Corporation
34. Tubmanburg City Corporation
35. Buchanan City Corporation
36. Montserrado County Superintendent Office
37. Margibi County Superintendent
38. Maryland County Superintendent
39. Bong County Superintendent
40. Rivercess County Superintendent
41. RiverGee County Superintendent

42. Bomi County Superintendent
43. Sinoe County Superintendent
44. Grand Cape Mount Superintendent
45. Grand Kru Superintendent
46. Johnsonville Township
47. Virginia Township
48. Kingsville Township
49. Garnerville Township
50. Mount Coffe Township
51. Caldwell Township
52. Congo Town Township
53. Barnersville Township
54. Louisiana Township
55. New Georgia Township
56. West Point Township
57. Millsburg Township
58. Chessemerburg Township
59. Royesville Township
60. Tolberta Township
61. Tubmanville Township
62. Whiteplain Township
63. Garworlohn Township
64. Dixville Township
65. Governor of New Kru Town

Civil Society

66. Liberia Geographical Society
67. Engineering Society of Liberia
68. Agro Tech Liberia
69. Daily Observer
70. LYFT Africa
71. Front Page Africa
72. National Association of Community Based Enterprises (NACOB)
73. Kids Development Initiative
74. Liberia Media Center
75. Ludepredent
76. Liberia EFA Technical Committee (Letcom)
77. Zorzor District Women Care (ZODWOCA)
78. Gofacout
79. New Liberia Newspapers
80. Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)
81. Red Power FM
82. ICare-Liberia
83. More Than Me Academy
84. AWACD

85. Press Union of Liberia
86. CSM-L
87. City Cleaners Liberia Inc.
88. New Public Transit
89. PMI Group
90. Copyright Society of Liberia (COSOL)
91. Tunes Liberia INC.
92. Liberia Institute of Architects
93. Liberia Civil Society
94. PFA
95. Radio Bushrod
96. Joy FM
97. NGT

Women Groups

98. Crozierville Women Group
99. West Point Women for Health and Development Organization
100. White Plaine Women Group
101. Barnersville Women Group
102. Riverview Community Women Group
103. Sinoe Women Platform
104. Women and Children Initiative
105. Concern Women Group
106. Society of Women Engineers
107. District 14 Women Group
108. Borough Women Group

Youth Groups

109. Federation of Liberian Youth
110. Liberia National Student Union
111. Liberia Youth Foundation
112. YALI Liberia
113. Congo Township Youth
114. Youth Crime Watch

Physically Challenged

115. Group of 77

Liberia County Program Partners

116. Cities Alliance
117. UN-Habitat
118. Habitat for Humanity International
119. YMCA
120. SDI/FOLUPS
121. WEIGO/ FEPTIWUL

Development Partners

122. UNDP
123. Liberia National Red Cross

[2]

Annex 6: Sample Forum Evaluation Form



NATIONAL URBAN FORUM REGISTRATION

THEME: IMPLEMENTING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA AND SDGs IN LIBERIA- TOWARDS A NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

Venue: Monrovia City Corporation

Date: November 26, 2019

Note: Please provide your feedback on activities of the National Urban Forum. Your feedback will provide us a clear understanding of your impression of our work and help us be more responsive during our next activities.

Age Bracket (Below 25 (); 25-40 (); 40-50 (); or 50+ ()):

Item	Yes/No	Comment	Score/10 (with 0 being the least and 10 the highest)
There was enough time to effectively tackle all items on the Agenda	Yes No		
Were the discussions focused on National Urban Policy for Liberia?	Yes No	Observation suggest that the policy is only for message to cities	
The discussions were portent to the NUP Process in Liberia	Yes No	It was portent for the future plan of local cities	
All members present in the meeting had an opportunity to engage in the discussions of the day	Yes No	yes everyone took part either through the regular forum or group work participation	
Did the meeting proceedings stray to other topics at all?	Yes No		
We had information related to the NUF Agenda in advance of the meeting commencement	Yes No	Through information from invitation Jerrad days before the meeting	
Catering services for the NUF were adequate and satisfactory	Yes No		
The presentations from facilitators were relevant and useful to the participants and NUP in general.	Yes No	Not everything that is said by the facilitators will come in full as many have be said with no impact	
The Forum moderator was knowledgeable and well prepared for facilitation	Yes No		
Is there an area you would like included into the next meeting discussion?	Yes No	Beside youth some major school students should also be invited and more days added to meeting time	
Do you have a suggestion for the NUP Process for consideration by organizers?		provide program to local down birth rate	

Thanks a lot for your participation!

Annex 7: Question and Answer Session

Table 2: Question and Answer session

Question	Answer
<i>Mose Massah: UNDP</i>	<i>Remy Sietchiping: UN-Habitat</i>
Has the National Urban Policy made links to Liberia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)?	Countries are required to report on progress of NDCs. The 2019 New Climate Economics Report revealed that only one in five countries can report on NDCs. UN-Habitat has devised a tool on mainstreaming climate change into NUP. Going forward, policy interventions were considered in NDCs through capacity building and awareness creation. The issue of environment and climate change is a priority area in the policy making process, and further engagements with UNDP will be facilitated to ensure relevant issues are incorporated into the policy.
<i>Julia W. Subah: Engineering Society of Liberia</i>	<i>William Cobbett: Cities Alliance</i>
How will the NUP be crafted to ensure infrastructure development in informal settlements is less disruptive and not riddled with conflicts between authorities and slum dwellers in Liberia?	The policy development process is people driven and inclusive. The NUP process will be people-driven and the informal settlement communities will have a chance to express their concerns regarding the development taking place in their communities and how NUP will influence their future lives.

Annex 8: Forum Interviews

Name	Comment
Hon. Momolu Johnson - Deputy Minister of Administration, Ministry of Internal Affairs	<p><i>How important is the NUF and NUP to Liberia?</i></p> <p>The NUP will provide a strategic direction on how urbanisation will happen in Liberia. The NUF is very timely because as a country, we are recovering from a post-conflict state. We hope the current partnership will give us a working policy document that will help in managing our cities.</p> <p><i>What guarantee do you have that the Policy will be implemented?</i></p> <p>As a government and as a country, we have realised that we critically need a policy to help us. The government takes the process seriously and would like to see it implemented; so that the hard work does not go to waste.</p> <p><i>What measures will you put in place as the Interior Assistant Minister to ensure the policy is realised?</i></p> <p>For a long time, we have concentrated on the urban sector, and we would like to shift and reach us to the counties to ensure the whole country is covered.</p> <p><i>What would you like to see in the NUP for Liberia?</i></p> <p>The policy has to be the thinking of all, and ensure we have the buy-in of all towards this process.</p> <p>We also thank our partners that have assisted the government in moving forward amidst a financial constrain</p>
Hon. Famater Roesler - Deputy Minister of Urban Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs	<p><i>What does this policy mean to you?</i></p> <p>It is very important because urban areas in Liberia need to reform to address challenges, they are facing, such as having growing slum communities. The government is paying key attention to that in collaboration with development partners, and the policy is an avenue we seek to achieve this.</p> <p><i>How will the government lobby to get more resources to implement the policy?</i></p> <p>The government is a key partner in the programme, and we have a responsibility to ensure the policy is implemented, in collaboration with our development partners</p> <p><i>It has been noted that the government is concentrating more on Monrovia and Paynesville. What measures are being out in place to cover other towns and cities?</i></p> <p>We have been negotiating with all stakeholders to ensure development initiatives are spread across the country.</p> <p><i>What key message do you have for those absent from the Forum to ensure equal development in all cities?</i></p> <p>This programme targets all Ministries, departments and agencies. We shall reach out to all ministries to ensure we capture their inputs. We urge all of them to join us next time, so that we move together as a government</p>

<p>William Cobbett - Cities Alliance</p>	<p><i>What is the Importance of the NUP and the NUF taking place today?</i></p> <p>The Forum acts as a ‘convening’, bringing together different cadres of Liberians to discuss changes going on in the urban space of Liberia. It needs to discuss how life will change in cities and towns of Liberia. The Policy Framework in Liberia needs to be reviewed to ensure it is in tandem with the needs of modern-day pressures.</p> <p><i>In your view, what needs to be included in the NUP for Liberia?</i></p> <p>Urban growth in Liberia is limited to Monrovia and Paynesville, yet more efforts need to be made in other small and medium towns. The policy, planning and regulation framework is outdated, and it needs to get ahead of the problems.</p> <p><i>Is there any progress made in changing the policy environment in Liberia?</i></p> <p>There is progress being made already in Liberia, such as the recognition of petty traders in Monrovia.</p>
<p>Remy Sietchiping - UN-Habitat</p>	<p><i>What is the role of UN-Habitat in the NUP process in Liberia?</i></p> <p>UN-Habitat has been supporting counties globally to develop and implement NUPs. However, Liberia’s case is unique and thus it needs a unique policy framework that will respond to the challenges and explore opportunities in urbanisation and transformation of human settlements. We shall share lessons learnt to ensure the policy is relevant and responsive to local needs.</p> <p><i>What are the next steps after the Forum?</i></p> <p>After the NUF, we will consolidate the momentum gained from the work of all the partner work in the country and put together a future we would want to see on urban transformation, while ensuring we leave no one behind, such as the youth, informal sector players, women and special interest groups. We shall seek to ensure they participate in informing how future cities will be more inclusive and productive.</p> <p><i>What drove UN-Habitat to start drafting a NUP for Liberia?</i></p> <p>UN-Habitat is the focal point for urbanisation and developing NUPs in various countries. In Liberia, we were involved at the request of the Government of Liberia, to offer support in the development of an urbanisation framework.</p> <p><i>How will the UN ensure the policy is implemented?</i></p> <p>As UN-Habitat, we will have demonstration projects that can be scaled to different places. We also expect every stakeholder to start implementing the policy and not wait for government. This is why the policy is for all and we need everyone to be involved in implementation. The media has a critical role to play, to disseminate information on the NUP to all Liberians.</p> <p><i>What is so unique about NUP that sets it apart from other policies?</i></p> <p>Urban policy is multisectoral and multidisciplinary, thus is all encompassing, and it finds relevance in addressing most issues affecting a country.</p> <p><i>What is your recommendation as we go forward?</i></p> <p>Stay engaged, to ensure every Liberian is engaged during the preparation and implementation phase of the policy</p>

<p>Hon. Jefferson Kojee – Mayor of Monrovia City Corporation</p>	<p>What is your take on the NUP?</p> <p>Looking at the global trends, cities are growing. Cities are drivers of economies around the world. This initiative is thus important for Liberia.</p> <p>Going forward, we will need a total profiling of all cities using various indices such as population and available services, challenges and potential for growth so that all implementation measures are informed. Such data is important to the growth of all cities.</p> <p><i>As the Chair of all mayors, what measures will you put in place to ensure development takes place in all the other cities?</i></p> <p>I would like all development partners to do more in other cities. We could decentralise the development efforts away from Montserrado. Liberians support each other.</p> <p><i>How can we ensure that the NUP goes beyond paper as many other policies in the past have?</i></p> <p>The policy development needs to be bottom-top and people led because people understand their issues. Implementation thus needs to address community issues and challenges. People need to address their issues. Participation and inclusivity are thus key.</p> <p><i>What do you think needs to be done to ensure sustainability of development interventions in Liberia?</i></p> <p>There needs to be a shift in the local people by ensuring ownership of programmes, getting engaged and empowering the locals to take up development programmes instead of relying on donor resources.</p>
<p>Ms. Kula Koufana - President, People's Foundation Africa</p>	<p><i>What are your views about the NUF?</i></p> <p>The Forum is an important step in Liberia, as it has brought stakeholders together to discuss issues affecting urban dwellers.</p> <p>The Forum can be more effective by improving participation and taking its sittings to other cities and towns in Liberia. Rural communities and young people need to be actively engaged in such forums.</p> <p>On implementation, there are many policies in Liberia that have not been implemented. There should be a way of harmonising all these policies to ensure coherence.</p> <p>Finally, Liberia needs to demarcate its cities based on population. This will have a proper system to provide services and facilities based on the need.</p>
<p>Nelson P. Kpeh – Assistant Secretary General, FEPTIWUL</p>	<p><i>What is your expectation of the NUP?</i></p> <p>Informal and petty traders need to be formally recognised in the policy as part of the informal sector</p>
<p>Hon. C. Oliver Varney - Township Commissioner, Johnsonville Township</p>	<p><i>What is your expectation of the NUP?</i></p> <p>I expect the deliberations of the Forum will be reflected in the policy and implemented</p>

Hon. Benetor W. Blamo – Mayor, Barclayville City Corporation	<p><i>What is your expectation of the NUP?</i></p> <p>I expect to see the NUP benefit the whole country, especially in equipping local governments create more jobs and develop our cities and counties. My city has challenges such as lack of a city plan and other basic facilities such as a town hall and council offices. I would also prefer measures to help in cleaning up my city</p>
Philip Q. N. Nyenah - Superintendent, River Gee County	<p><i>What is your expectation of the NUP?</i></p> <p>People have migrated into cities in local areas, placing a lot of strain on cities. There are needed measures to tackle challenges in urban and rural areas. We hope the policy will remedy the situation we have in rural counties.</p>
Hon Cecelia T. Hallie – Mayor, Foya City Corporation	<p><i>What is your expectation of the NUP?</i></p> <p>All cities in Liberia need to be improved and the local cities are upgraded . Foya city is facing various challenges such as difficulties in revenue collection and does not befit the status of being a city. It needs support to grow.</p>
Hon. Jackson Boakai – Mayor, Kolbal City Corporation	<p><i>What is your expectation of the NUP?</i></p> <p>I expect that participants will come up with ways of helping our cities to grow, and I expect our capacity will be built, so that we can learn of better city management strategies being applied elsewhere. Our city has budgetary constraints and no funding for development.</p>
Salome S. Tulay – Executive Director, Women and Children Initiative	<p><i>What is your view about the NUF?</i></p> <p>The Forum was important, especially for women and children. It gave a platform to advocate for rights of women, children and young girls. The policy needs to address issues such as child trafficking and protection of street children. I will ensure our voice is heard in the development of the policy.</p>
Ruth Coker Collins – President, Society of Women Engineers	<p><i>What is your view about the NUF?</i></p> <p>The NUF was eye-opening, and it gave representation to all sectors of the economy that are key to the development of the country.</p> <p><i>What are your views about the NUP?</i></p> <p>The policy is important, and I am happy we have been included in its development. Women's inclusion is a key priority. This is important as we shall be moving forward to putting all plans into action.</p>

More Forum Photos...

High Level Panel



Comments from participants



Participants in a Round table discussion group



Networking and Dialogue



Group Presentations



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