

Country Brief

# Kenya

2023

A better quality of life for all in an  
urbanizing world



Ngara bus stop - Arch. Maranga Njoroge 2023

# A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL IN AN URBANIZING WORLD

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



**UN-HABITAT**

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## URBAN CONTEXT AND TRENDS

The estimated urban population in 2021 is 28% which is comparatively low, both in relation to other lower-middle income countries at 40% and for Sub-Saharan Africa at 41%. The 2019 population census results indicate 19.5 million people live below poverty line, with 1.3 million in peri-urban and 4.2 in core-urban areas, with an estimated 60% of them living in slums and informal settlements. At the current rates of urbanization, approximately 50% of Kenyans will live in urban areas by 2030.

This rapid growth over the past decade has seen the poor urban population increase both in absolute numbers and as a share of the total living in slums and informal settlements spread across the country, with poor housing conditions, overcrowding, poor infrastructure, inadequate access to social amenities, water and sanitation services, poor health and high crime rates. The existing global crisis intensifies existing inequalities in access to essential services, especially water, further worsening the socio-economic situation.



Previously, the Kenyan urban system comprised one dominant metropole (Nairobi city) and secondary cities of Mombasa, Kisumu, and Nakuru. With devolution this trend is shifting with more urbanization occurring at county level (currently at 47 in Kenya) level as they continue to assume more roles as economic and socio-political hubs of the counties. Without proper urban plans and guidance, this might lead to growth of more slums and informal settlements, undue pressure to the existing urban infrastructure and basic services and most importantly, deteriorating urban environment. This therefore calls for integrated and holistic urban planning to improve access to basic services, reverse the proliferation of informal settlements and minimize urban risks especially to the most vulnerable.



# FACT SHEET

## Country urban figures

- Total Country Population (2023 projections): 51.5 Million
- Urban population (2019): 31.2%
- Urban growth rate: 3.7%
- Number of Urban areas- 372
- Major Cities and urban population (2019): Nairobi (4, 395, 749); Mombasa (1,208,112); Kisumu (440,788); Nakuru ( 1,046,938)

## Housing and informality

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slums in Kenya:</li> <li>• 60% of urban population live in 498 Informal settlement and slums</li> <li>• Housing Deficit: 2 M</li> </ul> | <p>Slums in major urban areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kibera in Nairobi</li> <li>• Dandora in Nairobi</li> <li>• Mukuru Kwa njenga in Nairobi</li> <li>• Mtwapa in Kilifi</li> <li>• Bondeni in Nakuru</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## Provision of basic services

- 24.6% of urban Households have access to the Main Sewer System
- 80% of Nairobi Urban population use public transport or non motorized transportation

## SWM services

- 15.3% of urban Household have Access to Solid waste Management Services (2019)

## Environmental and Climate Vulnerability

- Drought situation and Food Insecurity
- Expanding inland lakes and rivers
- Biodiversity loss, pollution, climate change



## UN HABITAT IN KENYA

In line with the Mid-Term Plans of Kenya's Vision 2030, UN-Habitat continues to focus on providing support to human settlements and sustainable urbanization priorities of the Government of Kenya within the context of several frameworks including the Habitat Country Programme Document for Kenya 2023-2027, a critical tool for mobilizing resources targeting implementation of programmes and projects at the national and county levels.

The country portfolio is guided by the Habitat Country Programme Document (HCPD) that builds upon the Government of Kenya's Mid Term Plans (MTP) of the Vision 2030 and aligns with the county governments' Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs). The HCPD enhances effective service delivery and sustainable urban development at national and county levels and is aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Co-operation Framework for Kenya (UNSDCF). At county level, the portfolio is supporting interventions such as capacity building at institutional, policy and skills level, evidence-based planning, risk mitigation and reduction, urban-rural linkages, sustainable utilization of blue economy and packaging of projects with investment potential through the Cities Investment Facility (CIF). Some key impactful and transformative achievements have been done in partnership with national and county governments, UN agencies, and donors.



# FOCUS AREAS

## 1 Improved Land management and sustainably planned human settlements

This will involve supporting the national and county level entities in the preparation of lower-level plans, including County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs), Sectoral plans, the County Physical and Land Use Development Plans (CPLUDP), Local Physical Land Use Development Plans (LPLUDP) and development control tools.

## 3 Promotion of innovative mechanisms in urban economy and financing

The country programme will continue to support counties through such units in promoting Local Economic Development (LED) and local revenue enhancement. UN-Habitat will provide part of the support to the government under the UNSDCF strategy, which focuses on SME-driven, decent, accessible particularly to youth, women and vulnerable groups and human rights compliant economic development.

## 2 Improved access to housing, quality urban basic services and infrastructure as well as upgraded slums and informal settlements

UN-Habitat has engaged the government to support provision of urban basic services that have been decentralized especially for the urban poor. The UN-Habitat has undertaken several joint activities to address the challenges, but more technical assistance is needed to rehabilitate urban basic services to keep up with the expanding population, while addressing the environmental issues on climate change.

## 4 Climate Change, Resilience and Disaster Risk Management.

UN-Habitat will offer support through technical capacity building to urban planners, city and municipal managers on areas of mainstreaming climate resilience, mitigation and adaptation in their city management and development (including early warning and response) processes to minimize the impacts of climate induced disasters, development of resilient and green infrastructure, climate action financing, environmental protection and reduction of greenhouse gases.


The **crosscutting issues** of human rights, gender, youth, children and older persons will be mainstreamed.

# About Our Projects


Ongoing Projects




## Coastal Cities and Blue Economy in Kenya (Go Blue) Project


 **Location:** Coastal County

 **Budget:** US\$ 8M

 **Donor:** EU

 **Objective:** To build capacity of institutions and relevant staff in land – sea planning and management for sustainable utilization of the blue economy, conservation of coastal urban and marine environment, inclusive economic growth, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. In four of the urban areas, the project is improving the municipal solid waste management systems and mitigating waste discharge from coastal cities into the Indian ocean as a way to demonstrate sustainable land-sea linkages towards “zero waste”.

## Kilifi Municipality ISUDP, Kilifi County

 As part of implementation of the Kilifi County Spatial Plan, the municipality of Kilifi is working with UN-Habitat and Trademark Africa to develop the Kilifi Integrated Strategic Urban Development Plan that will respond to the existing urban demands and needs for protection of the fragile environment of the municipality. UN-Habitat is providing technical backstopping including mainstreaming of international best practices on human settlements planning and design in the preparation of the ISUDP while Trademark Africa and the county government of Kilifi are each providing financial support. The ISUDP will lead to the development of various strategies including the municipal financing strategy with own source revenue plan as well as infrastructure for investments such special economic zones and industrial parks.

## Moyale Town LPLDP, Marsabit County

 UN-Habitat is supporting the County of Marsabit to prepare the Integrated Urban Development Plan (ISUD) for Moyale town, a rapidly developing major economic hub shared by Kenya and Ethiopia. The ISUD for Moyale town is envisaged to improve land use management, guide infrastructure development & connectivity within the towns, increase investment & trade thereby increase opportunities for livelihoods. The process involves the development of a Strategic Plan for Moyale with a clear vision, the preparation of a Land Use Plan for development control in a participatory manner and based on clear evidence

## Affordable Housing – Mavoko Sustainable Neighborhood Programme (SNP), Machakos County

 The housing project is taking place on 55 acres of land availed by UN-Habitat in Mavoko, Machakos County availed to Government to implement the Affordable Housing Programme. The project aims at constructing 5,360 housing units of different typologies to fill the gap of decent and affordable social houses for Kenyans. The Government of Kenya has provided USD 250,000 towards UN-Habitat’s technical support and seconded two staff from the ministry of Housing and Urban Development to support UN-Habitat’s country programme. The Government has further identified a private developer to provide the required funding and execute the project. A joint Steering Committee and joint Technical Committee have been constituted to oversee and provide input respectively to the project and are working at different levels.



# About Our Projects

Close and Ongoing  
Projects



## Strengthening Planning for Resettlement and Integration of Refugee Communities at Kalobeyei, Turkana County and Decommissioning of Dadaab Camp, Garissa County

 This is a multiyear project that begun in 2019. The objective of the project is to promote harmonious co-existence of host and refugee communities, ensuring long term sustainability, self-reliance, conflict reduction and resilience. Settlement planning has been done for over 60,000 refugees and host communities on 15 square kilometers of land in Kalobeyei. Support was given to development of livelihoods for refugees and host communities – provision of ‘hardware’ (facilities - shelter and infrastructure including a community center) and ‘software’ (capacity and skills development). The institutional capacity of the County Government to plan for and respond to refugee influx was also strengthened. In Dadaab, the capacity of the County Government is being built to re-plan and integrate the Camp into the County spatial planning and development programmes. One of the key outputs of the Project is the Kalobeyei Settlement Advisory Local Physical Development Plan, shows below.

UN-Habitat has implemented over 30 projects since 2010 in 22 Counties in Kenya, equivalent to 46.8% coverage of the Counties. 68% of the projects implemented are in the greater Nairobi metropolitan area (Nairobi, Kiambu, Machakos). More than USD14,510,725 has been mobilized by UN Habitat and invested in urban development in Kenya. More than 222,252 people have benefited directly from UN-Habitat’s activities in Kenya from its various interventions since 2010. Over these years, the portfolio was characterized by small projects with very limited funding, this is due to change in the coming year as the country office is adopting a programmatic approach that aim bigger impact to the Kenyan Population through strategic partnership with the Kenya Gov’t, UN agencies and Donor community

# Pipeline Projects

## Project Proposal: Partnership Implementing the New Urban Agenda Phase 1 (PINUA)

- **Donor:** EU
- **Budget:** EUR 7 Million
- **Duration:** 2023-2027

**Objective:** Upscaling of adequate housing and communities green coproduction. PINUA-1 is to offer paths towards inclusive community development, housing finance, and sustainable housing construction catalyzing not only private sector investments but moreover community and households investments.

## Project Proposal: BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE FOR THE URBAN POOR (BCRUP)

- **Location:** Kenya informal settlements
- **Budget:** To be determined
- **Partner:** WFP, UN Women, IOM, UNDRR

**Objective:** To Build the climate resilience of communities living in Urban informal settlements in Kenyan that are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, primarily through gender transformative urban planning, green based economy and diversified livelihoods

## Project Proposal : The Nairobi River Basin Regeneration Programme.

- **Location:** Nairobi
- **Donors:** Germany, Others To be identified

**Objective:** To regenerate, restore and enhance the Nairobi Rivers Basin and related infrastructure an urban structure in an integrated and holistic way to such standards as permits the full enjoyment of a safe, inclusive and healthy environment for all and unlock the socio-economic potential of the Basin.



# Pipeline Projects

## Project Proposal: Collaboration with Nakuru County

- **Location:** Nakuru County
- **Budget:** To be identified

**Objective:** This collaboration is built on the MOU signed between Nakuru County and UN Habitat and will feature activities around Urban Mobility, Blue economy, Housing and Basic services, Solid waste Management, Youth innovation, information and livelihood and local economic development.

## Project Proposal : Unlocking the potential of Inland Lakes and rivers to towns and urban areas around them.

- **Location:** Rift Valley, Nyanza and western regions
- **Funding Mechanism:** To be identified

**Objective:** To improve cities urban management and resilience and unlock economic potential of the inland lakes and rivers for the benefit of their respective towns and urban areas.

## Project Proposal: Peaceful and Resilient Borderlands in the Horn of Africa

- **Location:** Moyale-Borana Region in the Horn of Africa
- **Funding Mechanism:** To be identified
- **Partners:** FAO, Local Authorities

**Objective:** Peace and resilience of communities and governments of the Moyale-Borana region in contexts of perpetual climate induced displacement improved.

### Proposed Outcome areas

**Outcome 1:** Capacities of communities and local governments to cope with the adverse effects of climate change induced displacement improved.

**Outcome 2:** Peacebuilding, disaster management and social cohesion in the most vulnerable communities integrated.







Capacity building session with county leaders and technical staff held in Gigiri



Solid waste material recovery facility ground-breaking in Taita Taveta.

# Our Achievements

- In 2015 UN-Habitat facilitated implementation of the Executive Urban Leadership Conference whose aim was to boost dialogue between County Governors and the central government on issues related to sustainable urban development
- UN-Habitat has facilitated at varying levels the capacity building of staff from 13 counties which were part of the Kenya Municipal Programme
- Training on application of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) for County Spatial Planning in Kenya
- Better street design & improved pedestrianization in Ruiru Town, Kiambu County
- Establishing long-term solid waste management strategy in Kisii: 50 youth employed by the venture that was created are currently recycling and plastic into saleable products
- The design and construction of the Nyakwere Market that serves up to 20,000 people from 3 different counties was successfully completed as part of this activity.
- Lake Front Planning and Development Initiative in Kisumu City
- Under participatory slum upgrading in Mtwapa, Kilifi County, Over 12,000 households accessed improved water supply; 3000 households obtained security of tenure, solid waste management support covering 3000 households and sanitation facilities for 6000 people was provided.
- Compilation of the Inventory of Public Spaces in Nairobi and Kisumu Counties
- Under lake Victoria Region Water and Sanitation Initiative 100,651 people accessed safe drinking water while over 80,241 people now have access to sanitation facilities, Staff from 3 water service providers and 3 County Governments were trained on financial aspects of operating water, sanitation systems, 100 local government staff and 50 staff from the 3 water utilities were trained on technical aspects of operating, maintaining, and managing water and sanitation systems.
- Under the Covid 19 intervention in the country:

#### *Key achievements:*

*73(8 permanent and 65 temporary) handwashing stations installed in 6 counties that recorded 3.4 million handwashes significantly contributing to mitigation of COVID-19. 3 resource centers and 2 One Stop Youth Centers availed where community youth volunteers were mobilized to contribute to COVID-19 mitigation, sensitization and awareness campaigns and dissemination of messages. 176 youth volunteers in 19 informal settlements across 6 counties (Kilifi – 42; Kisumu – 32; Nairobi – 60; Nyeri – 12; and Mandera – 30) trained and 52 youth volunteers did door to door dissemination of messages and distribution of related materials. The mapping of informal settlements in Kenya by youths provided evidence in form of data for 5 key policy briefs on handwashing facilities, education facilities, solid waste management, and COVID 19.*





# IMPACT STORY

## **UN Habitat technical assistance in the establishment and Launch of the Nairobi River commission**

On the 22 February 2023, His Excellency William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya accompanied by H.E Rigathi Gachagua and other senior government official presided over a high level inauguration of the Nairobi River Commission at Korogocho Peoples Park, Nairobi. During the launch the Head of State in his speech acknowledged the past effort done by partners including UN-Habitat and UNEP towards the regeneration of the rivers in Nairobi and in particular noted UN-Habitat's contribution in undertaking the Nairobi River Regeneration Initiative.

UN Habitat assisted in the development of the commission. During the event, Rafael Tuts Director Global solutions Division represented Executive Director to UN-Habitat and read her statement noting that the Nairobi rivers provide an unparalleled advantage which could be a turning point towards sustainable urban development. This will ultimately improve urban health and wellbeing, create decent jobs and eco-tourism opportunities. It will also enhance biodiversity, and support the provision of clean water, sanitation and waste management. The initiative will further be a catalyst for infrastructure development i.e affordable housing, non-motorized transport and green public spaces, particularly within the vulnerable areas. He acknowledged the great role given to UN-Habitat together with her sister agency UNEP and World Resources Institute as members of the Advisory Group.

# Donors and Partners



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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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