

# NATIONAL URBAN POLICY: A GUIDING FRAMEWORK



**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

## **NATIONAL URBAN POLICY:**

A Guiding Framework

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# **NATIONAL URBAN POLICY: A GUIDING FRAMEWORK**



# Foreword



There is a growing consensus in the international community about the transformative power of urbanization. The new Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development consolidates our vision of urbanization as a tool and an engine, for development, as reflected in Goal 11, as well as other goals. If well planned and designed, urbanization is a source of wealth, social prosperity and environmental sustainability. Urbanization brings changes in the dynamics of the spatial distribution of people and the distribution and use of resources and of land. With rapid urbanization come both challenges and opportunities. Governments have new opportunities to chart the future of urban patterns and develop and implement national urban policies as one of the means to implement progressive urbanization that produces wealth. Urban actors and stakeholders play an important role in the betterment of social services, growth of employment options and the provision of better basic services. This approach contrasts with urban challenges such as unemployment, growth of slums, spread of disease and lack of basic services. Many of these challenges have emerged due to relatively uncontrolled urbanization, where urban planning and policy have failed to accommodate rapid rates of demographic growth.

Good urbanization does not happen by chance. Good urbanization occurs through choice. The potential opportunities and gains from urbanization are well understood. There is a need for government, policy makers and other stakeholders to acknowledge that urbanization will not necessarily directly correlate with

productivity and prosperity in cities. Rather, it is necessary through urban policy to actively facilitate the growth of cities that will incubate and grow the conditions that are required for productive and prosperous urban growth. A National Urban Policy (NUP) is an essential tool through which government can facilitate positive urbanization patterns to support productivity, competitiveness and prosperity in cities. A NUP should be able to create the conditions for good urbanization through the appropriate legal framework, municipal financing and planning and design which articulate horizontal and vertical coordination.

This Guiding Framework is particularly timely. The establishment of SDG 11: “to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” and the recognition of NUP as one of ten Policy Units for Habitat III have both confirmed the importance of NUP in the development of the New Urban Agenda. I am confident, therefore, that this Framework will act not only as an essential guide for policy makers, but will also be an important contribution by UN-Habitat towards the formulation and implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Joan Clos'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

**Dr. Joan Clos**  
Executive Director, UN-Habitat

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# Executive Summary

With the rapid levels of urbanization currently being seen globally, the growth of cities – along with climate change – has become one of the most defining features of the twenty-first century. With the growth of human settlements come both opportunities and challenges. Opportunities such as the betterment of social services, employment options, the provision of better housing options, local economic development and country-wide economic competitiveness are contrasted by urban challenges such as unemployment, the growth of slums, spread of disease and lack of basic services.

Many of these challenges have emerged due to relatively uncontrolled urbanization, where urban planning and policy have failed to accommodate rapid rates of growth. It is

for this reason that twenty-first century cities demand twenty-first century urban policies, or, a new generation of urban policy. This new generation of urban policy reaches beyond the traditional boundaries of the city and fosters stronger horizontal and vertical linkages, and creative partnerships in order to tackle complex urban problems in a coordinated way.

According to UN-Habitat, a National Urban Policy (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 for the long term (UN-Habitat, 2014).*



Street in Kigali, Rwanda © Flickr/Adam Cohn

A NUP is an essential tool for national government, which, when developed in consultation with other stakeholders, can provide an opportunity to control urbanization and capitalize on its opportunities of urbanization. By doing so, a NUP can help to promote productive, prosperous and environmentally sustainable cities. The value of a NUP is not only in the product, but is also in the process. The development of a NUP can promote good practices, such as stakeholder consultation, capacity development and evaluation of country policy processes. Integrating these lessons into future policy practice can promote systems change and institutional learning.

This Guiding Framework is designed to outline key elements and instruments of

the policy process through all the five NUP phases: feasibility, diagnosis, formulation, implementation and monitoring, and evaluation. Each phase is the subject of one part of the Framework. For each phase, the Framework will recommend perspectives and approaches that can be productive in the development of NUP. In addition, the Framework will consider the inclusion of the three NUP pillars: participation, capacity development, acupuncture projects and iterative policy design. While it is understood that all policy processes are unique and context-specific, this document will provide a guiding framework, based on research and practical experiences, in order to provide guidance on proceeding through the NUP process.



View of Honiara, Solomon Islands © Flickr/Jenny Scott



# Introduction

Cities in the twenty-first century are places of complexity and even of contradiction. On the one hand, cities are centres of globalization and its most dynamic manifestations. The concentration of production and services associated with globalized trade has led them to exemplify the possibility of social betterment for urban residents and rural migrants. Urbanization has the potential to agglomerate social services, enhance employment opportunities, and to provide better housing options for citizens, amongst other positive influences. On the other hand, bound up with these opportunities come the social stresses and dislocations that have emerged in numerous urban areas from the rapid and, in some cases, relatively uncoordinated urbanization of the last century. In twenty-first century cities, therefore, both opportunities and challenges co-exist in social, environmental and economic arenas.

Indeed, rapid urbanization has not only been a crucial social process of the past century, but it also promises – along with climate change – promises to be a globally defining characteristic in decades to come. In 2014, 54 per cent of the world's population could be found in urban areas, and it is projected that by 2050, 66 per cent of the world's population will be

urban. There are substantial variations in the level of urbanization across continents; in 2014, in North America, 82 per cent of people lived in urban areas, compared with Asia and Africa with 40 per cent and per cent respectively. Those areas that currently have the lowest level of urbanization (Asia and Africa) are also the continents that are urbanizing the most rapidly (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014).

Considering that urbanization has been and is, such a powerful process, and the majority of human beings are now urban people, there is a pressing need throughout the world for strong and coordinated policy action. This is necessary to control and direct the process of urbanization for the benefit of all and must encompass entire geographical areas. The new generation of urban policy now requires an approach that reaches beyond the limited approach to spatial planning that has traditionally been considered as adequate in defining “urban” policy areas. Complex social problems that manifest in urban areas require a broader approach to urban policy and a higher level of vertical and horizontal coordination, as well as creative partnerships outside of the public sector. For coordination to work, common understanding of the problems,

opportunities and sharing of goals, is necessary. Fox (2014), comments that:

*There is little doubt that rapid urban population growth in developing regions... places enormous strain on government resources and capacities. However, more could surely be done to improve the lives of the burgeoning urban populations in developing regions, but only where the interests and ideas of politicians and planners support a proactive urban development agenda (192).*

Through public policy, and particularly urban policy, governments, in collaboration with other actors, have the opportunity to define shared goals, set a national urban development agenda, and act in the necessary proactive and coordinated way in order both to take advantage of the opportunities presented by urbanization and to take steps to limit the challenges that urbanization also creates. In the past decade, with the growth of globalization, the role of national governments has changed, therefore calling for urban policies that look beyond the traditional national boundaries. In 1994, R.A.W. Rhodes identified a "hollowing out of the state," implying that the trend of privatization of services, decentralization, the growing power of supranational agencies, and the forces of global trade have all eroded the power of the state. While these processes have undoubtedly been at work, one clear outcome has been the need for the state to carve out and clearly define its role. This is especially true in key policy areas that have demonstrably profound implications for the future. Urban

policy is an area where governments can coordinate actors and interventions for the benefit of all. That is, governments can take a role that is far-sighted and proactive, asserting their power to guide and direct urbanization in their jurisdictions through the design and implementation of urban policy. The impacts of well-designed and adequately implemented policies can be felt beyond boundaries, hence harnessing urbanization dividends. As Gibson and Gurmu (2012) observed: "a key challenge for the next century is managing the scale and pace of urbanization."

In view of this crucial ongoing global challenge and the pressing demand from countries in supporting urban policy, UN-Habitat has committed itself not only to a comprehensive, evidence-based, transnational study of NUPs, but also to coordinating the insights that arise from initiatives in diverse contexts. UN-Habitat thus provides a distilled form of guidance for those governments considering developing or modifying their own urban policies. This Framework is designed to outline key elements and instruments of the policy process, and to recommend perspectives and approaches that can be productive in the development of NUPs. The Framework recognizes that policy development is often a fluid and non-linear process, and that the impact of specific policy initiatives must be effectively monitored, modified and even reversed. The Framework also emphasizes the participatory nature of any successful policy, a characteristic that is especially important in an urban context where

stakeholders and communities must necessarily participate in policy formulation if it is to be successful. The importance of participation, capacity development and continuous implementation and demonstration throughout the policy process is emphasized. While the Framework draws heavily on theories, practices, evidences and a range of experiences, it is flexible enough to guide and be adapted to various contexts.

## Defining NUP

A NUP is an important tool for governments that seek to manage and direct rapid urbanization, and to tap into urbanization's positive effects while accommodating its inevitable stresses. According to UN-Habitat, 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 for the long term (UN-Habitat, 2014).*

This guiding Framework is intended to delineate the implications of this a "government-led process." While the formulation of a NUP is necessarily based on a firm conceptualization of the policy process, it is also necessary to understand that no policy process will be the same as others. Accordingly, this Framework is not prescriptive but aims to elucidate the key characteristics of policy formation in this area, and to raise important considerations

and lessons learned from a variety of countries. To do this, the Framework highlights the objective and thematic areas of the new generation of NUPs. The key thematic areas of a new generation NUP – urban legislation, urban economy, and urban planning and design – are described in Part One. In addition to these three thematic areas, important objectives of a new generation NUP include:

- (a) The joint identification of urban development priorities towards socially and economically equitable and environmentally friendly urban and territorial development;
- (b) The provision of guidance on the future development of the national urban system and its spatial configuration, concretized through instruments such as national and regional spatial plans for territorial development;
- (c) The enhancement of coordination and guidance of actions by national actors, as well as all levels of government in all sectors;
- (d) The increased and more coordinated private and public investments in urban development and consequent improvement in the following key areas: the productivity of cities, inclusiveness and environmental conditions, subnational and local governments, financial flows, urban planning regulations, urban mobility, urban energy requirements and job creation.

In accomplishing these objectives, a NUP process should provide a plan for the **identification of problems and/or opportunities**, the **establishment of goals**, the **delegation of roles**, and the **ability to monitor and evaluate the success of the policy**.

## NUP and UN-Habitat

The work of UN-Habitat on NUPs is rooted in the Governing Council resolution HSP/GC/24/L.6 which “requests the Executive Director, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to develop a general guiding framework for the development, where appropriate, of NUPs, based on international good experiences, to further support member states when developing and improving their urban policies.”

UN-Habitat is currently working to support a number of countries with the development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of NUP. UN-Habitat contributes to the NUP process at the country level through country assessments, advice on setting up national processes, and stakeholder participation, documentation of good practices to support national processes, support for the policy formulation process, political economy assessment, analysis of urban planning policies and instruments, facilitation of local and national dialogue on reforms (sometimes in the form of National Urban Forums), policy process evaluation, design of the policy monitoring

framework, and capacity development in policy processes, particularly urban policy, across the full range of actors.

UN-Habitat has undertaken a range of projects related to NUPs, involving knowledge generation and management (including research), tool development, partnership and advocacy, capacity development, technical assistance and advisory services. In consultation with partners, UN-Habitat continues to develop tools to aid countries with undertaking the process of developing a NUP, and particularly with the feasibility, diagnostic, formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation stages of the process.



## The Sustainable Development Goals, Habitat III and NUP

Habitat III is the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development to take place in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016. This Habitat Forum, Habitat III, has particular significance as it will be the first United Nations conference following the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and since the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The most pertinent goal in this context is the establishment of SDG 11: “to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. For any NUP, this goal is particularly relevant. As a tool for governments, NUPs can be a direct instrument towards the achievement of SDG 11.

The preparation for Habitat III and the conference will include defining a New Urban Agenda through research and consultation with experts and stakeholders. The New Urban Agenda and Habitat III will aim to identify “drivers of change” or “development enablers”. These development enablers are tools that harness or capitalize on the complex forces of urbanization and transform them in a way that will result in productive and prosperous urban growth. NUPs have been identified as one of these drivers of change, or development enablers, because of their ability to provide structure and organization to the process of urbanization. A NUP is a valuable tool to capitalize on the opportunities of urbanization. The

recognition of a NUP as an development enabler is emphasized by its selection as one of 10 Habitat III Policy Units. The Policy Unit on NUP will bring together experts in the field to consider research and practical experience. This will be formulated into policy recommendations to contribute to the New Urban Agenda.

## Using the Guiding Framework

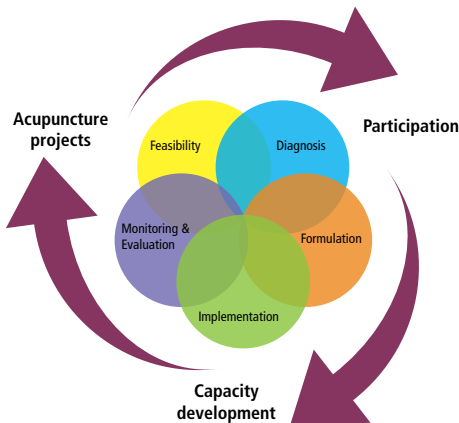
This Guiding Framework is based both on research and on lessons drawn from those countries that have undertaken an urban policy at the national level. The policy transfer or policy learning literature suggests that adaptation of policies from one country to another does not have to be based on exact policy duplication, but rather on the transfer of themes and processes. This Framework will therefore highlight themes at each stage of the process that can be used as core lessons learned by examining of the varying national initiatives and approaches. As will be evident throughout, value is added by progressing through each policy development stage thoughtfully and thoroughly. While the process to develop a NUP will be different in each context, the Framework will allow for the identification of key considerations for each phase. Possible tools to be used in each phase are also presented. The Framework should be used in conjunction with the NUP toolkits. While the Framework will broadly outline the phases and the key considerations for each phase, the toolkits will suggest and explain tools that can aid in undertaking each phase successfully.



Rail transport, Chile © Flickr/Rafael de Fronet

Each NUP phase is the subject of one part of the Framework. Figure 1 shows the relationship between the NUP phases, and it highlights the roles of the three NUP pillars.

**Figure 1: The NUP Process**



The NUP phases are not presented in a linear fashion. Instead, Figure 1 emphasizes the overlapping nature of all the phases. In order to ensure a reflective and iterative policy process, it is possible to move fluidly between the phases. For example, it is important to consider the implication of decisions in the formulation phase on tasks in the Monitoring and Evaluation Phases. It is important never to consider a phase finished or completed. Rather, a global view of the NUP process should be ensured as much as possible, and that all phases, pillars and principles are considered throughout.

# Part One: Understanding NUP

## The New Generation of NUP and the Three-Pronged Approach

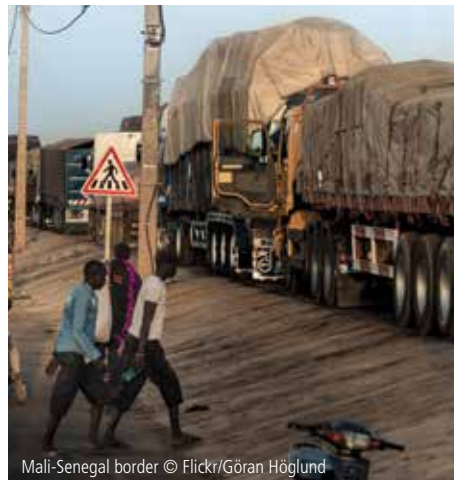
There are three key thematic areas within the New Generation of NUP: urban legislation, urban economy, and urban planning and design. Each of these thematic areas can be considered “operational enablers.” These operational enablers are themes or factors that, if considered through the urbanization process, will play key roles in promoting more sustainable, prosperous and productive urbanization. These three thematic areas together are considered by UN-Habitat to be the “three-pronged approach.” Due to the essential role that each of these components, they form the backbone of any New Generation NUP. By considering these three components, a NUP can enable the development of sound urban legislative, urban economic, and urban planning and design frameworks. A NUP should be able to create the conditions for urban policy and planning to deliver through offering a horizontal and vertical coordinating tool.

***NUP**, therefore, consists of reviewing and facilitating from the national level in order to allow policy and planning to succeed at the regional and local levels.*

### Urban Legislation

Urban legislation is the complex network

of laws and practices that operate as the legal and legislative framework. Policy, including NUP, depends on law as its primary means for implementation. The lack of a clear legislative framework, therefore, can act as one of the most major impediments to the effective design and implementation of policy. What must be avoided is the formulation of policy without consideration for whether there is the legislative framework to implement these policies on the ground. Therefore, it is also necessary to consider whether the necessary legal instruments to implement a policy are available and whether there is the capacity to enforce and regulate these legal instruments.



## Increasing the Accessibility of Urban Legislation: UrbanLex

UrbanLex is a tool developed by the Urban Legislation Unit of UN-Habitat that has compiled urban laws into a global database. The database is complemented by research tools which allow the user to search laws by theme, region, country or keyword. Laws are provided both in their original language and with English summary translations.

It is an effective tool that has increased the accessibility of urban law, giving policy makers, civil society, researchers, etc. the ability to access global examples of urban legislation. According to UN-Habitat, the goals of UrbanLex are to:

- Support the capacity of national, sub-national authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners in urban legislation;
- Develop new knowledge, document existing good practices, identify, pilot and adapt tools and implement operational projects in relevant thematic areas;
- Empower citizens, giving them access to legislative materials.

The UrbanLex database can be accessed at <http://urbanlex.unhabitat.org>.

## Urban Economy

In today's global economy, cities are often found to be the drivers of a country's gross domestic product and economic growth. It is important, therefore, that local urban economic opportunities are able to keep pace with rapid urbanization and the resulting influx of people into cities. The lack of healthy local economic development and employment opportunities can lead to urban poverty and under-employment of groups such as youth and women. Moreover, cities must have secure municipal income and developed municipal finance instruments that will enable the collection and enforcement of taxes and investment in infrastructure.

## Urban Planning and Design

The importance of good urban planning and design is often underestimated, as is its ability to promote an urban look and feel, public spaces and public infrastructure, which all work towards improving urban quality of life. One of the key issues that hinders good urban planning is a mismatch between local needs and national urban planning frameworks. Without urban planning frameworks and plans, urban growth is relatively uncontrolled. This often results in chaotic urban growth, urban sprawl, a lack of needed basic services and urban infrastructure and, in some parts of the world, slums. This rapid, uncontrolled growth puts pressure on surrounding land and natural resources, increasing the negative environmental impact.



## The Key Pillars of NUP: Participation, Capacity Development and Acupuncture Projects

The UN-Habitat NUP process is based on three key pillars: **participation, capacity development** and **acupuncture projects**. The use and implementation of these pillars does not occur at one particular stage in the policy process, but must be considered throughout. Consideration for participation, capacity development, and acupuncture projects should occur at all stages of developing a NUP, and will contribute to the overall sustainability and effectiveness of the policy. Each of the key pillars is considered below.

### 1. *Participation: What is Participatory and what is Inclusive?*

Integrating public participation into the NUP process is one of the key pillars of UN-Habitat’s approach to NUP development. Achieving a true participatory approach to policy-making means integrating participatory processes throughout the formation of policy. As shown in the table below, there are varying degrees to which the public can be engaged in the participation process. The ways in which the public is engaged in the NUP process will change the degree to which their input is ultimately reflected in the policy.

Publicity	Public Education	Public Input	Public Interaction	Public Partnership
Dissemination of general information regarding the NUP process	Specific targeting of groups within the public in order to share information on a NUP Information sharing and gathering is one way – information is presented to the public but input is not gathered.	Information is presented to the public, as in the public education phase, but reactions and input from the public are also collected.	Information is presented to the public and their input is collected. The ways in which their input can contribute to the policy are considered. The participation process is not only two way, but also enables dialogue and debate.	In a scenario where a partnership is formed with the public, communication is two way, and the public is closely involved in the shaping of the agenda of the policy. There is also an element of validation and consent from the public for the policy.

This spectrum of participation demonstrates the wide degrees to which the public can be engaged in the policy process, from **publicity**, which simply informs the public about the NUP process but does not engage anyone, to **public partnership** which promotes a two-way dialogue and debate, and seeks public validation and consent for the policy. When considering the spectrum of involvement, it is vital to make the distinction between a process which is participatory and one which is inclusive. As demonstrated by the spectrum, although a process may be participatory, this does not necessarily make it inclusive. Being aware of the difference is important in order to design a policy process which achieves both. Setting out initial definitions for these terms will aid in distinguishing between participation and inclusion. According to Quick and Feldman, participation and inclusion can be defined as follows:

*Participation practices entail efforts to increase public input oriented primarily to*

*the content of programmes and policies. Inclusion practices entail continuously creating a community involved in co-producing processes, policies, and programmes for defining and addressing public issues (Quick and Feldman, 2011).*

One vital difference between the two can be found in the role in which the citizens are seen to play in the development of policy. Gaventa (2004) differentiates between citizens as the “makers and shapers” of policy and citizens who are the “users and choosers” (29). This suggests that citizens should be given the opportunity not only to participate by choosing between pre-determined policy options, but they should also be included in the making and shaping of policy. By encouraging inclusion through the whole policy process as opposed to seeking input at the end of the process, citizens and stakeholders can have a say in developing the urban agenda, identifying problems and challenges, and developing and assessing different policy options.



Addis Ababa view, Ethiopia © Flickr/neiljs

## Mainstreaming Inclusive Practice: The Case of Ghana

Ghana's NUP was launched in March 2013 after four years of context analysis, workshops, and local and international consultation. The policy aims broadly to promote sustainable urban development with a focus on housing, basic services and improving institutional efficiency. The policy has a five year Action Plan which is being led by the Urban Development Unit within the Department of Local Government and Rural Development.

One of the unique features of the Ghanaian NUP is its approach to informal sector businesses and settlements. The NUP aims to "change the official attitude towards informal enterprises from neglect to recognition and policy support". The policy, therefore, is working to change the more traditional mindset that sees the informal sectors as both illegal and undesirable. Mainstreaming an inclusive approach into the NUP and attempting to change mindsets through the policy can allow for broader systems change. An inclusive approach can also facilitate a more participatory NUP by considering for populations, such as those within the informal sector, that are traditionally can be excluded from the policy process.

### **2. Capacity Development for Sustainable Urban Policy**

Capacity development is the second pillar of UN-Habitat's NUP process. Integrating the development of capacity at all levels of government is necessary for building sustainable policy. Through the assessment and development of human, financial and institutional capacity, it is possible to ensure more thoroughly that a NUP can be successfully developed, implemented, and monitored and evaluated by all levels of government. In this spirit, in order to develop sustainable and implementable policy, capacity development must be integrated into the NUP process and not viewed as an add-on or after thought.

According to the United Nations Environmental Programme, "the ultimate goal of capacity building is to sustain a process of individual and organizational

change and to enable organizations, groups and individuals to achieve their development objectives" (UNEP, 2006). The acknowledgment of capacity development as a *process* and not a static activity is one of the most vital parts of this UNEP definition. Capacity development should be understood not as just one activity within the NUP formation process, but as a process in itself.

As detailed further in the Framework, the initial step towards development of capacity is an assessment of institutional, human and financial capacity. An assessment of capacity prior to undertaking the implementation of NUP will not only get information on the potential need for capacity development or devolution of powers to lower levels of government, but will shape decisions regarding the "strategic and operational choices about overall levels, focus areas, operational modalities and timing" (European

Commission, 2005) of the NUP. Development of capacity following an assessment can take numerous forms: the development of skills through training, the improvement of organizational process through training or restructuring, and the increase of resources (human or financial, for example) through devolution of power, are all examples of how capacity can be built. Depending on the outcome of a capacity assessment, development of certain essential capacities may be necessary prior to the implementation of a NUP. However, the institutionalization of capacity development or the training of trainers at country level offers certain benefits for the longevity of capacity development efforts. Building of structures at country level, which will support ongoing capacity development, means that programmes could be offered on

a more regular basis and with a more forward thinking and long-term approach. With the institutionalization of capacity development within existing government structures or the training of trainers hosted at local capacity development and training institutions, ongoing training can also be more responsive to developing capacity development needs at national, regional and local levels.

UN-Habitat is advocates for the integration of capacity development into the NUP process, not only to promote the development of sustainable policy, but also to promote the sustainability of the capacity development process itself through continued and sustained efforts of capacity development and the potential for the institutionalization of capacity development in government or through the training of trainers.

### **Putting Capacity Development at the Core of Urban Development: The Case of Cambodia**

Prior to the development and implementation of a NUP, the Cambodian Government embarked on a national project of capacity development and technical training for sub-national government officials. The project, launched in 2013, was led by the launch of a project document, Capacity Development for Urban Management Project.

The project preceded and was in conjunction with the launch of the Cambodian Rectangular Strategy Phase III 2014-2018. The strategy set urbanization and urban development as a national priority and put capacity development and technical training at the forefront. Implementing a capacity development and training programme prior to the Rectangular Strategy Phase III aimed to prepared regional and local governments for increased level of responsibility due to the devolution of governance and financial power proposed in the strategy. By aiming to strengthen institutions and institutional connectivity prior to the implementation of the strategy, the Cambodian Government's approach is a useful example of how to prepare for the practical considerations of implementing of the strategy prior to its development.

### 3. Acupuncture Projects

The action of grounding policy through acupuncture projects is the third pillar of UN-Habitat's NUP process. The aim of grounding public policy, in this case, NUP, through acupuncture projects is to ensure that policy action is being translated into direct action. Translating policy action into direct action ensures that policy directives are relevant and implementable. The act of translating policy into action will also produce results, or "quick wins", throughout the policy process and ensure that the policy is not divorced from the implementing reality. The practice of grounding the policy through acupuncture projects also provides an opportunity to revise the policy if challenges are encountered, thus promoting an interactive policy design.

Before beginning to implement projects, it is important to consider which projects will have the greatest impact relative to the time and finances that have been expended. Urban acupuncture has been referred as "pinpricks" of urbanism in the form of projects or initiatives. These carefully identified projects extend beyond their boundaries and "ripple" through cities and communities to affect that city or its policies more broadly (Lerner, 2014). The process, therefore, uses small-scale interventions, through either planning or policy, to attempt to alter the larger urban context. By identifying these relevant small-scale interventions, urban acupuncture can produce catalytic change in the urban planning and policy spheres.

## The Five Principles of NUP

UN-Habitat advocates five key principles in the NUP process.

- **Iterative and forward thinking:** An iterative and forward thinking policy should have clearly defined long-term and short-term goals. In this way, a forward-thinking policy plans for the long term but implements in the short term. Short-term goals will build long-term plans, but can be monitored, evaluated, and adjusted in order to promote an iterative policy process. A forward thinking policy requires goals and roles for stakeholders, both in the long term and the short term. While it is necessary to implement in the short term, policy should take a long-term view, which can be based on lessons learned from past policy, statistical trends and political and cultural norms. Formulating the policy based on these long-term projections can allow for a policy that can target long-term, as well as short-term, needs.
- **Implementable:** During all phases of the NUP process, it must be ensured that the policy that is being formulated is implementable. In order to be implementable there are a number of factors that should be considered:
  - Is there the financial capacity to support the policy at all levels of government?
  - Is the human and institutional capacity adequate to support service delivery at all levels of government?
  - Is the legislative framework in

place and able to support the implementation and enforcement of the policy?

- Does the policy recognize other existing policy dimensions?
- Does the policy have broad stakeholder support?

- **Joined up:** A NUP should recognize the need to look beyond traditional institutional boundaries in order to address the challenges and opportunities of urbanization. There is a need for both horizontal and vertical coordination to ensure that the NUP is efficient and effective. To be successful, the cross cutting nature of the NUP objectives should be defined during the diagnosis stage of the NUP process.



- **Evidence based:** All decisions associated with the NUP process should be based on relevant and up-to-date evidence. The process of consulting evidence should ensure that not only evidence that is produced particularly for the policy is consulted but also consults bodies of evidence that already exist. To ensure that the evidence base encompasses different views, all stakeholders should be involved and consulted during the collection of evidence, particularly during the Diagnostic Phase.
- **Action oriented:** Key parts of the NUP process are identifying the challenges and opportunities presented by urbanization in a particular context and outlining clear goals associated with the policy. It is imperative, however, that clear actions are delineated during the Formulation and Implementation Phases so that goals are translated into actionable activities that can be monitored and evaluated.

All NUPs should be built with key principles in mind. Incorporating these principles into the NUP process will augment the ability of the policy to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by urbanization. Along with the pillars of a NUP, **participation, capacity development, and acupuncture projects**, the principles should be kept in mind through the entire NUP process.

*“Policy processes are in many respects continuous processes and initiatives may start anywhere in the system” (Hill, 1997).*

# Part Two: Feasibility

## What has been considered so far....

- The elements of the NUP process according to UN-Habitat
- What is a NUP?
- How to use this Framework document and the associated review Toolkits
- The key pillars and principles of a NUP

## Expected Accomplishments during the Feasibility Phase...

- Making the case for NUP: understanding the value additions from undertaking a NUP in a specific country context. Among others, benefits may include defining the role of the national government in urbanization, enhancing both national and urban competitiveness, and achieving gains made through the NUP process
- Identifying key facts and figures
- Being clear about the opportunities that are available will help to build consensus and support for undertaking a NUP

## Making the Case for a NUP

The potential opportunities and gains from urbanization have been well articulated both in academic and policy based literature. The essential role of urbanization in the economic and social progress of countries is captured in the *2009 World Bank World Development Report*, which states that:

*No country has grown to middle income without industrializing and urbanizing. None has grown to high income without vibrant cities. The rush to cities in developing countries seems chaotic, but it is necessary" (World Bank, 2009).*

There is evidence, however, that sheds doubt on the direct relationship between urbanization and productivity, competitiveness and prosperity. While the opportunity and potential is certainly there, it has been suggested that there is a need for government to recognize that urbanization will not directly correlate with productivity and prosperity. Rather, it is necessary to actively facilitate the growth of cities that will incubate and grow the conditions that are required for productive and prosperous urban growth. Turok and McGranahan (2013) state that:

*We need to move away from the notion that influencing the rate of urbanization is an appropriate policy goal in and of itself... [;] governments can work to enable the benefits of agglomeration to be better achieved... [;] to do this effectively requires intervening carefully in the urbanization process, so as to improve and not undermine its voluntary nature.... In some contexts it is also important for national governments to give cities the incentive to plan for this growth” (Turok and McGranahan, 2013).*

A NUP can be a powerful tool that can enable government and other stakeholders to actively facilitate the conditions needed for productive urbanization, and which can ultimately lead to enhanced global competitiveness at the city, regional and national levels. This provides a key incentive for governments to avail themselves of this tool for at least two reasons. Firstly, urban issues are demonstrably central to the policy concerns of jurisdictions throughout the world. Secondly, the lack of a clear policy direction in this area can lead to uncontrolled urban development, giving rise to social, economic and environmental problems, as well as possible social unrest. Nevertheless, it is also true that financial and human capacity concerns are common when considering the ability of a national government to undertake the NUP process. However, it is important to recognize the value added through a NUP. Through the solidification of the coordination role of national governments, the benefits for international competitiveness, and

the gains that can be made through the process of NUP development, it is possible to make a strong case for the human and financial investment in a NUP. The following paragraphs will point to some benefits of NUP.

## **Defining the Leadership Role of a National Government**

Evidence shows that national governments are more capable than regional or local governments of obtaining and analyzing a broad overview of the urban situation within a country (Turok and Parnell, 2009). With input from the regional and local levels, a coordinated effort from the national-level government provides the best chance of developing a coordinated and thorough nationwide urban development plan. The process of NUP development provides the opportunity for a national government to consider and set the agenda for urbanization in their country. The clear delineation of an agenda and a role for government is valuable in order to streamline the use of scarce fiscal and human resources to address urban priorities, as mandated by government.

It is important to consider, however, that the process of defining the urbanization agenda should not be undertaken solely by the national government. Rather, this process should be rooted in the first key pillar of the UN-Habitat NUP process: participation. The NUP process offers an excellent opportunity to allow the national government to define its role



in coordinating urbanization. Yet it is equally important to consider the roles of other levels of government, judiciary, parliamentary/legislative, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders. Gathering input from other stakeholders and defining their roles through the participation is essential in each stage of the NUP process.

## Facilitating National Competitiveness

With globalization, cities play a major role in the global economic competitiveness of countries. Michael Porter (1990) states that “nations choose prosperity if they organize their policies, laws and institutions based on productivity. Nations choose prosperity if...they upgrade the capabilities of all their citizens and invest in the types of specialized infrastructure that allow commerce to be efficient” (xii). Even more,

it has been recognized that the role of cities in shaping the competitiveness of countries is of the utmost importance. Iain Begg (1999) commented that, “the performance of the cities in a country will have a considerable bearing on its overall economic success, so that the efficiency and well-being of the urban system are of national concern” (2). Thus, enhanced productivity and competitiveness – essential to every state in a globalizing economy – are linked closely with prudent and well-directed investment in urban areas. UN-Habitat recommends that a well-founded NUP could ensure that urban investments are effectively made and managed. Further information on the relationship between cities and competitiveness can be found in the UN-Habitat publication *Urban Patterns for a Green Economy: Clustering for Competitiveness*, which can be found in the Feasibility Review Toolkit.



*“Indeed, cities are important economic forces not just for themselves, but to the entire nation, and central players on the world stage. When they are well-articulated with the national and provincial governments and their own development agendas are linked to regional and national development plans, when investments from central governments are aligned with local investments, cities can yield critically important results for the nation as a whole”* (UN-Habitat, 2012b).

## **Making Gains through the NUP Process**

Lastly, the value of a NUP must be considered not only as the value found in the end product but also in the process itself. A well-prepared and participatory process of policy development will allow for key milestones such as the **diagnosis and identification of urban problems**, the **setting of goals**, the **allocation of roles** and the **growth of capacity**. The process will also be framed to be fully responsive to the ongoing involvement of communities and stakeholders, the process will also suggest ways of making the benefits of responsive and adaptable practices permanent through the foundation of community organizations and consultative mechanisms. Processes of capacity development can also result in permanent changes in the human, financial and institutional capacity within the country. Lastly, policy process evaluation can be an opportunity to reflect on strengths and weaknesses within a country's policy

processes, opening an opportunity for institutional learning that can be reflected in future policy endeavours. All in all, undertaking the NUP process can result in **systems change**, or a positive and permanent shift in the way decisions are made about policy, programme and resource allocation. Therefore, when considering the undertaking of a NUP process, it is of the utmost importance to understand that the value lies not only in the product, but also in the process.

## **Building Support for NUP: Understanding and Articulating the Vision and Value Addition**

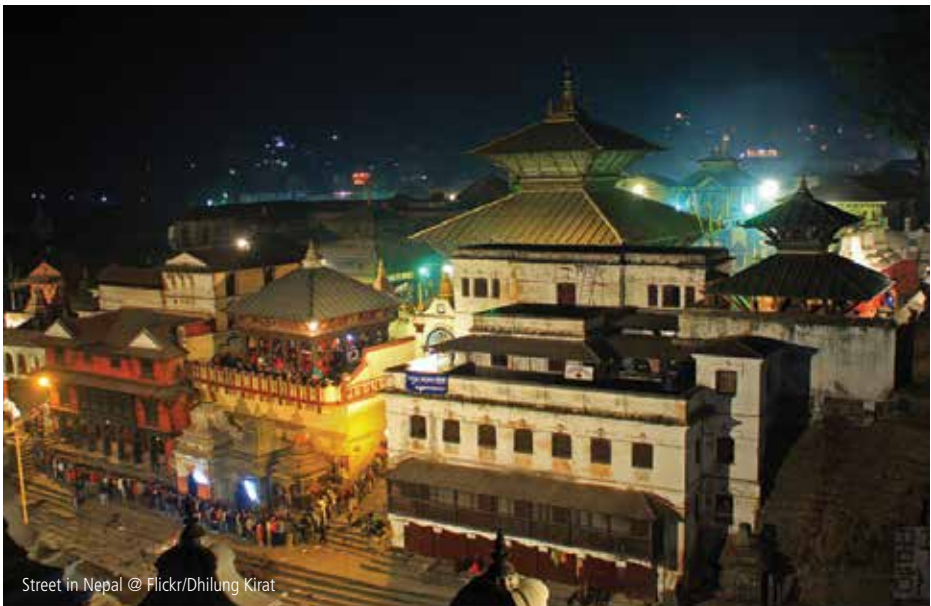
To successfully begin the NUP process it is essential not only to understand the specific vision and value additions that a NUP will bring, but also to build government and stakeholder support for the process. Being clear about the vision for a NUP and the feasibility of undertaking the NUP process in a particular context can help to build initial support for the policy. Building political will for a NUP during the feasibility stage is necessary in order to decrease the chance of the process being blocked at later stages. Political will is often stronger if the concrete benefits of undertaking policy change are clear.

The NUP can also benefit from the support of a “champion.” A champion can be either an individual, group of individuals or an organization that is willing to endorse the process by putting weight (either political or financial) and influence

behind the NUP process and actively works to increase political will and convince stakeholders to support the process as well. Champions may include those that are already active in political life, a member of public bodies, or part of a not for profit organization. The possibilities for who could be a champion are numerous, however most importantly, champions should be very familiar with, and known and respected within, the local context. Due to the need for the champion to be able to exert influence, the champion must have a level of authority that would command respect from political actors and stakeholders.

## Summing Up:

The goal of the Feasibility Phase is to make a case for a NUP and to begin to build stakeholder support and political will for this vision. The value additions of a NUP can vary from country to country. The Feasibility Phase, therefore, offers the opportunities to highlight the value additions in a specific context. Understanding not only the value additions of the finalized NUP, but the gains that can be made through the process, is essential to understanding the overall benefit of a NUP. Once the value addition of the NUP is clear, it becomes possible to begin to build consensus around the vision for a NUP.



Street in Nepal © Flickr/Dhilung Kirat

# Part Three: Diagnosis

## What has been considered so far...

- Making the case for a NUP and clarifying the value additions from undertaking a NUP in a specific country context.

## Expected Accomplishments during the Diagnostic Phase...

During the NUP Diagnostic Phase, it is expected to achieve an understanding of the context, the policy problem and opportunity, and to clarify the policy goals. The expected accomplishments therefore include:

- Understanding the context in which the NUP operates, which should result in the production of a NUP Discussion Paper.
- The mapping and analysis of key actors and stakeholders that should be sought and involved in the NUP process.
- Identification and definition of the problem and the opportunity which the policy will address.
- Based on the defined policy problem and opportunities, the policy goals should be defined.

## Potential Outputs of the Diagnostic Phase

- NUP Discussion Paper

## The NUP Diagnostic Phase

The NUP Diagnostic Phase is the phase in which key evidence is collected to act as the foundation for choices and decisions that will be made by policy-makers and stakeholder later in the NUP process. One of the principles of UN-Habitat's NUP process is that it be evidence based. Therefore, it is in the Diagnostic Phase that an understanding of the context's development, problems and opportunities can be identified, policy goals can be defined, and stakeholders can be mapped. The NUP Diagnostic Phase, therefore, is when the information necessary to support the other NUP phases is gathered, organized and analysed.

## Understanding the Context

It is characteristic that at the outset of any policy process, there are many questions that do not yet have answers. As early efforts are made to assess the scope of problems or challenges, there may at that point be no clear sense of just how the eventual policy will work to bring about beneficial change. Alternatively, there may be many possible visions of how the policy will operate, which will have to be pared down or fused as the process develops.

It is axiomatic that policies are normally developed in response to perceived problems or challenges or to capitalize on opportunities. It follows that in order to develop a policy that addresses issues that have been identified, it is necessary to understand in depth just what the problems or opportunities are. The definition of problems – that is, of its specifics and dimensions, as opposed to a general sense that a problem exists – and then the subsequent development of related goals, are the two expected outcomes of the diagnostic process. Likewise, understanding the opportunities will allow for a better understanding of how to harness them. Undertaking the process of problem and opportunity definition in the case of a NUP will, firstly, ensure that a NUP is built to answer the problems, challenges or opportunities that are most pertinent to the country at hand and, secondly, ensure that the policy is informed by a reliable base of evidence. It should be noted that undertaking the diagnostic process itself is of great value and an excellent investment. “Taking stock” of the state of urban areas will provide a broad overview that may have many important future uses beyond its role in the NUP process.

When beginning the diagnostic process, there are a number of questions that are helpful in framing the way forward,

including:

- What is the context?
- What are the key facts and figures?
- Who are the key actors and other stakeholders?
- What are the relevant variables and data associated with this problem?
- Considering this information, what is the policy problem?
- What are the goals of the policy?

In order to answer such questions, there are a number of steps within the diagnostic stage that will allow for proper preparation for the formulation stage. It is necessary first to understand the **context** in which the policy will operate. This involves, but is not limited to, an in-country review of the state of cities, an analysis of the age pyramid, an assessment of the political culture, legal and institutional assessments, an assessment of stakeholders, and a financial assessment. UN-Habitat’s Diagnostic Framework and Diagnostic Review Toolkit together provide guidance on the practical undertaking of the diagnosis. One of the key outputs of this context review can be the generation of a NUP Discussion Paper. The Discussion Paper can compile the findings from the context review, which can then be distributed to stakeholders. Examples of NUP Discussion Papers can be found in the Diagnosis Review Toolkit.

## Understanding the Context: Selected UN-Habitat Tools

Gaining an understanding of the context in which a policy exists is essential part of the Diagnosis Phase of the NUP process. UN-Habitat has many tools that can contribute to defining the context of a NUP. Three of these tools are highlighted below.

### 1. UN-Habitat Regional Spatial Planning Strategy Methodology

A Regional Spatial Planning Strategy is defined as one that “sets out a ‘spatial’ vision and strategy specific to a particular region with a view to maximizing the benefits from investments and bringing about more balanced territorial development patterns, ultimately contributing to peace stabilization and economic growth” (UN-Habitat, 2015). During the development of a Regional Spatial Planning Strategy of Darfur, a specific methodology was designed that could be used firstly to analyse the spatial characteristics of the area and secondly generate tangible regional planning proposals based on data generated by that analysis. This methodology, therefore, generates proposals that are based on knowledge of the local spatial, institutional and political contexts. While there are established methodologies for the development of regional plans, in the context of Darfur it was found that these methodologies, which are often heavily reliant on the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), required amounts and types of data that were not easily available. Undertaking the data collection and analysis for the development of a regional planning strategy in this context was beyond the capacities available. In order to facilitate the development of the strategy, methodologies were developed that could be used in an area with a scarcity of data and with low human, institutional and financial capacity. The methodologies, therefore, could be very useful for gathering spatial data in a variety of contexts.

### 2. UN-Habitat Urban Housing Sector Profiles

Undertaking a National Housing Profile can be both a useful and essential method of collecting thorough data on the housing sector. By providing information on the structure and functioning of the housing sector, the profiles can be used to inform a NUP and provide the data to make evidence-based policy decisions. In particular, conducting a housing profile can “help to disclose bottlenecks, identify gaps and opportunities in the housing sector that prevent the housing market from working properly” (UN-Habitat, 2011)

UN-Habitat has undertaken Housing Sector Profiles in a variety of countries and in a number of languages. For countries where a Housing Sector Profile has not been undertaken, UN-Habitat has developed a Practical Guide for Conducting Housing Profiles. The Practical Guide can be used as a roadmap for policy makers in order to develop a country level housing profile.

### 3. UN-Habitat City Resilience Profiling Programme

UN-Habitat’s City Resilience Profiling Programme (CRPP) is being developed with the aim of providing the necessary tools to national and local government to enable the development of both urban management programmes and planning approaches which will increase the governance capacity to monitor city risk resilience, including to climate change and catastrophic climatic events. Tools will enable governments to develop an integrated urban management and planning system which will have the capacity to profile a city’s vulnerability to threats and monitor the development and implementation of resilience plans.

The City Resilience Profiling Programme provides a resource to government officials to generate a resilience profile, which can be used to inform decisions related to NUP.

*“Fuller understanding of the broad context within which policy works should help policy-makers both when thinking about possible approaches to tackling a given problem and when they come to consider putting a particular solution into effect” (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, 2003).*

## The NUP Framework for a Rapid Diagnostic

One of the core principles of a NUP is to ensure that it is evidence based. Formulating a NUP, therefore, requires a stocktaking of the context. One tool that can be used to structure and coordinate this stocktaking is UN-Habitat’s NUP Framework for a Rapid Diagnostic. The NUP diagnostic is

*“An umbrella activity that gathers the necessary information to deliver on NUP objectives and other related principles.” (UN-Habitat, 2015b)*

Following a diagnostic, the information gathered can be used to give a foundation to the NUP and help to shape its direction.

The NUP Framework for a Rapid Diagnostic focuses on understanding thematic areas that are critical for a NUP: urbanization drivers, trends and projections, urban legislation and urban regulations, urban planning, housing, infrastructure and basic services, urban economy and municipal finances, and the urban network.

In order to facilitate a rapid diagnostic, the document gives guidance on questions for each thematic area, how the relevant assessments might be undertaken, and how to tailor the diagnostic to a particular context.

*UN-Habitat, (2015b). NUP Framework for a Rapid Diagnostic. Nairobi, Kenya: UN-Habitat.*

## Identifying the Problem

In association with identifying and surveying the relevant data and variables, the **identification of problems, challenges and opportunities** can provide direction to the NUP. The problems and identifying opportunities should be based on the information collected during the Diagnostic Phase. When considering policy problems, the problems in urban policy are notoriously complex. They have been referred to as “wicked problems” due to the complexity of their roots and their resistance to resolution.

Due to the complexity of urban problems, the identification of key problems and their causes is not always easy. Howlett (2003) characterized this process by commenting that:

*Even if policy-makers agree on the existence of a problem, they may not share the same understanding of its causes or ramifications. It is therefore to be expected that the search for a solution to a problem will be contentious and subject to a wide variety of pressures (143).*

Due to the complexity of social and urban problems, it is necessary to define which aspect of the problem the policy hopes to tackle. Incremental policy design deals with small parts of larger problems. For example, it is not realistic to list “resolving urban poverty” as a goal of a NUP. Instead, the policy would take an incremental approach to solving the problem by identifying small parts and addressing those one at a time. The policy, therefore, may have specific goals in such areas as increasing low-income housing availability, creating job opportunities for youth, or enhancing basic infrastructure and services in deprived areas.

It is important that a participatory approach be taken to the definition of a problem in policy. If participation occurs at the beginning of a policy intervention, but after politicians and policy makers have decided what it is about a given situation that constitutes the problem, then the policy is being built on a set of problems or challenges that were not inclusively defined. It is important to remember that problems in policy are not objective realities. Instead, problems and the interpretation of problems are linked to politics and perception: “problems are defined, and not identified or discovered... [and] are the products of imposing certain frames of reference on reality” (Dery 1984, 4). The reality is, then, that problems in policy cannot be taken as given. Considering that the identification of a set of problems or challenges forms the foundation upon which a NUP is built

it is imperative that the problem definition process is both participatory and inclusive.

The preparation of a problem statement can be helpful in further defining and expanding the scope of the problem into a form that is specific enough to be useful for policy formulation. Furthermore, the process of producing a problem statement also is an opportunity to engage stakeholders. Stages in constructing a problem statement could be to:

- 1) Think about the problem;
- 2) Delineate the boundaries of the problem;
- 3) Develop a fact base;
- 4) List goals and objectives for policy solutions to the problem;
- 5) Identify the key policy players that should contribute to the solution;
- 6) Develop preliminary costs and benefits;
- 7) Review the problem statement.

Tools, such as a Problem Tree Analysis and Objective Analysis, can be used to aid in the definition of problems and the subsequent identification of goals. More details on the use of Problem Tree Analysis and Objective Analysis can be found in the Diagnosis Review Toolkit.

## Goal Definition

Following the identification of the problem, the **policy goals** should be identified. Clear and concise goals will allow for a well-defined direction for the policy. Policy goals can be short, medium and long-term. When considering the timeline



of policy goals, consideration can often usefully be given to where positive results can rapidly be achieved in some areas. UN-Habitat recommends identifying “quick wins” and catalytic interventions that can be implemented throughout the urban policy process and particularly during the Diagnostic Phase. “Quick wins” can be powerful in their ability to show demonstrable benefits and to help convince sceptics of the value of a given policy direction. Conversely, it is also important to ensure that short-term goals are achievable. Setting goals that are too ambitious, especially with an unrealistic timeline, will do much more harm than good. Therefore, when defining the goals for a NUP it is important to consider the formulation and implementation stages even when framing the policy goals. How long will it take to build consensus for the policy? Where devolved governments are involved – most commonly, in this policy area, municipalities – what is their level of financial, human and institutional capacity? How much capacity building will be necessary prior to implementation? Asking questions such as these is essential while considering the timeline for policy goals.

## **Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis**

In the Diagnostic Phase it is important to identify key actors and stakeholders. A stakeholder is “a person who has something to gain or lose through the outcomes of a planning process or project”

(Hovland, 2005), and it has been usefully suggested that stakeholders or “interested parties” can usually be grouped into the following categories: international, public, national political, commercial/private, nongovernmental organization (NGO)/civil society, labour and users/consumers (Schmeer, 1999). It is also important to involve the judiciary and parliamentarians in the NUP process. The process of stakeholder analysis and mapping allows for the identification of stakeholders in the policy process, as well as of the needs, interests and capacity of the stakeholders. The result of the stakeholder process is a firm map of stakeholders, as well as a more complete idea of how to engage and include them in the NUP process. Including stakeholders in the NUP process is necessary for the success of the policy in order to ensure, firstly, that the policy is correctly identifying problems and goals, and secondly, to ensure the building of consensus. As stated in the Introduction, a participatory process is not always inclusive. Therefore, it is necessary to have a firm grasp on the map of stakeholders in the NUP arena to ensure that all groups are consulted and have the opportunity to participate. Particularly vulnerable groups such as women, youth, the elderly, and the disabled, may have to be identified and sought out to ensure their participation. Further guidance on undertaking stakeholder analysis and mapping can be found in the UN-Habitat Diagnostic review Toolkit. The analysis could happen in four broad phases that could include:

1. Identifying the Stakeholders: listing relevant groups, organizations and people.
2. Analyzing the Stakeholders: understanding the perspectives and interests of all stakeholders.
3. Mapping the Stakeholders: using the perspectives and interests from the analysis to visualize relationships to the policy recommendations, working arrangements (such as the suggested Urban Development Unit) and to other stakeholders.
4. Categorizing/Prioritizing the Stakeholders: ranking stakeholder relevance and identifying where they fit into the NUP process. Although all stakeholders are important, some may be some important to different aspects (to different policy recommendations, for example) and during different phases.

that make up the policy environment for the NUP. Due to the connection between the two processes of stakeholder and institutional mapping and analysis, Aligica (2006) commented that, “stakeholder mapping and institutional mapping are not two separated procedures but are faces of the same coin, two dimensions of the same analytical formula” (80). Having an understanding of the institutional arrangements can make the assigning of roles and responsibilities during the Formulation Phase more evidence-based and informed. Important decisions, such as which ministry will lead the development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the policy, also need to be informed by a consideration of the influences and interests at play. Undertaking stakeholder and institutional mapping and analysis are all for the necessary insight regarding power, influence and interests.

## Institutional Mapping and Analysis

Upon the completion of the Diagnostic Phase, it is important to have a clear understanding of the institutional setup within which the NUP will be developed, implemented and monitored and evaluated. Along with undertaking a stakeholder analysis, undertaking institutional mapping and analysis can provide a necessary insight into power dynamics, influence and interests (Aligica, 2006). It is these power dynamics, influence and interests within the stakeholder group and institutional setup



Gold Coast light rail tram, Australia © Flickr/Simon Morris

## Summing Up:

The goal of the Diagnostic Phase is to develop a clear picture of the particular context in which the NUP is being developed. This picture should include **a review of the state of urbanization, consideration for policy problem, challenge and opportunity identification, policy goal definition and a review of stakeholders.**

Collecting this information ensures that policy decisions that will be made in the Formulation Phase are based on research and evidence. The identification of key problems and challenges that will be targeted by the NUP will allow for the development of informed goals for the policy, which will form the foundation for the policy itself.

### Finding Value in the Diagnosis: The Case of the Czech Republic

The Principles of Urban Policy was drafted in 2010 by the Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic. The document was produced in order to address the need for an overarching urban policy to link sectoral policies in the Czech Republic. The Principles of Urban Policy is the product of the NUP Diagnostic Phase and is meant to act as an initiator of the development of this policy in the post 2013 re-drafting period. While a NUP has not yet been drafted in the Czech Republic, the Principles of Urban Policy provides an extensive overview of the context in which a Czech NUP would exist. It addresses both the state of urbanization in the Czech Republic and of urban policy in Europe.

The Principles of Urban Policy provides an excellent example of what can be produced from the Diagnosis Phase of the NUP process. While the document was prepared in order to form the foundation of a NUP in the future, it also has an important function of its own. Through an analysis of context, identification of problems and opportunities and finally the identification of key “principles”, this document can function not only as a product of the Diagnosis Phase, but it can be used in the interim as a guide for other policies framing a government-approved approach to urban areas. It thus provided a framework for the urban goals determined by the government through research.

The demonstration, with this case, that the Diagnostic Phase has the ability to be more than simply a transitory, data collection phase, is powerful. The length of time needed to successfully complete the NUP process is different in each country and is dependent on political will, and financial, human and institutional capacity, etc. In the case of the Czech Republic, it was determined that, even though urban affairs were a priority, the introduction of the NUP in the middle of a programme period would not be beneficial. Therefore, while serving as an important diagnostic tool, the Principles of Urban Policy also offered guidance in the interim. This highlights the reality that all stages of the NUP are interconnected, and can and should be adapted to the local context. The Czech Republic demonstrates that the Diagnostic Phase can be used as an excellent tool to drive the NUP process forward.

# Part Four: Formulation

## What has been considered so far...

- Understanding the context in which the NUP operates and the production of a NUP Discussion Paper
- Identification of the policy problem and opportunity
- Definition of policy goals
- The identification of key actors and stakeholders

## Expected Accomplishments during the Formulation Phase...

The NUP Formulation Phase is that in which the proposal for the NUP will be drafted. Within the phase, there are a number of important steps and expected accomplishments:

- Evaluation of different policy options should be undertaken to assess which option is best suited for the context in order to achieve the policy goals.
- A policy proposal should be formulated once a policy option is selected to propose a way forward.
- Strengthening consensus for the policy proposal should continue when the proposal has been formulated. Consensus regarding the proposal can support the continuity of the NUP process.
- An assessment of human, financial and institutional capacity should be undertaken based on the policy proposal in order to identify potential capacity weakness prior to implementation.
- It is also necessary to consider the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of NUP phases during the formulation phase to produce an implementable policy with a strong monitoring and evaluation framework.

## The NUP Formulation Phase

The NUP Formulation Phase will allow a mapping of what will occur between the definition of the policy problem(s) and attainment of the policy goal. In essence, it will be the point in the process that policy options will be evaluated and decision made regarding

the way in which the policy goals will be achieved. It is during the Formulation Phase that “specific policy options are developed within government [and] the range of plausible choices is narrowed by excluding the unfeasible ones” (Howlett, 2013; 13).

It is important to remember in the Formulation Phase that, in each case, there will be variety of ways to solve the same policy problem. Mintrom (2012) suggests that “policy development work is often characterized as involving problem-directed searches for possible policy solutions” (213). In this search, there could be a variety of solutions, or policy options, that present themselves. An important element of the formulation stage, therefore, is an evaluation of the different options that are available to resolve the problem(s). Following this evaluation of options, there must be **an evaluation of different policy options**. Once an option is selected, it is possible to move on to the **formulation of the policy plan, the building of consensus, and the evaluation of human, financial and institutional capacity**. As is outlined below, it is also essential to **consider implementation and monitoring and evaluation during formulation**.

During the formulation process, there are a number of questions that can be beneficial to consider or refine:

- What are the policy goals? Do the goals conflict or intersect with any other existing policies?
- What are different ways to achieve these goals?
- How will the goals be achieved?
- Has consensus been built?
- What are the critical actions to be undertaken to support the achievement of the goals (as a means to develop an action plan)?

The nature of these questions is such that they pre-suppose that the Diagnostic Phase has successfully identified clear goals for the policy. If, on arriving at the Formulation Stage, it becomes clear that clear goals have not been provided or that the goals are no longer suitable, the Diagnostic Phase can be revisited, thus providing an example of the non-linear nature of policy development. In policy development, it is always necessary to reflect back as well as to think forward and in the area of urban policy this is especially important. The participatory role of stakeholders may prompt debate and questioning that indicates a need to retrace the steps of diagnosing the problem, in the interests of building broad support for policy formulation.

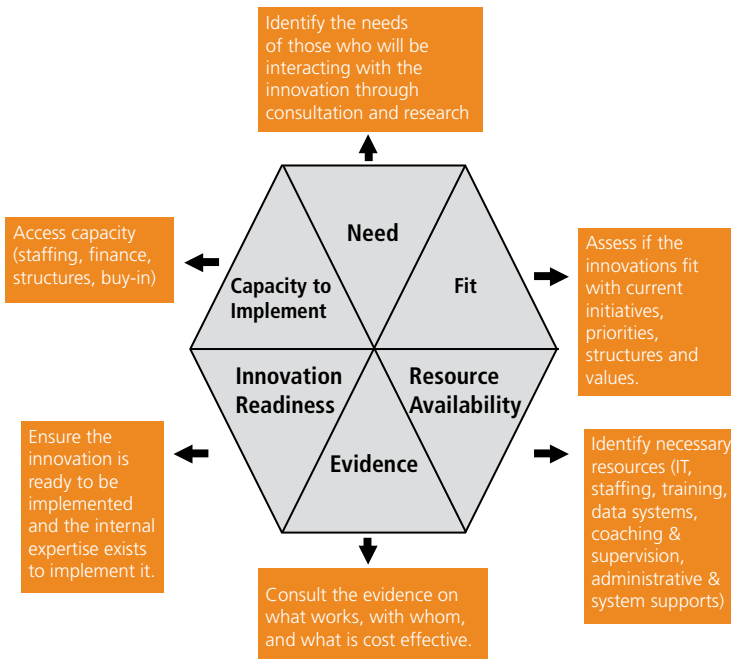
## Evaluation of Different Policy Options

It is important to develop different policy options and engage in a comparative exercise in order to select the option(s) that are most suited to the context and the goals. One tool that can be used to compare different policy options is the development of **General Assessment Criteria** that will allow the strengths and weaknesses of all policy options be measured together. Examples of some commonly used criteria would be to assess:

- How well the policy option addresses the policy goals;
- The time frame for implementation of a policy option;

- The impact of a policy option on stakeholders;
  - Reactions of stakeholders to a policy option;
  - Potential adverse impacts of a policy (i.e. in fixing one problem, is another one created or is another existing problem made worse);
  - Cost implications;
  - Administrative ease of implementation of a policy option and capacity of government agencies to implement;
  - Legislative considerations;
  - Inter-departmental or sectoral impact (many problems are cross-cutting; i.e. the policy response may affect the work of other departments or sectors and/or the policy response may have to come from a cluster of inter-related departments);
  - The degree to which a policy option is consistent with other relevant government policies, procedures and regulations;
  - Potential risks (including the worst-case scenario) associated with a policy option and actions that could be taken to deal with the potential adverse impact. (Office of the Provincial Auditor, 2003)
- The diagram below illustrates some of the elements that could be considered when evaluating policy options:

**Figure 2: Elements for Consideration in Evaluating Policy Options** (adapted from Burke et al, 2012).



## Formulating a Policy Proposal

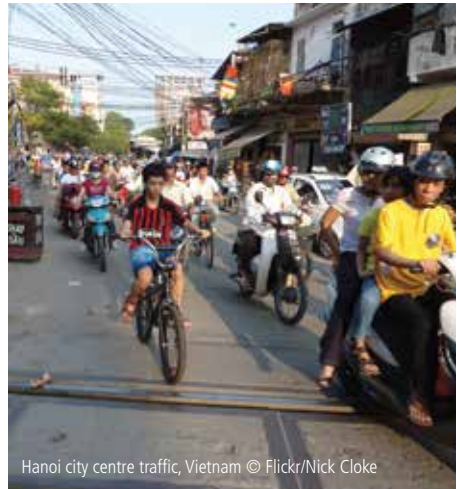
Once different policy options have been considered and prioritized, it is then necessary to decide on a policy plan.

Developing a policy proposal is one way to formalize the policy route that will be taken. A policy proposal will act as a guide for the policy, and can state why the policy should be undertaken, and how it should be done.

Key components of a policy proposal are:

- Policy summary: this lays out the policy problem that was considered during the Diagnosis Phase and addresses how the policy will address this problem and why it is important that the problem is addressed. It will also highlight the opportunities that arise from confronting the problem and undertaken the policy initiative.
- Policy goals: in the policy proposal it is important to list the policy goals that were formulated during the Diagnosis Phase and include a justification for policy goals that were selected.
- Policy task breakdown: in a complex policy environment, it can be difficult to foresee all tasks that will be necessary to successfully formulate, implement and evaluate a policy. However, a preliminary consideration of a task breakdown can be valuable. Considering the task breakdown for each policy goal forces consideration of the “key tasks associated with undertaking policy” (Mintrom, 2012; 69).
- Project time and financial budget: once a preliminary task list has been suggested, the time needed to complete each task can be estimated. Once an estimate has been made for each task, it becomes easier to estimate the time needed to complete each policy goal. Similarly, estimates of approximate financial costs can be associated with each task, thereby facilitating the approximation of the financial costs associated with each policy goal.
- Stakeholder consideration: once preliminary maps of tasks for each policy goal have been drawn, it is possible to consider which stakeholders will be important to which tasks. This process will draw on the stakeholder review that was undertaken during the Diagnosis Phase.

Further guidance on formulating a policy proposal can be found in the Formulation Review Toolkit.



## Key Qualifiers During Formulation: Compact, Integrated and Connected Cities and Human Settlements

UN-Habitat promotes the development policies that stimulate the development of cities which are compact, integrated and connected in order to ensure the urbanization is both sustainable and resilient to climate change. When formulating a NUP, it is important to keep these qualifiers in mind to promote sustainable urbanization.

Compact urban growth aims to intensify urban economic, social and cultural activities, and to manipulate urban size through the promotion of activities such as urban regeneration, the revitalization of town centres, restrained development in rural areas, higher densities, mixed-use development, the promotion of public transport, infill development, planned city extension and the concentration of urban development at public transport nodes.

Better integrated cities and human settlements refers to a deliberately holistic approach to urban development that interlinks various dimensions of urban life: social, economic, environmental, political and cultural. Emphasis is on the linkage of spatial aspects of urban development with economic, social and environmental components, in particular to achieve both mixed use and social mix.

Better connected cities implies encouraging the development of urban policies/plans/designs that offer better physical, social and virtual connectivity among people living in different locations and sizes of urban areas. During the formulation of policies/plans/designs that promote better connected cities, it is important to consider that cities do not exist in vacuums. They are connected to the surrounding region and to other cities through the ways in which they share resources and opportunities. Consideration for the linkages between urban and rural areas is particularly pertinent during the formulation of a NUP. More information on urban/rural linkages and ways in which urban planning can promote compact, integrated and connected urban growth can be found in the Formulation Review Toolkit (UN-Habitat, 2015a).

## Consensus Building During Formulation

Once a policy proposal is generated, it is necessary to build consensus for the policy prior to moving forward to implementation. It is important to note that building consensus during the Formulation Phase is easier if stakeholders have been involved from the beginning of the NUP process. As stated above, it is important

that stakeholders are the “makers and shapers” of policy as opposed to the “users and choosers” (Gaventa 2004, 29). As noted in the Part Two, it is important to involve a wide variety of stakeholders while diagnosing the policy problem. This initial involvement increases the likelihood of successfully building consensus for the policy proposal.



## Why take time to build consensus?

During the Feasibility Stage, it was essential to build support for the NUP. Once the process has moved to Formulation, it is necessary not only to have support for the NUP process, but also consensus among stakeholders. Consensus building is a vital part of a participatory and inclusive NUP process. While it may be time consuming and require both human and financial resources, it is a necessary part of the policy process. Some benefits of consensus building include:

*Better decisions:* The process of building consensus gives an opportunity for different stakeholders to learn about the needs and wants of each other. This process of mutual learning can lead to an understanding and appreciation of the diversity of needs in the NUP process, which will inevitably lead to better decision-making capacity. Understanding the needs and wants of others also increases the chance that stakeholders will be open to compromise and offer their support to the final NUP product, even if all of their demands were not met.

*Faster implementation:* Policy implementation depends on the complex network of individuals, organizations and institutions. Building consensus and giving

stakeholders the opportunity to give their input before implementation increases the feeling of engagement with and ownership of stakeholders to a policy and it decreases the likelihood that implementation could be blocked or subverted by stakeholders who are not supportive of the policy.

*Possibility of generating new resources:* Building consensus is also an opportunity to educate stakeholders and potential partnership of the importance and relevance of the policy. Engaging with a wide variety of organizations in the public, private and community sectors increases the visibility of the policy and therefore increases the number of potential partnerships which could bring additional resources to the table.

During the development of the National Urban Development Policy in Germany, for example, the National Urban Development Policy Board was created in order to build consensus and support the development of the policy by engaging a wide variety of stakeholders. This is one method of building consensus for a policy. Further details on the German National Urban Development Policy Board and further suggestions for other methods for building consensus can be found in the Formulation Review Toolkit.

## Building Consensus: The Development of a National Urban Development Policy Board, The Case of Germany

Germany's National Urban Development Policy seeks to advance six crucial goals through the development of this NUP: building civil society with citizens involved in their city; creating opportunities and preserving social cohesion; making the innovative city a driver of economic development; building the city of tomorrow that will be effective in combating climate change and assuming global responsibility; improving urban design; and urban enhancement through regionalization. The development process of the National Urban Development Policy, is guided by the National Urban Development Policy Board which includes representatives of a wide variety of stakeholders, including all levels of government, architects, planners, engineers, chambers of commerce, property-owners, tenants, craft associations, the construction industry and retailers. Civil society groups represented on the board include major churches as well as cultural, social and environmental associations, while the board is also rounded out by a number of distinguished individuals with academic and other forms of expertise in relevant areas. The existence of the Policy Board provides an excellent forum for discussion at all stages of the NUP process, particularly when building consensus during the formulation stage, which, as demonstrated through other case studies, is of paramount importance.

### Evaluating Human, Financial and Institutional Capacity

When considering how policy goals will be achieved, there are very practical considerations to attend to before the Implementation Phase. The first of these is the **assessment of human, financial and institutional capacity**. Capacity development has been defined by the United Nations Development Programme as, "the process through which individuals, organizations, and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time" (UNDP, 2008). In order to assess whether the various other actors have the necessary capacity to achieve a NUP's objectives, it is necessary to assess capacity prior to moving to the full

Implementation Phase. Failure to do this can result in capacity gaps that can cause disjointed implementation and severely lessen the policy's chances of success. A **capacity assessment** is one tool that can be used to determine if the implementing agencies have the necessary capacity. If gaps and needs are highlighted after undertaking an assessment of institutional capacity, then it is important to undertake **capacity development** prior to and throughout the implementation. The type of capacity development will be determined by the capacity gaps and needs identified. A number of tools exist which can aid in assessing capacity and undertaking the needed capacity development. Examples of these tools can be found in the Implementation Toolkit.

## Considering Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation During Formulation

*“A policy initiative is more likely to achieve the best possible outcomes when the question of how the policy is to be implemented has been an integral part of policy design. Where this does not receive sufficient and early attention, problems may arise during subsequent implementation. These problems may include: sub-optimal delivery methods; overambitious timeframes; resources not being available when required; inappropriate skills or capability for the initiative; and insufficient contingency planning” (Office of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, 2006).*

During the Formulation Phase, it is imperative to think beyond formulation and consider both the Implementation and Evaluation Phases.

Key implementation points to consider during the Formulation Phase are:

- The capacity of institutions: Formulating a policy that is beyond the capacity of institutions at the national, regional, and local levels will result in implementation gaps and the potential failure of the policy. Formulating a policy proposal that is realistic and based on institutional capacity is an essential consideration during policy formulation.
- The decentralization of institutional and financial capacity: If the decentralization of institutional powers is required, it is important to consider how long the decentralization process will take (including the necessary capacity development at lower levels) while formulating the policy plan and timeline. It is also essential to consider the extent to which the devolution of financial capacity is required in order to facilitate successful implementation and sustainability of the NUP.



Downtown Yangon, Myanmar © Flickr/World Bank

Key monitoring and evaluation points to consider during the Formulation Phase are:

- Even during policy formation, it is important to consider evaluation. It is important to consider that the policy is formulated in such a way that shows clear goals and objectives that can be evaluated.
- Prior to moving to the Implementation Phase, it is essential to confirm that all necessary baseline data has been collected and targets set in order to ensure meaningful monitoring and evaluation at a later stage of the NUP process.

### Summing Up:

During the NUP Formulation Phase, key steps have been taken to make decisions regarding

how the policy goals, defined during the Diagnosis Phase, will be achieved. These steps include **an evaluation of different policy options, the formulation of the policy plan, the building of consensus, and the evaluation of human, financial and institutional capacity**. Additionally, throughout the Formulation Phase there has been a **consideration of the Implementation and Monitoring, and Evaluation Phases during formulation**. By ensuring the clear definition of policy goals in the Diagnostic Phase and the formulation of a policy plan in the Formulation Phase, it is possible to begin the processes of implementing clear goals and processes. Building consensus has helped to build ownership of the policy amongst stakeholders, which should promote stakeholder engagement moving forward.



Traffic in Apia, Samoa @ Flickr/Simon\_sees

# Part Five: Implementation

## What has been considered so far

- Evaluating different policy options
- Formulating a policy proposal
- Building consensus
- Evaluating institutional capacity
- Considering implementation and monitoring and evaluation during formulation

## Expected accomplishments during implementation

During the NUP Implementation Phase, the policy proposal and plan that had been completed during the Formulation Phase will be translated into actionable items. To ensure that the implementation of the NUP is successful, there are a number of important steps:

- Undertaking an implementation analysis can help to understand the legislative and administrative landscape in which the NUP will be implemented;
- Completing an implementation plan is essential to structuring the way forward and communicating how implementation will play out to stakeholders;
- Developing a timeline is part of finalising an implementation plan and can aid in delegating roles and responsibilities;
- Clear delegation of roles and responsibilities will ensure that stakeholders understand what part they play in the implementation of the NUP;
- Decentralization and devolution of financial and governance power may be necessary in order to ensure that lower tiers of government have the power and capacity they need to successfully implement the NUP.

*"It is important to consider implementation of policy from the outset. It is often easier to implement change when those directly affected understand the reason for it and have some sense of engagement or ownership over the nature of the change or the way it is to be introduced. This provides another set of reasons for considering engaging with the staff and customers involved in the area affected by the policy initiative"* (**Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, 2003**).

## The NUP Implementation Phase

The NUP Implementation Phase is the phase when the policy plan is actioned. Due to the complex nature of policy implementation, it is important to prepare an implementation plan that can be complemented by an implementation analysis. The Implementation Phase should make all stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in implementing the policy clear and should ensure that all stakeholders have the capacity (human, financial and institutional) to implement the policy as planned.

Policy implementation is the stage where "policy decisions are translated into action" (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003; 185). There is no one way in which policy "should" be implemented; whether a policy should be implemented in a "top-down" or "bottom-up" fashion is an ongoing discussion, and is certainly context dependent. In an attempt to bridge that gap, Larzin (1995) suggests that implementation is "a part of a single, ongoing process in which policy is formulated, enacted and continually readjusted and adapted" (262). This comment highlights the need for policy implementation to be considered jointly with the policy formulation stage as well as other stages, rather than as a stand-alone stage of policy making. The previous Part Four highlighted the need to consider implementation during the formulation stage. It is equally necessary to consider formulation during implementation, as the policy can and should continue to grow and evolve while it is being implemented.

A healthy policy process will be iterative and non-linear. Where a policy is large in scale, an approach that can facilitate the ongoing awareness of formulation is for implementation to happen in stages, as opposed to a single roll-out of the whole policy. To facilitate the implementation of the NUP, there are a number of steps that can be considered. Undertaking an **implementation analysis** can help to prepare for implementation by highlighting any existing implementation gaps. Once the implementation analysis has been completed, it is useful to **develop an implementation plan and timeline**. Making an implementation plan allows for the breakdown and **delegation of roles and responsibilities**. Depending on this, the **decentralization** of power to lower levels of government may be considered.

## Implementation Analysis

Policy implementation is not a simple matter. It is no longer tenable to argue – as government officials, policy-makers, and academics thought at one time – that once a policy was formulated the administrative part of government would execute the relatively neutral step of policy implementation. This Framework recognizes that while going through the administrative process of implementation, policies can change, and therefore they are not always implemented in the way in which policy-makers had imagined in the Formulation Phase. Howlett and Ramesh (2003) commented that "the implementation process and its outcomes

are shaped by political factors related to state capacity and subsystem complexity” (203). Thus, instead of taking for granted the neutrality of the policy implementation process, prior to implementation it is important to understand the legislative and administrative landscape in which the policy will be implemented. One tool through which to do so is an **implementation analysis** (Mintrom, 2012: 285). Although implementation analysis does not have any one standard methodology, it is a tool which provides guidance on how to spot gaps that went unseen during the policy formulation phase. Weaver (2010) describes implementation analysis as “having a checklist of standards and concerns that can be applied when a policy proposal is being considered [that] can highlight potential trouble-spots early in the policymaking process” (2). Further information on how to undertake an implementation analysis can be found in the Implementation Toolkit.

## Developing an Implementation Plan and Timeline

Following an implementation analysis, **developing an implementation plan** can be helpful to structure the way forward. An implementation plan can help to:

- Determine a timeline for implementation;
- Inform service providers;
- Define roles and responsibilities for stakeholders;
- Develop communication protocols;
- Develop standards and procedures;
- Confirm performance indicators and targets.

Implementation of the NUP should always build on existing projects and initiatives that are being undertaken at different governmental levels and by different stakeholders. To be informed about these existing projects and initiatives, it is important to ensure that stakeholders remain involved in the NUP process, not only during the Diagnostic and Formulation Phases but also during the Implementation Phase. Holding **National Urban Forums** through the NUP process is an excellent way to remain engaged with stakeholders and up to date on their projects and initiatives.



Cranes at Dalian Port, China © Wikipedia/Axe

## Ensuring Continued Stakeholder Engagement and Participation Using National Urban Forums

Participation is one of the key pillars of the UN-Habitat NUP process. While it is essential to have the principles of participation streamlined through the process, it can be difficult to maintain this momentum, particularly after the formulation of the NUP. Undertaking a National Urban Forum (NUF) can be an excellent way of maintaining the participatory element of NUP and also ensuring the NUP remains a priority for government and stakeholders.

### What is a National Urban Forum?

A National Urban Forum is an environment and platform where stakeholders can meet and openly discuss urbanization challenges and opportunities at the local, regional and national levels. A NUF supports sustainable urban development processes by facilitating discussion and debate, and by allowing space for stakeholders to have their voices heard. A NUF does not have to be only a discussion forum but it can include elements of capacity development and advocacy activities in the form of workshops and training.

### How can a NUF benefit a NUP?

The ability of a NUF to bring stakeholders together and facilitate discussion is a valuable tool to have at any point of the NUP process, whether it is to set priorities for the NUP, assist in the selection of policy options, delegate roles and responsibilities, or facilitate monitoring and evaluation. The advocacy and awareness attributes of a NUF allow for the interaction, participation and consultation of stakeholders in the NUP process. This, combined with the possibility for the integration of capacity development and training elements with a NUF, make it an excellent tool to streamline the two pillars of NUP: participation and capacity development.

The design of an implementation plan also provides an excellent opportunity to consider the third pillar of a NUP: Acupuncture Projects. By designing the Implementation Plan to include strategic, concrete initiatives, the policy will quickly move from “policy action” to “direct action” to more quickly promote “on the ground” change.

Along with the implementation plan, **the establishment of a timeline** for implementation is an important

component. Depending on the size and scope of the policy, and the number of agencies and actors involved, the time required for implementation of the full urban policy will vary. In many cases, especially where policies are complex, implementation in phases can give time to evaluate and readjust as necessary. It follows from this that a timeline may well be altered as the process goes on, but the initial drawing of a timeline can be valuable in itself for a number of reasons.



Firstly, the development of a timeline allows for the laying out of sequential activities, tasks and duties during the implementation process. The organization of these activities will make the process of rolling out the policy clearer, and it also provides an opportunity to evaluate the budget based on the activities included in the timeline. A timeline also creates a system of accountability for all actors involved by creating deadlines for policy activities and goals. To set up this system of accountability, a clear and transparent delegation of roles and responsibilities must occur.

### **The Processes of Implementation:**

When developing an implementation plan and timeline, it is useful to think of policy implementation as consisting of three broad parts. Firstly, the policy is passed from the state level to the appropriate lower level of government or administrative arm of the government. Secondly, the

intent of the policy must be translated into legislation to allow for the enforcement of policy. Lastly, resources – human and financial – must be allocated in order to facilitate the actioning of the policy and legislative direction.

Once these three stages have been completed and the first policy phases have been put into effect, there must be a number of actions that are maintained through the Implementation Phases:

- Provide on-going support and assistance to staff;
- Monitor on-going implementation results;
- Change and update of institutional systems and culture, as necessary;
- Continue to explain and communicate why the policy is necessary and reiterate what the ultimate goals of the policy are;
- Create feedback mechanisms to inform future actions

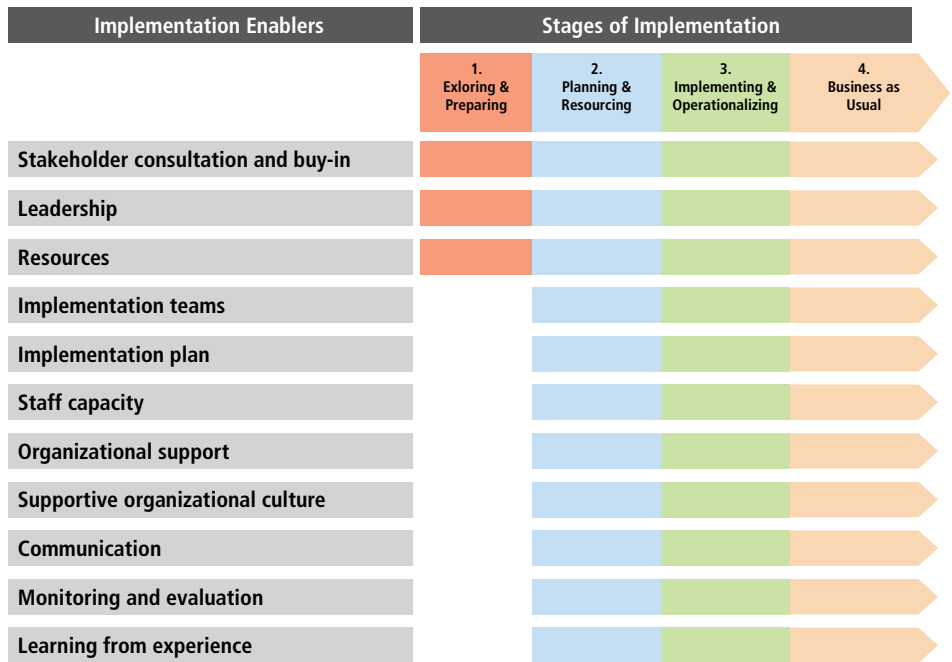
(Adapted from Burke *et al.*, 2012)



The diagram below highlights “implementation enablers” or necessary actions or preconditions for successful implementation and the implementation “stage” in which they are or could be undertaken: 1) Implementation Preparation, 2) Implementation Planning

and Resourcing, 3) Operationalizing Implementation, and 4) “Business as Usual” after the mainstreaming of the policy. More information on the “stages” of implementation can be found in the Introductory Guide to Implementation in the Implementation Toolkit.

**Figure 3: Implementation Enablers and Stages of Implementation (from Burke et al., 2012).**



Overall, in the Implementation Phase the degree of decentralization of power within the country and the possible implications for successful implementation must be considered along with the necessary delegation of roles and responsibilities.

## Delegating Roles and Responsibilities and Decentralization

The clear delineation of roles and responsibilities is essential for successful implementation of the NUP. In a complex policy environment, it is necessary not only to be clear about how and by whom the policy should be implemented, but also about who should evaluate different parts of the policy. Different actors at different levels will implement a NUP, therefore coordination is indispensable. The development of the Policy Plan during the Formulation Phase can aid in the delineation of roles and responsibilities for implementation. The Policy Task Breakdown within the Policy Plan allows for a roadmap of required actions which can be assigned to the appropriate area for implementation. The monitoring of the implementation process is essential. Firstly, because, as mentioned above, it is highly unlikely that any policy will be implemented exactly as it was formulated, and secondly it can be difficult, if not impossible, to foresee all tasks that will be necessary to successfully implement the policy. Consistent monitoring will allow for readjusting as necessary.

### Delegating Roles and Responsibilities: The Case of Rwanda

In order to facilitate the “ambitious agenda for change” (Office of the Prime Minister, 2012) the Rwandan Office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Cabinet Affairs published a Cabinet Manual in 2012. This aims to dictate the structures and working procedures of the Cabinet in order to capitalize on the opportunity for efficient and effective Cabinet operating procedures.

The Manual highlights the pillars of government in Rwanda (Executive, Legislature and Judiciary) and the key powers and roles of each pillar. The Manual also outlines the roles, responsibilities and expectations for members of the Cabinet, Ministers and Acting Ministers, including codes of conduct, travel guidance and a code of ethics. Lastly, the modalities of the Cabinet’s decision-making process are laid out clearly and transparently.

The Manual is a valuable tool in delineating the policy procedure in Rwanda, and particularly highlights the roles and responsibilities. Designing and building agreement on this type of Manual can lay the foundation for not only understanding the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the policy process, but also understanding the policy priorities, such as consultation and communication.

The full Rwandan Cabinet Manual can be found in the Implementation Review Toolkit.

## Creative Financing Techniques and Partnership Building: The Case of Morocco

In 2001, Morocco declared that “decent housing” would become a national priority. Accordingly, a three-year programme was initiated that aimed to integrate slums into the country’s urban fabric. As well as promoting resettlement in new housing insofar as land availability permitted, the programme involved enhancing of technical capacity and the generation of appropriate policy instruments. It was crucially important to find secure funding for implementation and, in 2001, a tax was introduced on cement. With the resulting revenue devoted to social housing initiatives, the tax was subsequently extended to cover all building materials. The resulting funds were also made available for other elements of urban renewal.

With international support, this innovative model was further enhanced in 2004 to create a more comprehensive plan for Villes sans Bidonvilles – Cities Without Slums. The new policy approach proceeded on a number of fronts simultaneously: subsidizing private developers to build affordable housing; locating public lands that could be used for development; reviewing the planning system to make it more effective; and signing contracts with city authorities to ensure implementation. In each year of the programme, between 100,000 and 150,000 affordable housing units were built, and 43 cities were declared slum-free by 2011. By 2013, the number of slum households had been reduced by some 75per cent.

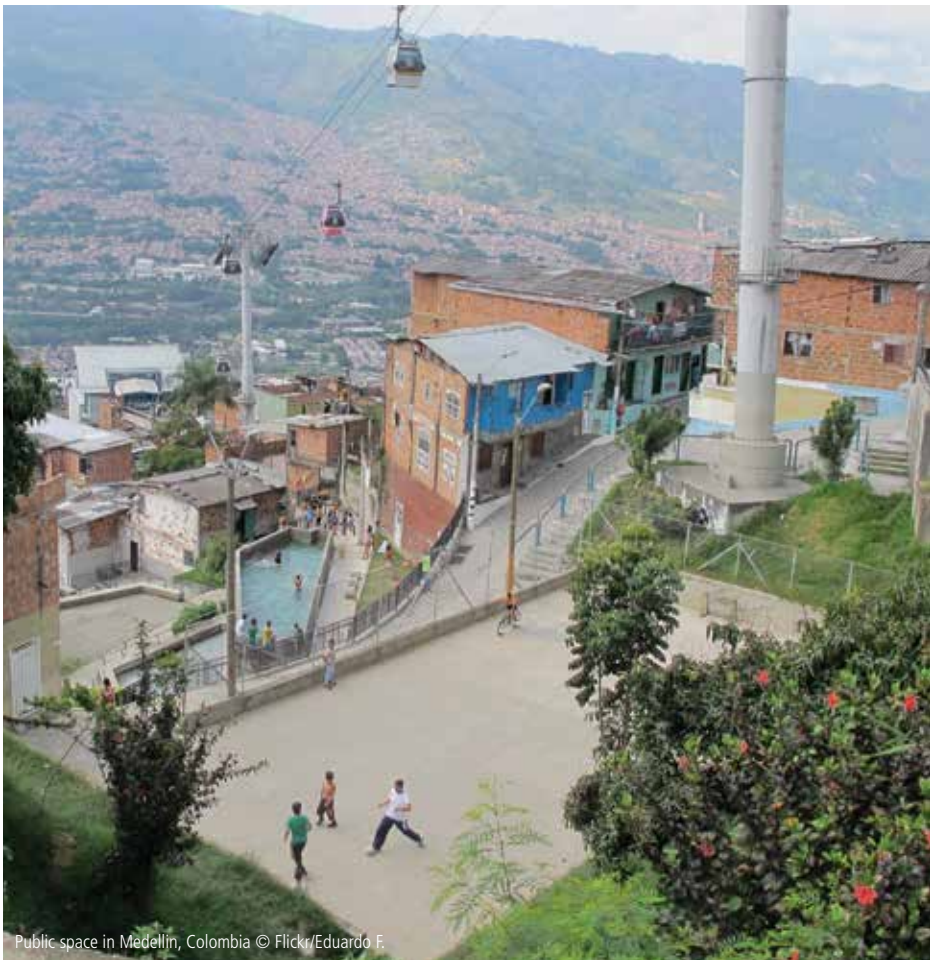
Depending on the way in which roles and responsibilities are delegated, it may be necessary to gradually decentralize both institutional and financial powers to lower levels of government, depending on their absorption capacity. Decentralization offers an opportunity for lower levels of government to engage in the NUP process and to be able to undertake the roles and responsibilities delegated to them in the Implementation Plan. Considering that these levels of government are often closer to the practical use of the NUP at the regional and local levels, this can ensure that the policy is place and context specific. However, it must be considered that implementing the NUP when decentralization is incomplete, and lower tiers of government therefore lack the institutional, human and financial capacities to support the NUP, can result in serious implementation gaps and policy failures. Further information on undertaking successful decentralization can be found in the *International Guidelines on Decentralization and Access to Basic Services For All*, available in the Implementation Toolkit.

## Summing Up:

The NUP Implementation Phase is the phase in which the policy plan, developed through the Diagnostic and Formulation Phases, is put into action. Policy implementation is complex due to the interplay between administrative and legislative arms. As is highlighted in this part, undertaking

an **implementation analysis** can help to prepare for implementation by highlighting existing implementation gaps. After the implementation analysis, the **development of an implementation plan and timeline** can help clarify the **roles and responsibilities** of different stakeholders and ensure that everyone has the same expectations for implementation. Depending on the delegation of roles and

responsibilities, the **decentralization** of power to lower levels of government may be considered. Finally, it is important to remember that not all implementation elements need to happen at one time. Instead, implementation can be rolled out in phases. With continuous monitoring and evaluation problems can be spotted and remedied more easily than after the full policy has been implemented.



Public space in Medellín, Colombia © Flickr/Eduardo F.

# Part Six: Monitoring and Evaluation

## What has been considered so far...

- Implementation analysis
- Implementation plan
- Developing a timeline
- Delegating Roles and Responsibilities
- Considering Decentralization and Devolution of Powers

## Expected Accomplishments during Monitoring and Evaluation...

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is the NUP phase which considers both the effectiveness of the process and the success of the outcomes. In order to facilitate evaluation, data collection and monitoring should be undertaken throughout the NUP process. Key accomplishments during the M&E Phases include:

- There are various ways in which evaluation can be undertaken, and the first task of the M&E Phases is to consider which approach to evaluation best suits evaluating the NUP.
- Consideration must be given to the difference between evaluating outcome and process. Evaluation of both is important, but is undertaken differently.
- How policy evaluation can lead to institutional learning in the context of NUP is important in order to ensure that lessons are incorporated into policy making in the future.
- Monitoring and evaluation is not a static phase but exists through the policy process. How to streamline M&E in the NUP should be considered.

The NUP Monitoring and Evaluation Phase should not be considered the “last” phase in the NUP process. Monitoring, as explained below, should be undertaken throughout the Evaluation is an opportunity to review the gains made so far and study any shortcomings. Lessons

learned from an evaluation of outcomes and of process can feedback into the policy cycle and promote an iterative policy design. Through consistent monitoring and evaluation much can be learned not only about the policy but also about the effectiveness of the policy process in a particular country context.

## Undertaking Evaluation

There are many different and varied approaches to undertaking policy and programme evaluation, some of which have been outlined in the Evaluation Toolkit. Time should be taken to select an approach which works in the specific policy context and will deliver results that will be useful. Generally, however, guidance can be given on what should, at a minimum, be undertaken. Firstly, it is necessary to **prepare for evaluation** well before the evaluation stage by collecting baseline data and diligently following a monitoring plan. Having a policy with clearly defined goals and an implementation plan will make the monitoring and evaluation process more straightforward. This has been outlined further in Part Three on Policy Formulation. Through monitoring, data can be collected during the run of the policy, with a specific view to evaluation. Baseline data that were initially collected will be required in order to

generate a clear delineation of the state of affairs before the policy was put into effect. Data must be kept to help to analyse the effective reach of the policy, and what expenditures of time and resources it has entailed. Information should be collected about and from the stakeholders and those affected by the policy initiative. This important data capture may be carried out continuously, or in successive waves, but in all cases the purpose is to compare with the baseline data in order to assess the impact of the policy. Once this comparison has been completed, the findings of the evaluation can be interpreted, both in terms of the actual functioning of the policy to date and in terms of its likely long-term effectiveness if it is still ongoing. Evaluation findings in the public policy arena are typically disseminated widely, and in the field of urban policy, this kind of dissemination is often important for keeping stakeholders and communities engaged and supportive.



## Gathering Data at Sub-National Governmental Levels: The City Prosperity Initiative and Urban Data Database

Gathering data at the sub-national levels can often be extremely challenging. However, data at this level is also frequently essential to understanding the context of NUP and collecting baseline data for policy monitoring and evaluation. UN-Habitat's City Prosperity Initiative and Urban Data Database can both serve as resources to gain data on sub-national levels.

### The City Prosperity Initiative

The City Prosperity Initiative (CPI) offers cities a possibility to create indicators to monitor urbanization trends and to collect baseline information. The CPI measures prosperity in cities across six dimensions:

- Productivity
- Infrastructure
- Quality of life
- Equity
- Environmental sustainability
- Governance and institutions

Data is collected within each dimension through the use of indicators for each dimension. By using the CPI cities can work to define targets and goals. Through the collection of data, city officials can define priorities and make evidence-based policy decisions. By collecting data using the CPI, officials at the national level can also gain a clearer picture of the state of urbanization in their country.

### UN-Habitat Urban Data

The UN-Habitat Urban Data Initiative aims to collect and make available urban data which has been analysed by UN-Habitat's Global Urban Observatory. Data for the initiative has been collected by national level statistics authorities in respective countries through household surveys and censuses.

## Outcome Evaluation and Process Evaluation

When undertaking a policy evaluation, it is important to distinguish between evaluating outcome and evaluating process. Both are important parts of evaluating policy, but can be viewed separately in order to ensure that both are considered.

### Evaluating Outcome:

Gerston (1997) defined evaluation in policy as the stage that "assesses the effectiveness of a public policy in terms of its perceived intentions and results". This definition, with its focus on effectiveness in terms of outcomes and results, can be considered to be a definition of outcome evaluation. There



are a number of points to make about this definition. The first concerns the word “effectiveness”. There are different ways in which the “effectiveness” of a policy can be described. Is it effective in terms of its value for money? In terms of its achievement of results within a short time scale? In terms of the overall goals of the policy? Therefore, when understanding evaluation, it is important to consider how “effectiveness” is being defined. This definition can have repercussions for the methods used during the evaluation itself. The second point regarding the definition is the reference to the policy’s “perceived intentions and results”. This highlights the importance of setting out clear and measurable goals during the policy formulation and implementation stages. The development of an implementation plan can also help when tracking process through monitoring. If evaluation is to measure the results of the policy against

the goals that were set for it, the goals need to be clear. However, evaluation should not only be about the measurement of results. An evaluation of process can be important in order to assess not only if goals have been reached, but how the process did or did not help with achieving these goals.

### Evaluating Process:

Gomby and Larson (1992) define process evaluation as one that:

*focuses on what services were provided to whom and how. Its purpose is to describe how the programme was implemented, who was involved and what problems were experienced. A process evaluation is useful for monitoring programme implementation, to identify changes to make the programme operate as planned, and, generally, for programme improvement (71).*



Ipoh railway station, Malaysia @ Wikipedia

While outcome evaluation has the ability to consider to what extent the NUP achieved the goals that it set out during the Diagnostic and Formulation Phases, an evaluation of process can potentially give an insight into what elements of the process led to successes or failures.

It is important, however, to consider a role for evaluation beyond outcome and process. Bovens *et al.* (2008) propose a form of evaluation that can facilitate dialogue and understanding among different stakeholders. Evaluation should enable debate. It is this debate and dialogue that encourages an interpretation that moves beyond assigning to the evaluation a fixed and narrowly-defined place in the policy process and, instead, creates the possibility that the evaluation operates in tandem with policy to inject debate and feedback into the policy cycle.

## **Building a Policy Inclusive of Monitoring and Evaluation**

The evaluation of a policy does not mark the “end” of the policy cycle and should not occur only at the end of a policy’s lifecycle. Monitoring and evaluation can be a vital and creative tool for assessing the ongoing value of a policy, and for prompting changes if necessary – again demonstrating that effective policy must be reflective about the past as well as being forward-looking. Using evaluation in this way promotes iterative policy design, as explained more thoroughly below. The importance of using monitoring

and evaluation in this way is especially applicable to a policy such as a NUP, which, by its nature, is complex and of long duration.

Marking key times during policy implementation to evaluate how the programme is functioning and the degree to which it is attaining its goals can be an effective way of ensuring that the policy’s operation in practice will be monitored in such a way as to facilitate any needed adjustments and improvements. Careful planning for evaluation, therefore, must be an integral part of the preceding policy phases, and certainly should be a priority during the Formulation Phase – thus, data gathering for evaluation can be smoothly put into action when implementation begins, and evaluation itself carried out at regular, predetermined intervals. Ensuring that monitoring and evaluation takes place throughout the NUP process promotes the creation of a constant “feedback loop”, where progress can be evaluated and readjusted if necessary. As described below, this feedback loop promotes iterative policy practices.

## **Iterative Policy Practices and the Feedback Loop**

Rather than thinking of policy making as a linear or rational exercise, in the context of this Framework, policy should be understood as a matter of iterative process. In order for policy to influence the decisions of government in an effective and useful way, it must be grounded in a

pre-determined, yet flexible and iterative, process. A thorough process may involve elements such as, among others, research, analysis of data and context, synthesis of information, and consistent monitoring and evaluation. While the creation of a NUP must be based on evidence, this practice is not a one-time stage during policy formulation. The NUP process is always subject to the interplay of complex and competing influences, and so all effective policy development will have the ability to accommodate and adjust to such contingencies, based on a continuous review of experiences and feedback. This review can be facilitated through the consistent monitoring and evaluation of policy progress. In this way, evaluation of the policy does not mark the “end” of the policy cycle. Rather, monitoring and evaluation are built into the policy during Formulation so that it can be reviewed and revised as the process moves forward. This iterative process allows for lessons learned from initial stages or pilot projects to be taken into account and to help inform and shape future NUP stages. Maintaining a dialogue allows policy makers and stakeholders to continuously look forward and reflect back in order to ensure that feedback and lessons learned help shape the process.

Policy never exists in isolation. Its elements constantly interact with one another, and are also affected by societal factors that occur in and influence the policy arena. Due to the complexity of urban characteristics and problems, and the tensions that inherently exist among

stakeholders and communities, these fluidities are particularly evident in the urban policy context. The proper inference is that urban policies require an especially iterative development process, keeping long-term goals in sharp focus while being responsive at all times to those who will be most directly affected by the policies adopted. This iterative process not only provides valuable information for the NUP, but also for the institutions involved in the NUP process. As described below, iterative policy practices through consistent monitoring and evaluation can help to promote valuable institutional learning.

## Policy Evaluation and Institutional Learning

Evaluation is meant not only to measure the success or failure of a policy, but also to provide guidance on opportunities to do better. Therefore, a good evaluation should not only ask *if* the policy has achieved its goals but also *how* and *why*. This distinction can be achieved by undertaking an evaluation that uses both outcome evaluation and process evaluation. While outcome evaluation can answer *if* the policy achieved its goals to date, process evaluation can help to understand the *how* and *why* by highlighting what it is about the policy process that has been successful or not. This *how* and *why* information, in turn, provides an opportunity for institutional learning that not only improves the ongoing performance of this policy, but also provides a basis for the improvement of future policy initiatives

and the performance of institutions. The Government of Canada, for example, states that policy evaluation:

*is the systematic collection and analysis of evidence on the outcomes of programmes to make judgments about their relevance and performance, and to examine alternative ways to deliver them or to achieve the same results* (Treasury Board of Canada, 2013).

Regarding the role of evaluation in programme betterment and learning, Kusek *et al.* (2005) comment that “generating information to hold government accountable is certainly one reason to generate information, but another is for learning and managing” (14) and that evaluation “provides critical information and empowers policy makers to make better informed decisions” (21). Although the steps between information and empowerment are not cogently set out, learning and betterment are clearly emphasized. Likewise, Conlin and Stirrat (2008) assert that the learning function is one step beyond the traditional role of evaluation as a tool for accountability, and believe that this “increasing stress on the learning functions of the evaluation” is due to an increasing trend of viewing evaluation as “contributing to ‘empowerment’” through the generation of knowledge and awareness (Conlin and Stirrat, 2008;196).

There is no easy way to ensure that outcomes from evaluation are successfully used to promote institutional learning. However engaging with stakeholders and policy makers and administrators during the evaluation process enhances the visibility of the evaluation and increases the likelihood of the results being regarded as useful. More information on methods for Participatory Evaluation can be found in the Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit.

### Summing Up:

Although policy evaluation is often associated with the “end” of a policy, the NUP Monitoring and Evaluation Phase should not be considered the “last” phase in the NUP process. As explained above, monitoring should be started with the beginning of the policy, through the collection of baseline data, and continued periodically throughout the policy’s lifecycle. When developing the policy, it is important to recognize the difference between **outcome evaluation and process evaluation**. While both are essential, it is important to recognize the different perspectives that both evaluating outcome (the *if*) and evaluating process (the *how* and *why*) can bring. Lessons learned from an evaluation of outcomes and of process can feedback into the policy cycle and promote **iterative policy practices and feedback loops**. Institutionalizing the lessons learned from outcome and process evaluations and feedback loops can promote **institutional learning and systems change**.

# Conclusions

With the increasingly rapid rate of urbanization come both challenges and opportunities in the areas of social, economic and environmental change. Urbanization brings opportunity: the possibility of betterment of social services, enhancing employment opportunities, the provision of better housing options and country wide economic competitiveness. However, with these opportunities come challenges, many of which have emerged from the relatively uncontrolled urbanization of the last century. As shown through the commitment to the betterment of human settlements in SDG 11m and through the processes for the upcoming Habitat III Conference, there is now strong global recognition of the need for a coordinated and directed approach to urbanization. As illustrated in this Framework, a NUP is a tool for government that aims to capitalize on the opportunities of urbanization through promoting an organized and sustained approach to urban growth and management. By undertaking the process of developing a NUP, countries can help translate urbanization into productivity and prosperity into city and country level competitiveness at the global level.

There is now a considerable body of global experience with NUPs, which UN-Habitat has worked to research and distill. Through the use of the associated Toolkits, NUP case

studies and regional reports, and the NUP database (all produced by the UN-Habitat), it is possible to draw from a growing amount of international experience and lessons learned which together, support the formulation of evidence-based NUPs. There is enormous potential for NUP initiatives to address the global opportunities and challenges presented by urbanization, as well as to focus on resolutions that are specific to urban-related problems for any given country.

It is important to note that the value of a NUP lies not only in the product, but also in the process. While moving through the stages of feasibility, diagnosis, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, it becomes possible to legitimize institutional, legislative, economic and urban-planning related reforms that will enable the processes of sustainable and inclusive urbanization, thereby promoting systems change.

It is important to emphasize that the NUP phases are not discrete processes necessarily following one after the other. They are layered and non-linear, and, at any time, it may be necessary and healthy to back-track and rethink a particular approach in order to promote an iterative policy design. This is true of all policy processes, but it is especially true with a NUP, which is crucially dependent on wide

participation and on the engagement of stakeholders and communities. Throughout the NUP process, it is important to reflect upon the three pillars, as outlined by UN-Habitat: **public participation, capacity development and acupuncture projects.**

Accordingly, this Framework, in conjunction with the NUP toolkits, NUP case studies, NUP regional reports and NUP database, seeks to provide positive and practical recommendations regarding the policy

process of a NUP. This Framework will undoubtedly be adapted and modified to suit the needs of any given country. However, it can provide a practical and workable outline of the essential steps that require consideration when developing economically, socially, environmentally and culturally sustainable cities.



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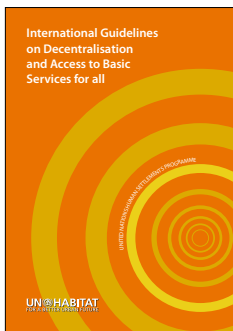
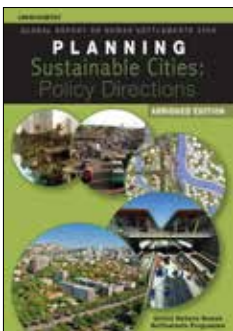
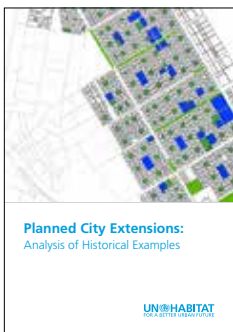
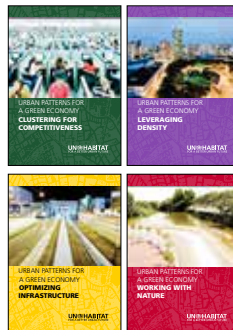
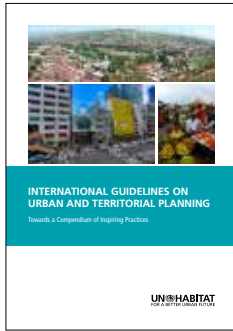
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Rapid urbanization has become one of the most defining features of the twenty-first century. Along with climate change, the growth of human settlements is one of the most powerful forces shaping territorial development globally. To respond to this, countries need to develop a coordinated approach to urban development. In this context, urban planning and policy require a scope that reaches beyond traditional borders and the traditional city. Wider ranging questions about issues such as urban connectivity between cities, regional level development, and consideration for the urban/rural interface, must now be answered. These imperatives demand, in turn, a broader approach to urban planning and policy. This broader conception requires a higher level of vertical and horizontal coordination through national level guidance on urban development, in the form of national urban policies. According to UN-Habitat, a National Urban Policy (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 for the long term.***

NUP is an essential tool for national government. Its necessity has been demonstrated through the inclusion of NUP as one of ten Policy Units for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. When developed in consultation with other stakeholders, NUP can provide an opportunity to control urbanization and capitalize on the opportunities of urbanization. By doing so, a NUP can help to promote productive, prosperous, and environmentally sustainable cities.

This Guiding Framework is based both on research and on lesson drawing from countries that have undertaken an urban policy at the national level. This Framework will highlight themes on each stage of the NUP process, feasibility, diagnostic, formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. While the process to develop a NUP will be different in each context, the Framework will allow for the identification of key considerations for each phase.

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