

**UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
(UN-HABITAT)**

Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: 2004 - 2005

Background

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is now accepted as the framework for Africa's development. Although the initial programme document of the NEPAD did not feature the urban sector and the mandate of UN-HABITAT as a priority issue, however, the Water for African Cities Programme was singled out. In order to address this gap, UN-HABITAT embarked on a two-track strategy to bring the urban challenge to the forefront of Africa's development agenda. These strategies are being implemented through a multi-pronged approach outlined here below.

Advocacy work

UN-HABITAT embarked on intense lobbying and mobilization of political will to sensitize African leaders on the fact that for NEPAD to succeed, it could not afford to ignore the rapid rate of urbanization in Africa, and its impact on the quality of life of citizens. The activities that marked this track include:

- Attendance at OAU/AU summits in 2000-2004;
- Regular correspondence with and information dissemination to key Ministers in charge of Housing and Urban Development;
- Address from the Executive Director to the African Heads of State and Government Steering Committee of the NEPAD in Abuja in November 2002;
- Securing Decision 29 by the 2nd AU Summit in Maputo and engaging with the AU Commission to implement it;
- Driving and coordinating the organization of an African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development;

AU / Decision 29 - AMCHUD

The effort to draw the attention of the leadership of Africa to the challenges of urbanization culminated in the AU taking a landmark Decision 29 on "Promoting the Development of Sustainable Cities in Africa". By this decision, the AU called on the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT to continue rendering support to the Commission of the AU in implementing the various decisions taken with regard to the issues raised. This decision, along with others previously taken at the WSSD formed the basis of the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD).

AMCHUD I was jointly convened by UN-HABITAT and the African Union, and hosted by the Government of South Africa from 31 January to 4 February 2005, in Durban, South Africa.

Its major outcomes included: (i) Establishment of a standing consultative mechanism, whose Bureau is composed of a Chair - South Africa; a Rapporteur – Kenya; Members: - Algeria, Senegal and Chad; (ii) The functioning modality and venue of the Secretariat will be determined as soon as possible and will be supported by South Africa, African Union and UN-HABITAT; (iii) Agreement on an “Enhanced Framework of Implementation of Housing and Urban Development in Africa”; (iv) Agreement on a common position on Africa’s message to the 13th Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD-13), the 20th Session of the Governing Council (GC-20) and on the Implementation Review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

AMCHUD 2005 also recognized the relevance of the NEPAD Cities Programme initiated by UN-HABITAT. The Programme is now entrenched in the Declaration by African Ministers, who have resolved to support and strengthen its further activities.

Coordination of clusters and interagency consultations

In response to resolution 57/7 of November 2002, UN agencies working in Africa were organized in clusters to assist in implementing the priority themes identified by NEPAD. UN-HABITAT has been chairing Cluster 4 on Environment, Population and Urbanisation with the active participation of various UN agencies including: IMO, UNECA, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, WMO, UNDP, and in collaboration with the NEPAD Secretariat.

In addition, various units and branches of UN-HABITAT have been very active within the NEPAD cluster arrangement, including the Urban Governance Section as the agency’s focal point for Cluster 2; the Disaster Management Unit devoted to conflict situations and post conflict reconstruction contributing as well to the work of Cluster 2; and Water, Sanitation and Infrastructure Branch related to UN-Water (Africa) and UN-Energy (Africa) - both of these are in Cluster 1 on Infrastructure Development.

NEPAD Cities Programme – Phase I

Track 2 of UN-HABITAT’s efforts in the implementation of the NEPAD objectives comprises a programme implementation strategy. UN-HABITAT formulated the NEPAD Cities Programme as a means of achieving a quick-win for NEPAD. NEPAD Cities Programme has been a product of cluster 4 with UN-HABITAT as lead agency, to popularize NEPAD at the community level, initially through the municipalities. A concept paper was developed and a proposal for selection of seven cities to start it was endorsed by the Heads of State Implementation Committee at their 8th meeting in Maputo. A flash publication of the concept paper was printed in both English and French and a sum of USD 125,000 provided from UN-HABITAT Foundation to start the programme in Bamako, Douala, Durban, Lagos, Lusaka, Nairobi and Rabat. The progress to date is as follows:

- Profiles of seven cities have been completed and discussed at the first consultative forum held in Lagos;
- Mayor's Committee has been set up to supervise the NEPAD Cities Award and ensure its acceptance as part of APRM, chaired by the Mayor of Durban;
- Report of Phase I of the NEPAD Cities Programme has been finalized;
- Progress of the NEPAD City Programme was reported in Chairman's report to the 3rd AU Summit in July 2004.

NEPAD Cities Programme – Phase II

With Phase I of the NEPAD Cities Programme successfully concluded, it is in Africa's interest to capitalize on the momentum of Phase I and intensify efforts to continue building constituencies with the help of local authorities within the African region. Indeed, UN-HABITAT's partnership with local authorities over the past decade has been key in improving the overall collaboration between the United Nations and this crucial partner group for the benefit of the urban poor.

The proposed priority issues for Phase II of the NEPAD Cities Programme will focus on: (i) localizing the NEPAD objectives; (ii) bringing the concept of sustainable cities closer to the decision-making organs; (iii) expanding the concept of Environmental Planning and Management (EPM); (iv) supporting the NEPAD Cities Award Initiative in collaboration with United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA); (v) involving the NEPAD Cities partners in UN-HABITAT's work on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities; (vi) Promoting the NEPAD Cities as engines of growth and as tools for regional integration.