

Country Brief

SENEGAL

2023

A better quality of life for all in
an urbanizing world



A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL IN AN URBANIZING WORLD

We promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.



UN-HABITAT

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Saint-Louis, Senegal Credit: Abdoulaye Sarr, MBAYE

URBAN CONTEXT & CHALLENGES

Senegal, a prominent West African country, is currently at a turning point in its journey towards urban development. This country, both coastal and Sahelian, very densely populated in some places and almost deserted in others, is faced with a highly polarized population spread over its territory, making it more vulnerable economically, socially and to climatic hazards (Diop, 2021).

More than 49% of the population now lives in urban settlements (agglomerations, towns, or municipalities). According to projections by the National Agency for Statistics and Demography (ANSD), by 2035 more than 60% of the Senegalese population will be citizens of urban areas. However, the urbanization figures hide another problem: the imbalance of urbanization and the supremacy of the Dakar metropolitan region. The Dakar metropolitan area, the economic and administrative capital of the same name, has an urbanization rate of 98% for nearly 4 million inhabitants. The Dakar region, with a surface area of 550 km² (i.e. 0.3% of the national territory), concentrates more than 25% of the population of Senegal with a very high density of 4,147 inhabitants per km² compared to 11 inhabitants per km² for the Tambacounda region. It generates more than 55% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and 87% of national tax revenues and concentrates 80% of modern businesses and jobs.

Dakar is the only city in Senegal with a population of one million, followed by Touba with a population of about 800,000. Most of the other cities in Senegal have less than 300,000 inhabitants, showing a great disparity between the secondary cities and Dakar (World Bank, 2021).

The structure of the national economy as well as that of urbanization is concentrated in the coastal zone. Dakar attracts most of the investment. The economic and social situation of urban populations is better. However, the rise in insecurity and vulnerability to disasters, as well as the increase in environmental risks (pollution, overfishing, soil erosion, flooding, etc.) and health risks (pandemics) are more prevalent in the cities. The agglomeration of Dakar, particularly the departments of Pikine, Guédiawaye and Rufisque, has large areas of informal and precarious housing (slums). Urban sprawl is rapid, despite the notable progress of vertical densification (UN-Habitat, 2008).

In 1972, Senegal attempted a first experiment in decentralization, followed in 1996 by a transfer of competences that established the Act II of Decentralization. In 2013, the Act III extended and strengthened the competences transferred to local authorities and established full municipalization. However, the transfer of resources to local authorities is still weak. They do not yet have their own civil service (ANAT, 2020).

Since 2014, the Plan Sénégal Émergent (PSE), a new public policy reference framework, aims to achieve Senegal's emergence by 2035. The PSE promotes the territorialization of public policies through the implementation of investment programmes in sectors that promote economic growth and social inclusion in key areas. In Axis II of the PSE, the Government is committed to significantly improve the living conditions of the population, a more sustained fight against social inequalities, and the protection of resources to promote the emergence of viable territories (Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning, 2018).

Thus, today, the territory is still characterized by the same dysfunctions identified during the elaboration of the PNADT (ANAT, 2020), notably:

§ Major territorial imbalances between Dakar and other regions on the one hand, and between the western and eastern parts of the country on the other.

- Poor exploitation of the resources and potential of the territories.
- A low capacity for intervention by local authorities.
- The lack of integration of certain parts of the territory; and
- The occupation of high-risk areas.

The habitats and living environments are influenced by the degradation of natural resources and the environment. In cities as well as in the countryside, the development of spontaneous and precarious housing is observable. In urban areas, this type of housing represents approximately 30% to 40% of the occupied space (World Bank, 2021). These spaces are characterized by promiscuity, the inexistence or weakness of facilities and the non-existence of official property titles (ANAT, 2020).

In order to correct the dysfunctions observed in the territory, the State, as part of the implementation of Act III of Decentralization, decided to draw up the Plan National d'Aménagement et de Développement Territorial (PNADT) which replaces the PNAT in order to better integrate the territorial development dimension.

The general objective of the PNADT is to "promote the development of Senegal from its territories, through a good structuring of the space and a sustainable development of resources and potentialities" (ANAT, 2020).

The Government is committed to meeting the challenges of sustainable urbanization. Like other countries in the world, Senegal has experienced COVID-19 and its socio-economic impacts. Senegal's economic growth, projected at 6.8% for the year 2020, was then projected at less than 3% for the year 2021 (ANSD, 2021). Today, the COVID-19 crisis, the measures and responses taken, and the reaction of the population have had a dramatic social impact on health, access to housing and basic services and food security. In response, the government has created a Fund for Response and Solidarity against the effects of COVID-19, known as FORCE-COVID-19, with 1,000 billion CFA francs (around 1.5 billion euros), equivalent to 25% of the national budget for the year 2020. This fund finances an economic and social resilience programme aimed at strengthening the health system and supporting households and businesses (MULHP, 2021).



UN HABITAT IN SENEGAL

The United Nations Human Settlements programme (UN-Habitat) supports Senegal at several levels:

- At the local level, UN-Habitat carries out projects to improve slums, waste management and the construction/improvement of public spaces, in coordination with UN-Habitat's headquarters and programmes such as the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) and the Public Spaces Programme. In 2023, the country office has been focusing on the implementation of the CityRAP tool in Bargny as part of the Spatial Development Strategy for the Sahel (SDSS), as well as the conception of a Sustainable and Resilient Habitat Programme (PHDR) in the inter municipality of Saint-Louis.
- At the national level, UN-Habitat supports the Senegalese government in the development of its National Urbanization Policy and carries out the project Re-think Buildings Programme.
- At the sub-regional level, Senegal is one of the eight countries analyzed by the Spatial Development Strategy for the Sahel, that aims to reinforce the system of cities of the Sahel, in cooperation with UNDP. Senegal is also part of the initiative to set up a Centre of Excellence for Housing in the WAEMU region. To address the challenges of rapid urbanization in Senegal and to take advantage of its positive effects, UN-Habitat and the Government of Senegal, through the Ministry of Urban Planning, Housing and Public Hygiene (MULHP), are collaborating to develop a National Urbanization Policy (NUP). The objective of Senegal's NUP is to mobilize all actors around a shared vision of national urban development in Senegal (MULH & UN-Habitat, 2021).

UN Habitat in Senegal

In the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Senegal (UNDAF 2019-2023), there are 3 strategic axes of cooperation in which the UN-Habitat Country Programme proposal for Senegal 2021-2023 fits:

- Creating opportunities for inclusive and sustainable economic growth:

"3 Vulnerable communes strengthen their resilience to the induced effects of climate change and contribute to the protection of ecosystems."

- Improved access of the most vulnerable populations (men and women) to quality basic social services and social protection

"5. The most vulnerable populations have better access to integrated quality health, nutrition, water, hygiene, and sanitation services."

- Strengthening progress towards inclusive governance and the rule of law

"8. The most vulnerable groups fully exercise their roles of civic control in public policies to promote peace, security and effective governance."

UN Habitat Footprint in the Country

As in many countries around the world, urbanization presents both opportunities and challenges for Senegal. To fully benefit from the positive impacts of urbanization, the country is committed to promoting sustainable social, environmental, and economic development. However, this requires a comprehensive framework that goes beyond sectoral policies on territorial planning, urban development, and the environment.

UN-Habitat supports Senegal's efforts by engaging its technical expertise to assist the government in the design of the country's first National Urbanization Policy and providing capacity building expertise, aiming to serve as an effective and robust framework for sustainable urban development at the national and local levels. Our approach is tailored to the unique urban context of the country. We work alongside the government to define a long-term vision based on the guiding principles of inclusivity, social equity, and environmental sustainability and to promote long term capacity-building to its technical staff. The NUP will include a set of measures aimed at managing the concentration and growth of population as well as its increasing economic activity.

Working together, we can create a National Urbanization Policy that is inclusive, equitable, and sustainable, showcasing our commitment to improving the lives of people in Senegal.

Our Thematic Focus

UN Habitat contribute to the achievement of sustainable urban development in Senegal through the following areas:



Urban planning and management

We work with the government and other partners to develop and implement urban planning and management programmes. This includes promoting participatory planning processes and consultative workshops.



Capacity building and institutional strengthening

We have a key role to play in strengthening governance and institutional capacity and frameworks for service provision towards delivery of quality services to urban residents.



Civic participation

We promote active citizen engagement in urban development processes and decision-making by supporting community-led development initiatives, which empower local communities to take ownership of their own development.



Sustainable Buildings and Infrastructure

We promote sustainable and environmentally friendly building practices, such as the use of low-carbon building practices, energy and materials in the construction and operation of buildings, notably through collaborative technical assistance on energy-efficient building design.



Public space and urban design

The objective is to co-create safe, inclusive, and sustainable public spaces that can enhance the quality of life and promote social cohesion in urban areas.

Through these thematic areas, UN-Habitat in Senegal works to support the government in making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable by achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (mainly SDG11).

Cross-cutting issues: social inclusion, gender, youth, resilience.

UN Habitat Approach in the Country

1 At national level

UN-Habitat support the development of the National Urbanization Policy in Senegal, which includes several steps:

- An in-depth diagnosis based on existing studies and regional consultations.
- A long-term vision for the urbanization process in Senegal.
- Various programmes and strategies related to urbanization will be aligned under a single strategic framework.
- A more appropriate institutional and legal framework will be proposed.
- An investment plan will be formulated in alignment with the National Territorial Development Plan (PNADT).

2 At cities level

We focus on the Greater Dakar and selected secondary cities:

- The first objective is to strengthen the governance framework of the Greater Dakar at the metropolitan level. In addition, this aims to review and harmonize existing urban planning instruments, strategies, and programmes in the targeted cities, favoring participatory approaches such as the deployment of the City Resilience Action Planning Tool (CityRAP in Bargny).
- Our action at this level intends to improve municipal finance systems and support resource mobilization by formulating innovative and impactful projects at the local level.
- Moreover, we aim to enhance the capacity of local actors, improve public spaces, as well as to enhance urban waste management systems in the targeted cities.

UN Habitat Approach in the Country

3 At local level

UN Habitat's focus is on improving the living conditions and capacities of local communities, primarily those living in informal settlements in Senegal. Through participatory processes, physical interventions can be identified with the most vulnerable populations to enable them to actively participate in decision-making and implementation. These interventions may include:

- Addressing security and gender issues.
- Land management.
- Developing social housing.
- Providing essential services such as water, sanitation, and electricity.
- Social infrastructure such as schools and health centers.
- Improving infrastructure such as roads.
- Promoting local development activities such as job creation, vocational training, and small businesses.
- Enhancing public spaces.
- Strengthening resilience to climate risks.



About Our Project



Previous UN-Habitat projects and activities in Senegal

Programme	Funding	Partners	Activities carried out
Support for the formulation of Local Agenda 21 (2006-2009)	Belgian Cooperation - UN Habitat (350k USD)	Government, AMS, IAGU, Municipalities of Louga, Saint Louis, Matam, Guédiawaye, Tivaouane	Development of an environmental profile of the city; Organisation of local consultations; Setting up of working groups; Development of an action plan
Greater Dakar Development Strategy (2008-2010)	Cities Alliance, UNDP, Municipalities of the region (USD 500k)	Government, Municipalities of the region of Dakar, CAR-CADAK Agreement, IAGU, ENDA, UNDP	In-depth diagnosis of the agglomeration; Additional studies on the local economy and governance; Preparation of the territorial development plan for the city of Dakar
Water for African Cities Programme (2007-2011)	AfDB, Canada, etc. (Multi-Donor Trust Fund) (USD 1M)	Municipalities of Ngor and Malika, SDE, SONEES, PEPAM, Government, ENDA Eau Populaire	Extension of access to sanitation for low-income households; Consolidation of Water Demand Management measures; Water Management Education; Lake Guiers water quality monitoring programme.

About Our Project



Previous UN-Habitat projects and activities in Senegal

Programme	Funding	Partners	Activities carried out
Participatory Budget Programme (2007-2010)	Spanish cooperation (USD 250k)	Government, AMS, Municipalities of Mékhé, Rufisque-Est, Kaolack, ENDA	Planning of the participatory budgeting process; Implementation of the process
Urban Sector Profile - Slum Upgrading Programme (2005-present)	European Union (500k USD)	ACP Secretariat, Government, AMS, IAGU, Dakar (Arafat and Grand-Médine), Kaolack, Kanel	In-depth and participatory urban diagnosis/profile, elaboration of priority project sheets, implementation of demonstrative projects to improve living conditions in the slums, involvement of the Private Sector.
Formation of joint ventures between Senegalese emigrants and Italian entrepreneurs	European Union, Italian Cooperation		Evaluation of good practices of joint ventures; Implementation of pilot experiences; Networking of emigrants and businessmen in host countries; Large-scale application

About Our Project



Previous UN-Habitat projects and activities in Senegal

Programme	Funding	Partners	Activities carried out
Affordable housing construction and risk reduction in Saint Louis (2011-2013)	Japan (USD 2M)	Government, Municipality of Saint-Louis, NGOs	Construction of affordable housing in a non-flood-prone area of Saint-Louis to resettle vulnerable populations of Guet Ndaret from other parts of the city
Global Cities Resilience Programme (2017-2020)	EU (400k USD)	Municipalities of Dakar, Government	The City Resilience Profiling Tool (CRPT) is based on a people-centred approach and encompasses all aspects of urban resilience in order to obtain a comprehensive diagnosis and derive a strategic and integrated action plan.


About Our Project



Current and upcoming UN-Habitat projects and activities in Senegal


Programme	Funding	Partners
National Urbanisation Policy (2020 - ...)	165,000 USD UN-Habitat through Booyoung funds	MULHP, Municipal Development Agency, World Bank
Sahel Resilience Project: Implementation of the CityRAP tool in Bargny and Spatial Development Strategy for the Sahel (2021 - ...)	UNDP (537,140 USD) + UN-Habitat co-funding (102,000 USD)	UNDP
Young Gamechangers Initiative (Public spaces in Bargny) (2023 – 2026)	Fondation Botnar (582,515 USD)	National and local authorities, NGOs (Young gamechangers), Eva Studios, Block by Block Foundation, WHO
Re-think Buildings Programme (2023 – 2024)	German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) (510k USD)	UNOPS, UNEP
Harnessing urbanization in French-speaking LDCs (2023 – 2025)	UNDA (500,000 USD)	UNECA, UNECLAC, UN country teams in Senegal, Burkina Faso and Haiti, Academic institutions
Saint-Louis Sustainable and Resilient Habitat Programme (PHDR) (2023 – 2027)	At the concept note stage	MULHP, Local communities, Inter-municipalities ACT-SL, Municipalities of Fass, Ngom, Gandon, Mpal, Ndiébène and Saint-Louis, ANSD, ONAS, SONES
Cross-border project – Project for the integration of migrants and emigrants through land tenure (Casamance, Guinea Bissau, TheGambia)	At the concept note stage	UNHCR, IOM

Our Achievements



Throughout the years, UN-Habitat quietly established a foothold in Senegal, diligently working towards challenging goals and fostering meaningful partnerships that have left an indelible mark on local communities. In a momentous stride towards expanding our global reach, we proudly strengthened our effective presence in the country in 2022, setting the stage for meaningful collaborations and transformative initiatives and embracing the opportunity to make a lasting impact. Step into a realm of notable achievements:

Collaborative contribution to the Senegal Emerging Programme (Plan Sénégal Émergent), adopted in 2014. This was the benchmark for social and economic development aimed at the emergence of Senegal by 2035. Achieving this objective entailed the completion of major investment projects in promising sectors to enable economic growth and social inclusion. For instance, the Senegal Zero Slums Programme with a budget of 25.7 billion FCFA (USD 52 million) to be completed by 2035, is a flagship programme aiming to achieve resilient, sustainable, and prosperous cities.




Elaboration of a roadmap to push for the advancement of the National Urban Policy, part of the implementation of the New Programme for Cities in some African countries. It talks about “leaving no one stranded and no space behind”. The policy project should contribute to the strengthening of urban-rural linkages (URL) for a better synergy between the two areas, by integrating the development and implementation of relevant political, territorial, and spatial frameworks, as a tool to locate the New Urban Agenda.

United endeavor with the Government that paved the way for the establishment of the Urban Sector Profile, the Housing for the Victims of Flood and the visionary Social Shelter Office, serving as a beacon of hope for countless individuals.


Efforts leading to a transformative Greater Dakar Development Strategy and a Participatory Budgeting, empowering communities to shape their urban destiny with a collective voice.

Our Achievements



Capacity development for building resilience in the coastal city of Bargny and that orchestrated a remarkable convergence of diverse stakeholders, forming dozens of participants, hailing from the very heart of the city. This transformative endeavor was meticulously designed to equip participants with the essential tools and knowledge to fortify their urban landscape against the tumultuous waves of climatic, social, and economic shocks. Through immersive training and collaborative dialogue, a united front emerged, poised to navigate the uncharted waters of resilience, and build a thriving future.

In our unyielding commitment, we have embarked on a groundbreaking initiative to **strengthen relations** with grassroots organizations to conduct comprehensive baseline studies that lay the foundation for strategic programming. These invaluable studies serve as a compass, guiding us towards tailored interventions that will uplift the lives of those most in need. With a resolute focus on the vibrant spirit of youth, we strive to nurture their potential, empowering them to become catalysts of change within their communities.



Together, UN-Habitat and the Government of Senegal have ushered in a new era of transformation, where every step taken holds the promise of a brighter, more inclusive, and resilient tomorrow.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Launch of the National Urbanization Policy after its finalization
- National workshop gathering main stakeholders of the building and construction sector, to elaborate a roadmap for the promotion of sustainable materials and practices in this sector
- Installation of UN-Habitat's Sub-regional office for West Africa in Dakar
- Finalisation of Bargny's City Resilience Framework for Actions (RFA)



DONOR AND PARTNERS



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BOTNAR

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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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