

Country Brief

MALI

2023

A better quality of life for all in
an urbanizing world



UN-HABITAT

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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URBAN CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

The Republic of Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa—one of the largest. The Sahara Desert covers two-thirds of its northeastern region, which has a population of just 778 000, translating to less than one inhabitant per square kilometer in an area of 822 000 square kilometers. The largest city in Mali is Bamako—the capital—with a population of 2.9 million people. This city is also the economic, administrative, and cultural center of Mali, experiencing rapid urbanization over the past few decades. The rural exodus and urban sprawl of the surrounding rural towns have contributed to the city's growth, but also created significant urban challenges. One of the major challenges facing Bamako is inadequate urban infrastructure, particularly in transportation, sanitation, and water supply. The city's access to clean and safe water is limited, and its sanitation system is inadequate, leading to poor hygiene and environmental health conditions. Access to improved sanitation in urban areas was below the Sub-Saharan African average in 2012, with only 37.5% of the urban population having access.

Informal settlements and slums have also emerged in many parts of the city, which often lack basic services such as electricity and are vulnerable to natural disasters caused by climate change. Urban poverty is also a significant problem in Bamako, with a large proportion of residents living below the poverty line. This issue has resulted in social and economic inequality, as well as a lack of access to basic amenities. The second-largest city in Mali is Sikasso, which has a population of 280 000 inhabitants, making it ten times smaller than Bamako.

Mali is grappling with a host of issues, including the lack of adequate registration and demarcation of spaces delineated in the Urban Development Master Plan (SDU). In addition, territorial authorities and customary chiefs often ignore regulations, and the absence of legislation to enforce the collection of land revenues such as ordinary concessions and domain royalties exacerbates the problem. Moreover, land speculation and land grabbing present major hurdles to the country's urban development.

Mali's urban growth has been driven by one of the highest growth rates in Africa, further fueled by the country's situation since 2012. The precarious and insecure conditions have been exacerbated by various factors at regional, transborder, national, and local levels, involving multiple actors, including state and non-state actors, and non-state armed groups. As a result, the humanitarian situation in Mali is dominated by a growing number of population movements that exacerbate the humanitarian needs of people seeking access to basic social services. As of 2022, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has continued to rise, with 422 620 individuals, of which 54% are women and 46% are men, representing an increase of 72 510 people compared to the previous year. More than half of the displaced persons, representing 63% of the total, are children aged 0-17. This trend is due to the persistent violence in the regions of Ménaka, Gao, Tombouctou, Ségou, and Mopti.

Given that most internally displaced persons seek refuge in urban areas, UN-Habitat's vast experience in developing strategies and implementing practical measures in urban areas of conflict and post-conflict countries is particularly relevant. The notable and alarming trend of urban population growth demands immediate attention through the establishment of a new urban strategy to manage and regulate human settlements. UN-Habitat stands ready to support the Government of Mali in addressing these urbanization challenges and overseeing the implementation of the National Urban/Cities Policy.

FACT SHEET



Area of
1, 240, 192 sq km



Population of 21, 904, 983
in 2021



GDP of 19.14 billion USD
in 2021



Urban population
of 45% in 2021



4.9% annual urbanization rate
in 2021



Urban Population with
access to improved
sanitation
37.5%



Internally Displaced Persons
422,620



Women Displaced
54%

Children Displaced
63%





CityRAP initiative in Nioro, Mali

UN HABITAT IN MALI

UN-Habitat and the Republic of Mali work for a better urban future in the country. We provided Mali with technical assistance to formulate and implement the following projects:

- National housing strategy in 1995; the strategy was evaluated in 2005.
- Cities without slum programme (2008-2012).
- Safer cities project (2005-2008).
- Leaving no one and no space behind: Implementing the New Urban Agenda (2020).

At the request of the Malian government, UN-Habitat is assisting in the development of a new National Urban Policy that emphasizes housing, due to the previous policy's lack of alignment with the New Urban Agenda and Agenda 2030 established in 2012. The project involves multiple phases of policy support at the national and subnational levels, including local communities and efforts to enhance territorial approaches and linkages between urban and rural areas. Specifically, the focus is on revising the 2012 NUP and creating urban or sub-national policies in post-conflict areas.

UN HABITAT IN MALI

As part of the expansion of the regional presence UN Habitat Country office was recently established in 2022 based in Bamako, we focus on building partnerships and fostering cooperation to establish a collective resource mobilization strategy aimed at supporting sustainable housing, land management, social housing construction, and reducing insecurity through environmental design. Our work also involves promoting efficient land information management and urban governance, and most importantly, creating socially and environmentally sustainable cities, towns, and communities across various cities in Mali. Our goal at UN-Habitat is to provide suitable housing and improved living standards for all.

On the Spatial Development Framework component of the Sahel Resilience Project, we finalized the process of data collection at country level for the elaboration of the Spatial Development Strategy for the Sahel (SDSS) during the first Quarter of 2023 in partnership with UNDP. The other component of the project is the implementation of the City Resilience Action Planning (CityRAP) tool which main objective is to enable local government in the city of Nioro to understand the risks and plan practices to progressively accelerate urban resilience.

Through the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme, key priorities have been identified, including the need to develop and implement strategies that proactively integrate informal settlements into the urban landscape. This can be achieved by utilizing both new and existing regulations, planning methodologies, and awareness campaigns. The PSUP has provided an opportunity for stakeholders to come together and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different aspects of urban quality of life in cities throughout Mali.



Our Thematic Focus

We contribute to the achievement of sustainable urban development in Mali 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.



Access to basic services

We support the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation, and energy in urban areas in Mali, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized populations.



Housing and slum upgrading

UN-Habitat works to improve access to adequate housing for all, including the urban poor and vulnerable populations in slums and informal settlements.



Capacity building, institutional strengthening and Legislation

We provide technical assistance and capacity building support to national and local institutions to strengthen their capacity to plan, manage and govern urban development.



Community participation and social cohesion

UN-Habitat promotes community participation and social cohesion in urban areas in Mali, fostering partnerships between local communities and local government to address urban challenges.

About Our Projects



PARTICIPATORY SLUM UPGRADING PROGRAMME - PHASE III (PPAB III)

Project Duration: 25 months

Project Value: 256 020 USD

Location: Bamako, Bandiagara, Kayes, Sénou

Partners: Ministry of Urban Development, Housing, Land, Territorial Administration and Population | The ACP Group | NGO GRAD

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is a global initiative aimed at improving the living conditions of people residing in slums and informal settlements in urban areas. Through a participatory approach, the program actively involves slum dwellers, local authorities, and other stakeholders in planning, implementing, and monitoring slum upgrading activities. This approach ensures that the upgrading activities are in line with the needs and aspirations of the slum dwellers and are carried out in a socially, culturally, and environmentally appropriate manner. The PSUP country team has identified various priorities, including the development and execution of strategies that proactively integrate squatter settlements into the urban fabric by utilizing both new and existing regulations, planning methodologies, and sensitization campaigns.



STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND ADAPTATION FOR RESILIENCE IN THE SAHEL REGION: FOSTERING RISK-INFORMED SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SAHEL RESILIENCE PROJECT)

Donor: UNDP and SIDA

Project Duration: 5 months

Project Value: 265 000 USD

Location: The Sahel region

Partners: Ministry of Urban Development, Housing, Land, Territorial Administration and Population

This goal of this regional project is to facilitate sustainable development in the Western Sahel and Lake Chad Basin countries by implementing risk-informed solutions. It aims to achieve this by developing secure, resilient, and sustainable human settlements throughout the Sahel region, using a regional approach that strengthens community resilience across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus. The project's focus is on enhancing the regulatory, political, and budgetary frameworks for disaster risk governance at both the regional and national levels. This effort will help promote recovery processes considering the underlying risks of disaster and climate change, as well as urban risk management.

About Our Projects



BAMAKO URBAN RESILIENCE PROJECT (PRUBA)

Donor: The World Bank Group

Project Duration: 5 months

Project Value: 394 505.61 USD

Location: Bamako

Partners: Ministry of Urban Development, Housing, Land, Territorial Administration and Population

This project aims to improve access to clean water, sanitation, waste management services, increase flood resilience in vulnerable zones, and decentralize urban services. The project will enhance administrative, technical, and financial capacities of local authorities, construct, and upgrade infrastructure, and promote sustainable development and community engagement in decision-making. The main goal is to improve the living conditions and overall well-being of residents in targeted areas

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR HOUSING

Donor: The World Bank Group

Project Duration: 5 months

Project Value: 394 505.61 USD

Location: Bamako

Partners: Ministry of Urban Development, Housing, Land, Territorial Administration and Population

This initiative is to establish a sub-regional Center of Excellence serving as an innovative and sustainable knowledge hub that provides data, knowledge, expertise, and long-term capacity building and training services to develop skills of practitioners on sustainable urban development in the eight (8) countries of WAEMU. The project will establish an analytical framework for the housing sector that consolidates the efforts made by each WAEMU country and implement an innovative and sustainable program to train and enhance the skills of sector actors. This includes creating analytical indicators for housing, land, and habitat, and producing a national housing report for Côte d'Ivoire.

Upcoming Events

In the Sahelian belt on the border with Mauritania, UN-Habitat is working to enhance the resilience of the vulnerable city of Nioro. This secondary city was chosen to benefit from our City Resilience Action Planning (CityRAP) tool. All along its implementation, the CityRAP process has allowed Nioro to prioritize actions for its urban resilience. We are now in the thrilling second phase, we look forward to the third phase of this process, and we are eager to develop the Resilience Framework for Action. From a more resilient Nioro, only two steps away:

- Phase 3 to be held in June 2023
- Phase 4 to begin in July-August 2023



DONOR AND PARTNERS



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UN-Habitat in Mali is supporting technical and operational capacities of the government authorities, at all level (from national to local) and in many strategic areas, including offering Durable solutions to the Internally displaced persons including youth and women and climate resilience to the urban population.

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UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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