

**SYNTHESIS OF NATIONAL REPORTS ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HABITAT AGENDA
IN THE AFRICA REGION***

Summary

The main objective of this preliminary report is to highlight the main trends and issues of concern in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, as identified in the national reports received so far from countries in the ECA region by UNCHS (Habitat). The commitments and strategies of the Habitat Agenda, which are the core-negotiated agreements of Habitat II, provide the framework for the assessment. For each of the commitments covered, the synthesis highlights key issues from the 33 national reports so far analyzed, with an emphasis on progress made since 1996, prevailing conditions, new trends and emerging issues, policy and legislative changes since Habitat II, institutional weaknesses and obstacles encountered and lessons learnt, with emphasis on sustainability and impact. The presentation is organized in six chapters: shelter; social development and eradication of poverty; environmental management; economic development; governance; and international cooperation, as per the guidelines for country reporting issued by UNCHS (Habitat) in October 1999.

Revisiting the Istanbul commitments is a powerful reminder of the strength of the goals set at the Habitat II Conference and a way to assess the extent to which further action is required to implement them. Progress has been made in many countries, but more intensive action is needed in all areas.

The purpose of the regional meeting that was held in Addis-Ababa Ethiopia 6-8 November 2000 was not only to review progress made but also to identify and agree on concrete initiatives for extending and strengthening action to implement the Habitat Agenda commitments and achieve its goals in the ECA region.

*This document has not been formally edited.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul, Turkey in 1996 endorsed important changes in the approach to human settlements, acknowledging the need for guiding urbanization, rather than preventing it. 171 governments adopted the Habitat Agenda - a global call to action. The Habitat Agenda highlighted that the benefits of economic growth should be spread equitably among all, and that fulfilling the basic requirement in terms of housing, employment and services for the people should rest upon a national consensus where supportive policy frameworks recognize and strengthen action by local levels of government, civil society and communities.

2. As elaborated in the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements and the Global Plan of Action, the objectives of the Habitat Agenda, and the strategies for their implementation revolve around two main themes: (a) Adequate shelter for all and (b) Sustainable human settlements in an urbanising world. By adopting the *Habitat Agenda*, the international community endorsed the Agenda's key objectives of enablement, participation, partnerships, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation and international co-operation, as well as specific commitments and strategies. United Nations Member States committed themselves to implementing the Habitat Agenda through local, national, sub-regional and regional plans of action and developing policies and programmes for adequate shelter and sustainable human settlements. The overall implementation of the Habitat Agenda is thus dependent on countries implementing their local and national plans of action and monitoring progress towards achieving objectives by means of appropriate indicators.

3. Pursuant to a recommendation of the Conference, the General Assembly in paragraph 12 of its resolution 52/190 of 18 December 1997, decided to hold a special

session of the General Assembly in the year 2001 for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of Habitat II. The Organizational Session of the Preparatory Committee which was held in Nairobi in May 1999, as a follow up to General Assembly resolution 53/180 of 15 December 1998, adopted the criteria on the scope of the review and appraisal process to be conducted at the Special Session.

4. To help organise in-country activities and make national reports broadly congruent and directly relevant to the Habitat Agenda, 20 key items have been identified in a consultative process (in line with resolution 17/1 of the United Nations Commission on Human settlements) as universal priorities from the commitments and strategies adopted in Istanbul in 1996. Although they vary in breadth, the commitments and strategies have a clarity of intent that would assist in keeping preparation and debate clearly focused, with priorities and specific performance objectives against which progress can be measured.

5. Guidelines for national reporting on the implementation of the *Habitat Agenda* were sent out to Member States and Habitat Agenda Partners and United Nations agencies and organizations in October 1999. Reminders on the deadlines for submission of the national reports were also sent in December 1999, February and June 2000.

6. The main objective of this preliminary report is to highlight the main trends and issues of concern in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, as identified in the national reports received by UNCHS (Habitat). At present a total of number of 33 national reports have been received from the ECA region. An effort has been made throughout the report to link trends and solutions highlighted by individual ECA countries to broader issues equally detectable in neighbouring countries or in the region as a whole. (The list of countries, which have submitted their reports, is attached as annex 2)

7. The synthesis follows the universal-reporting format that was provided to national governments in the Guidelines for Country Reporting. The commitments and strategies of the Habitat Agenda, which are the core negotiated agreements of Habitat II, provide the framework for the deliberations. For each of the commitments covered, the report considers progress made since 1996, prevailing conditions, new trends and emerging issues, policy and legislative changes since Habitat II, institutional weaknesses and obstacles encountered and lessons learnt, with emphasis on sustainability and impact.

8. The synthesis is organized in six chapters corresponding to the Guidelines for Country Reporting: shelter; social development and eradication of poverty; environmental management; economic development; governance; and international cooperation.

Chapter 1

Shelter

9. Being the least urbanized continent with only about 35 percent of the population living in urban areas, Africa is currently experiencing high rates of population increase and the world's most rapid rate of urbanization. Between 1950 and 1990 the population of Africa nearly tripled. Over the same period, its urban population increased more than seven-fold. While there were eight cities with one million in 1975, there are now 40 African cities with a population exceeding 1 million¹. Close to 300 million currently live in urban settlements in Africa. By 2015 the urban population is likely to exceed 500 million.

10. Current estimates indicate that there will be need to construct over 60 million new dwellings in the coming ten years just to accommodate the new households². It must be noted that this is an underestimation of the

actual need for housing, as it does not account for the replacement of dilapidated housing units and construction of additional units to relieve overcrowding. The huge need for shelter makes construction of new units the key shelter issue in most African countries.

11. According to the national reports, several governments are in the process of revising national strategies and reviewing institutional and legislative frameworks related to shelter development. A number of countries are addressing the issue of shelter in the context of the broader framework of economic development based on the notion that housing can be used as a major tool to create economic wealth and employment. The reports also indicate that in many countries the role of government is gradually changing from a provider to a facilitator of public-private partnerships, and a supporter of community-based initiatives in the housing sector.

12. While many governments have facilitated comprehensive shelter policies and revised their housing development strategies, few have managed to be sufficiently effective in implementation. The main reason for this policy-implementation gap seems to lie in the lack of capacity at the local level, which ranges from technical, planning and financial. Countries disrupted by war stress on the fact that armed conflicts and their consequences (landmines, destruction of the urban and rural infrastructures, thousands of refugees, etc.) have a direct impact on the implementation of their shelter policy and housing strategies.

13. Some of the complex tasks that municipalities face relate to: promoting security of tenure, provision of adequate supply of land; and construction of infrastructure and provision of services. There is a considerable need for strengthening the capacities of local authorities and other actors such as NGO's and CBO's at this level.

1.1 Provide security of tenure

14. Expansion of informal settlements has been a major concern for the governments and local authorities in the region. Many countries (e.g. Algeria³, Central-African Republic⁴, Mali⁵, Niger⁶, Togo⁷, Madagascar⁸) are engaged in efforts to upgrade and regularize these informal settlements, and promote security of tenure for millions of people. Togo's tenure system has been liberalized. It has however, been characterized by a complicated tenure situation; a traditional tenure system coexists with a modern system. However, the modern system is complicated by uncontrolled and irregular transactions facilitated by land surveyors, thus jeopardizing government planning efforts. Another threat to security of tenure is the expropriation of land justified by public utility needs, but without any type of compensation to the affected persons. The Government has undertaken compensation measures for expropriated land to secure the tenure system by disciplining urban actors and particularly private developers. The Government further still strives to secure the tenure system in encouraging and financing the housing branch in local municipalities, easing the public access to basic services, as well as encouraging researches on building materials.

15. In Zambia for instance through an Act of parliament, unplanned settlements that meet a set of criteria are legalized and residents offered title to Land. Other efforts include recognizing full ownership rights as well as putting into place flexible land tenure arrangements, such as facilitating users' rights. For example Namibia has developed a flexible tenure system to run parallel to the more formal system. There is common understanding that security of tenure can be promoted also by addressing issues such as access to basic services, credit, employment generation and by assisting people in their own housing initiatives. Addressing gender inequalities in ownership and inheritance rights is deemed as one of the most

fundamental steps in this regard. Efforts in Botswana⁹ to increase house ownership by female-headed households, is a good example of such approaches.

16. In the period of 1996-1998, Algerian implemented an action plan based on a housing policy characterized by: identification of useful lands throughout the country, controlled urban growth and building development, restructuring and improvement of housing conditions in identified problem areas. Priority actions were undertaken during this period to manage urban development, and to increase housing supply, with a particular accent on family - friendly buildings.

17. Several countries in the region are in the process of implementing informal settlement upgrading programmes. In Egypt, the current housing policy states that the government is responsible for the formulation of the housing development plans and afterwards to carry out directly only 20 per cent of this plan, where 80 per cent is to be implemented by the private sector.¹⁰ However, only few countries have reported that they have implemented projects, which combine upgrading of informal settlements with the provision of security of tenure. This may be due to the fact that implementation of land regularization programmes is often confronted with difficulties, some of them due to the customary land tenure systems found in many countries. Although in some countries such as Zambia through the 1995 lands Act the government legally recognized the right of people to hold land under customary law. It should also be recognized that, the machinery needed to effect a massive land registration/regularization programme requires a strong administrative control that may be largely missing in a number of countries. In addition, there are several other difficulties in promoting secure tenure that must be confronted. Lack of incentive on the part of residents to pay for the land or for improvements once security has been assured, invasion of legalized areas by speculators and

higher income groups, and further squatting as a result of this invasion are some of the most obvious examples.

18. Improvement in security of tenure appears to be an important but not sufficient condition for channeling the people's resources into housing. Other incentives such as loans, technical assistance, and community organization for self-help and mutual-aid construction are often necessary. In Burkina Faso's¹¹, in order to be an effective tool for housing the poor, security of tenure is recognized as an indispensable component of an integrated programme aimed at bringing improvements by mobilizing people.

19. Some countries have undertaken policy changes that include decrees to regulate urban and rural settlements e.g. Rwanda's Ministerial decree of 1997¹², or RDC's Presidential Decree of 1998. Some governments have created shelter and housing councils to provide regulatory frameworks for this sector. They have formulated housing policies and reviewed existing ones to match new challenges. Other legislative instruments that have been reviewed by some countries include town and country planning acts. In Gabon¹³ the Government aims at regulating construction and progressively reducing the impact of spontaneous (informal) settlements.

1.2 Promote the right to adequate housing

20. Housing has become more and more an instrument for economic empowerment and poverty alleviation policies. This is evident from the number of countries addressing the issue of shelter within the framework of poverty reduction programmes. Some countries embarked on building housing units and rehabilitation of neighborhoods through public/private partnerships in addressing urban poverty.

21. Many countries have addressed such issues through the creation of national strategies on reduction of urban poverty and the setting up of housing funds that can

promote access of the poor to housing finance. Housing institutions have been set up or strengthened to monitor and oversee the national process of implementing the Habitat Agenda.

22. Realization of housing rights in the region is strongly linked to provision of security of tenure for people living in informal settlements, to the prevention of forced evictions, and to the promotion of access to information and to other elements of housing development process including affordable land building materials, practical building technologies and sources of finance.

23. In Namibia¹⁴, the constitution provides a framework for legislation and policies to safeguard the Namibians' equal right to shelter. In Mali, an institution framework exists for protection of tenants on the basis of decrees 130 PGRM from 27/8/1967 and 146 from 27/9/1967: Tenants are protected from arbitrary evictions. Although the right to adequate housing *per se* has not been addressed in most African countries through specific legislation or other related measures, it has been addressed in some countries within the framework of general legislation related to areas such as right to own land and property.

24. Ethiopia¹⁵, for instance, reports that there exist no impediments to women or any other particular group to owning or renting land, or taking mortgages in their own right. Botswana¹⁶ notes that because past housing programmes often tended to exclude poor households, the government is now implementing integrated poverty alleviation and housing schemes to assist the urban poor to generate income, earn a living and build houses through organized self-help. Assisted with loans and technical assistance, the poor can produce building materials, earn income from the sales and use the same materials to build their houses. However, it is crucial to monitor the quality of building in order to avoid tragedies in times of calamities such earthquakes/floods.

25. In many African countries ravaged by wars, famine and political unrest, governments have put in place legislation that enables the reintegration of returnees and displaced persons. In Rwanda, for instance, the government has established a Housing Fund, and is currently preparing a land bill. With a view to promoting gender equality, a law on succession and matrimonial rights was recently passed.

26. The Republic of Djibouti¹⁷ has elaborated a legislative framework to facilitate provision of housing for all income groups. This framework focuses on ensuring funds for the maintenance of basic infrastructure; reducing construction costs through low-cost techniques and use of locally produced building materials; promotion of housing finance systems for all income groups; implementing pro-poor land pricing systems; increasing provision of serviced plots and promoting the private construction sector. In Namibia, the Build Together Programme assists the poor to gain access to land and build their own housing through self-help and by utilizing the potential of the informal sector.

27. Coordination among institutions responsible for the shelter sector has been mentioned often in the national reports (Gabon, Central-African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, and others) as a difficulty in shelter delivery. Lack of capacity of local authorities and community builders has been identified as another institutional weakness. Increase of prices in the construction sector, unavailability of local building materials locally and the high cost of foreign components in housing construction have been major obstacles for the housing development process which has increasingly hindered the process towards realization of housing rights.

1.3 Provide equal access to land

28. In most countries in the region, shortages of affordable land for housing has resulted in overcrowding of existing neighborhoods and the growth of informal settlements on

marginal lands unsuitable for housing. This is to a great extent caused by the slow and inadequate implementation of land-related recommendations of the Habitat Agenda. Municipal land development policies are often irrelevant, as most of the land development takes place outside the formally regulated sector. Few countries however, have succeeded in establishing well-articulated land markets that can deliver land at reasonable prices.

29. There are numerous factors that seem to constrain the supply of land in African countries. These include customary land rights, land speculation, lack of up-to-date cadastral and land data systems, inappropriate regulations affecting land use, lack of effective land adjudication processes, and inappropriate valuation and tax systems. In some countries, the concentration of land in the hands of central government has furthermore resulted in serious bottlenecks in land markets.

30. Yet, many countries are in the process of setting up processes to increase delivery of land. In some countries, nationalized land is returned to former landowners or land is sold to the highest bidder through auctions. Some countries are in the process of reviewing the roles of the government and municipalities in land management. In Egypt the government provides serviced land for housing to needy citizens with emphasis on the equal opportunities for women. These policies directly aim at improving living and housing conditions of the urban poor.

31. In Lesotho¹⁸, an innovative project addresses the issue of customary land tenure through a multi-stakeholder approach that recognizes the legitimate interests of customary community chiefs. The aim is to create added value to parts of a site through planning, so that the surplus can be used for the provision of serviced plots to support poor.

32. In Uganda¹⁹ and Tanzania²⁰, land policies have been formulated aiming at increasing access of women to land. Specific programmes, such as South Africa's²¹ land reform programme, have

benefited those previously denied the opportunity to own land. Institutional and financial support has been put into the land delivery process for poor communities through innovative approaches such as the dual development approach in Namibia (in-situ upgrading and new development for at resettlement).

33. In countries in war e.g. Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, Governments have become aware of the fact the without the promotion of equal access to land, the reintegration of refugees and other displaced persons would be problematic. Therefore, clear legislation has been formulated in the Burundi Peace Agreement (Arusha) and Lusaka Accord (RDC) in order not to let the land issue and the lack of adequate housing for all become a source of future conflicts.

34. It is widely recognized that the problems created by the growth of informal settlements cannot be solved unless adequate amounts of affordable land are made available for housing the poor. Central-African Republic, for example, has created “fonds d’aménagement et équipement Urbain (F.A.E.U)”, to ensure the control of useful urban land for the benefice of poor fractions of the population. Yet, much remains to be done to establish well-functioning land markets, which can deliver land at reasonable prices. Assessing the constraints in land supply and putting in place coherent land development strategies that increase the supply of land are urgent tasks for the governments in the region. The present processes of land development must be reformed with the objective of enhancing the land development capacity of municipalities.

1.4 Promote equal access to credit

35. Housing finance institutions in the region are typically small and provide a very small proportion of total housing finance. This is a result of national fiscal policies and economic conditions such as the high interest rates; restricted development of domestic financial instruments; restricted investment selection directed to other sources than housing; and

limited access of households to credit. Most financial resources for housing development come through the informal sector. Particularly low-income households depend to a large extent on informal credit sources, which are expensive and short-term. The beneficiaries of such loans lack the collateral, the guarantee of a regular and recorded household income and the ability to save. As a result they have limited access to formal financial institutions. Restrictions on women’s access to land and inheritance rights have often prevented their access to credit. Another impediment to the expansion of credit in some countries has been the right to private ownership of land. As pointed out in the Angolan report²², as per law the land is the property of the state, and this reduces the possibility for the banking system to use the land as collateral. However, the evolution of banking credit in Angola in December 1998 and December 1999 has shown a permanent increase in the value of credit for housing and construction. In that period the credit for housing was on average 8% of total banking credit.

36. The “fonds d’aménagement et équipement Urbain (F.A.E.U)” in Central-african Republic also, specializes in giving credit for purchase of land and houses, management of sanitation and clean water installations. In Mali, a “Bank for Habitat” gives credits at a low rate of 7% to members of housing cooperatives (the normal rate being at 9%).

37. The Democratic Republic of Congo reports²³ that 48 micro-credits institutions, approved by Micro-Credits Institutions World Secretariat are in action in the country and have mobilized more than 780.000 members of habitat initiatives in the regions of lower-Congo, Bandundu, Equateur, and Kasai.

38. Since the adoption of the Habitat Agenda, many countries have undertaken efforts to address the above issues. Some countries have special provisions for the support of cooperatives for land and housing, and a number of countries have extended credit to these cooperatives. In Namibia for example,

the Building Together Programme provides loans to low-income households who wish to buy land, construct or repair their homes. In South Africa, the National Housing Finance Corporation is developing new loan schemes and risk-sharing mechanisms²⁴. Zimbabwe has initiated measures to involve building societies in lending to housing cooperatives. In Guinea, a Bank for Housing has been created, and a new system for social housing financing is being implemented by using local savings and credit.

39. In many countries, workers provide considerable amount of capital to financial institutions in the form of contributions to pension and provident funds; yet they often have difficulties in having access to credit for housing. In South Africa, “worker advocacy” has led to the use of provident funds to leverage loans for housing²⁵. In Zimbabwe, up to 5 percent of the National Security Authority funds can now be invested in low-income housing through building societies²⁶. In Kenya, a part of the National Social Security Funds has been invested in land and housing projects²⁷. Outstanding issues in all three countries include charging market interest rates on provident fund linked loans and creating more democratic control over the funds.

40. In several countries in the region, some incremental and complementary forms of low-income housing finance are being developed. For example the hands-on lending approach in South Africa²⁸ where good consumer education and provident fund guarantees result in 99 percent repayment. Small loans through housing cooperatives in Kenya²⁹ are also demonstrating almost 100 percent repayments. A large percentage of households, with very low or no regular income, however, can still not gain access to credit even if they were given special conditions, as they would not be able to service a loan from their incomes. This problem can be overcome by integrating poverty alleviation strategies with housing development, as demonstrated by the Botswanan authorities who have provided the

poor with a loan to start manufacturing building materials for income generation.

1.5 Promote equal access to basic services

41. Efforts have been made in many countries to establish mechanisms and guidelines for provision of basic services especially to people living in poverty. In Tchad³⁰ as well as Senegal, efforts were made to improve the water sector. Senegal for instance is implementing a sectorial water project (2.901 millions USD between 1996-2001) for a period of six years. The project is intended to promote balance between production and consumption to reduce the water supply deficit in the capital Dakar.

42. A number of programmes and projects related to basic services, social development and eradication of poverty have been undertaken, such as the Markets Town Development Programme in Ethiopia. Other countries in the region are promoting improved access to services through sites and services schemes. In most cases however, these are small projects funded by external donors, which have not been implemented at larger scales. The rapid growing informal settlements make it imperative to search for more sustainable solutions to infrastructure provision. In many countries, standards for infrastructure are identical for all urban areas where different income groups live, even though the poor cannot afford to pay for high standard infrastructure. While low-cost solutions for infrastructure have been well tested within experimental projects, they need to be included in building codes and by-laws to ensure application on a larger scale. In many countries, there appears to be a need to adjust standards of infrastructure to the level of affordability, as pointed out in the national report from Tchad. Guinea, for example, wants to reach this goal through the rehabilitation and modernization of the already existing infrastructure, and through the capacity building and building of personnel as well as direct help to the population through the reduction of costs for essential medicines.

Chapter 2

Social Development and Eradication of Poverty

43. Key elements highlighted in the Habitat Agenda are the provision of equal opportunities for a safe and healthy life, social integration and inclusiveness, and gender equality. Addressing the status and needs of marginalized groups is fundamental to this aspect of policy worldwide. With widespread poverty (like in Mali, Madagascar, Burkina Faso, Niger, Central-African Republic and others) and a low level of economic development in many countries of the region, this presents a daunting challenge. The situation of and prospects for women and children are of particular concern.

44. Countries in the African region are addressing social development within the framework of poverty reduction and through the UN system particularly UNDP, using the Development Assistance Framework. Madagascar is implementing an action plan with the support of the international community. This action plan includes policy on, and resources for addressing poverty. Thus the support of the international community, both in terms of resources and the conceptualization of poverty and social development, are of heightened importance in Africa.

45. Poverty manifests itself in various forms, of which homelessness and inadequate housing are some of the critical aspects, along with poor conditions of health. In this respect the poverty reduction frameworks and programmes prepared by many countries provide an opportunity for positive change. The major goals for countries' poverty eradication plans have been to create a context for economic growth and transformation, ensure good governance and increase the ability of the poor to raise their incomes. Although there have been signs of progress in a few cases, in the majority of countries the

status has not changed much. Even where there is some nominal progress, the challenge faced is how to sustain the efforts made so far given the difficult economic environment.

2.1 Provide equal opportunities for a safe and healthy life

46. Poverty appears in many ways including homelessness and inadequate housing and lack of access to health. It is for this reason that many countries are addressing the issues of human settlement through the broad cross-sectoral approach provided by the development assistance frameworks, which also promote coordination among international agencies. Many countries in the region have adopted and are implementing poverty eradication and social development programmes utilizing these frameworks.

47. Access to health care and a healthy environment has also been set as a priority by countries within these frameworks. Because good health contributes to an increase in quality of life, it has frequently been targeted by countries in the region as one of the main areas requiring greater resource allocation. A number of health sector reform agendas have been formulated, with a broad approach to providing a healthy, safe and productive life. This has been done through addressing inequalities in access to health services. As a result, access to quality health services, particularly by the poor and marginalized groups, is being expanded.

48. Various mass-based health and nutrition programmes have been undertaken focusing on preventive health. The most vulnerable groups are specifically targeted within such programmes. These efforts have resulted in a slight improvement in peoples' health situation. For example, coverage in terms of access to health care in Ethiopia has grown from 48.5 percent in 1996 to 52.4 percent in 1999.

49. However, in a majority of countries the situation has not changed much. In many cases this is because, although health services may

now be there, they are not affordable. According to the National report from Uganda the household survey data of 1997 indicated that 51 percent of people do not seek medical care when ill. The reasons given are the high cost of health services in terms of the cost of drugs and treatment, distance and time³¹ This kind of situation indicates that attention and resources still need to be put into establishing local health centers, so as to continuously increase levels of access to health care as well as reduce walking distances.

50. The National Report of Mali³² presents different figures to understand the progression of poverty, education, infant mortality, health and popular diseases, as well as efforts made by the State to face improve the national situation.

2.2 Promote social integration and support disadvantaged groups.

51. To support the involvement of disadvantaged groups in economic, social and political decision making processes, countries have undertaken legislation that supports the participation of women and disadvantaged groups. These measures include decision making related to human settlement development, as well as representation at high level positions in government.

52. The question of integration of handicapped persons has become a priority in Morocco. There is a clear effort to satisfy to the needs of handicapped persons through specialized administrative and legislative structures that also encourage the political participation of those persons in general, and of women, in particular.

53. In countries in civil war (Burundi³³, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo) and in hosting refugee countries (Tanzania, Congo) refugees are considered as being part of disadvantaged part of the population. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Government has set up a General Commission on the Reinsertion of refugees that mobilizes

external and national aid for refugees and other displaced persons. The Arusha Peace Agreement on Burundi recommends a Commission for the reinsertion of refugees.

54. Uganda and Nigeria³⁴ are examples of countries that have revised their constitutions in order to allow the participation of women and other disadvantaged groups in various sectors of the economy. For example, Uganda's constitution of 1995 article 35 covers vulnerable groups comprehensively. Women, children, orphans and widows are singled out³⁵.

55. The challenge remains on how to translate these legislative reforms into actions that actually change the status of the most vulnerable groups. In their reports, several countries have identified lack of capacity as a major constraint. In order to implement comprehensive poverty eradication programmes that support vulnerable groups; human resources, expertise financial and material resources are required to be directed towards lower income communities.

56. Nevertheless some countries have set in motion comprehensive programmes aimed at bringing about the necessary changes. Structures and mechanisms are being established which provide a multi-dimensional approach as well as the necessary focus and direction for poverty eradication. For example in Rwanda, there is as a detailed country development and poverty eradication strategy for the next 20 years³⁶.

57. In other countries there are specific measures targeted towards disadvantaged groups, (for example the principle of direct intervention of the State for the benefit of the disadvantaged populations, in Algeria.). These include housing loans for pensioners, disabled and destitute persons. These are being given at beneficial rates of interest while remaining economically viable through cross subsidization systems. Early childhood development centers have been established in countries where this need has been identified,

and women have earned income by running the centers. Care and support for children, especially orphans, have also been undertaken. In some countries youth forums have been established in conjunction with regional and district administrations in order to provide a platform on which the youth can air their views.

⁵⁸. Despite such positive examples, there is acknowledgement that wide spread ignorance prevails about the rights of marginalized groups. This is identified as a major factor contributing to the lack of capacity to implement programmes that address their needs. As a result, international support for increasing awareness about the rights of vulnerable groups, as well as their needs, is identified as a priority. This can be tackled through increasing publicity and education at all levels on these issues.

2.3 Promote gender equality in human settlements development

59. Since the Habitat II conference and other major UN conferences, countries in the region have demonstrated political will and commitment to creating an environment conducive to addressing gender issues and enhancing the status of women. Efforts have been made towards the formulation of policies and programmes that promote equal participation of women in human settlements planning and decision making, as well as strengthening of existing measures.

60. Governments have put in place a series of policies and affirmative action measures for women, aimed at creating equal opportunities for social and economic development. The local government statute put in place in Uganda well before Habitat II in 1987, offers an opportunity for women's representation on local councils that does not exist in many other countries. This legislation laid a foundation for women's inclusion in government's decision-making structures by mandating that women councillors must form one third of all local government councils.

61. More recently, legislation that supports the participation of women in decision-making and representation in high-level positions of government has been revised or new ones enacted in a number of countries. Likewise, measures affecting women's equal access to and control of land and housing have been recently enacted in many countries in the region. The different pieces of legislation and frameworks in place include constitutions, gender policies, and gender plans of action.

62. Namibia is revising its succession laws and married equality act. In Chad the government is developing what is called a family code, aimed at improving the economic condition of women as well as their legal status, while the National Housing Strategy guarantees a quota of 50 percent of serviced plots for women-headed households. Similarly, Botswana has made efforts to increase home ownership by female-headed households. Burkina Faso's Presidential Decree of 1997 recognizes equal access to land and property without any discrimination based on sex and matrimonial status.

63. Mozambique's new land law of 1997 establishes the right of occupation for all peasant farmers, regardless of gender, as having the same force as a land title. According to Eritrea's Land Proclamation of the same year, women have the legal rights to own and inherit land, and both partners in the marriage have the same rights within the family. In 1999, Rwanda enacted a Law of Succession, establishing equal access to land and property for both men and women, while a Land Bill is under preparation that will also address current gender inequalities.

64. In 1998 Uganda enacted a new land law to operationalize the 1995 constitutional reforms. Article 31 (1) of the Constitution provides that men and women are entitled to equal rights in marriage, during marriage and on its dissolution. The new Land Act aims at ensuring gender equality in respect of access to land, as well as the protection of the rights of disadvantaged groups in general. However, it falls short of making specific provision for

the co-ownership of family home and land by both spouses.

65. In South Africa on the other hand, although legal provisions for gender equality in access to land and property are less advanced, the Land Redistribution Program provides for the removal of restrictions on women's access to land. It also establishes procedures to promote women's active participation in decision making and the registration of land assets in the name of the beneficiary household members, not solely in the name of the household head.

66. Probably the most comprehensive gender treatment of land reform is that of Tanzania. The Land Act of 1999 recognizes the right of every adult woman to acquire, hold, use, deal with, and transmit land to the same extent and subject to the same restrictions as every adult man. Any customary law which is against women's rights to own and to use land is declared null and void, while it is stipulated that in Village Land Law, women have equal rights to own, manage, transfer, use or to receive land as a gift.

67. Gender responsive programmes have been promoted within the national strategies for poverty reduction, particularly by components that direct support towards women entrepreneurs. These measures are aimed at enhancing women's economic opportunities through the provision of financial assistance, and also by improving women's access to affordable housing, economic resources and social services. As a result of such targeted policy implementation strategies, the gender gaps are beginning to reduce. For example, in Ethiopia's cooperative credit schemes, women form 67 percent of total beneficiaries.

68. Illiteracy levels among women have contributed to their poverty levels, and as a result governments have developed policies and incentives aimed at encouraging more women to increase their literacy levels. Universal primary education in Uganda is just one example of this effort. However, in Uganda this in itself has also given rise to

other problems such as inadequate physical facilities and infrastructure. The quality of education has also been compromised.

69. In Guinea³⁷, the professional education of women has been set up as a priority. Local Authorities are being requested to give priority to laws and other legal structures in favor of women and to mobilize funds and resources to improve their participation in the commercial and private sectors.

70. As part of the data collection activities for Istanbul +5, countries have made efforts to collect gender-disaggregated data and have created data banks that reflect this. Thus there have been considerable advances in institutionalizing gender equality. Yet despite the existence of legislation and regulatory frameworks, most countries have not yet translated them into concrete actions for implementation at the national and local government levels. Many countries are concerned as to what extent these policy actions can translate into concrete activities that actually change the status of women. Inadequate financial and human resources continue to plague the national and local machineries for gender equality. Capacity building in gender analysis, planning and mainstreaming, which is seen to be essential, is still lacking.

Chapter 3

Environmental Management

71. Key aspects of the Habitat Agenda concerning environmental management are (a) promotion of geographically balanced settlement structures, (b) management of supply and demand for water in an effective manner, (c) reduction of urban pollution, (d) prevention of disasters and rebuilding of settlements, (e) promotion of effective and environmentally sound transportation systems, and (f) supporting mechanisms to prepare and

implement local environmental plans and local agenda 21 initiatives.

72. Countries in the region recognize that environmental issues should be included in legislation and other enabling frameworks. A number of countries have formulated strategies or are in the process of modifying legislation concerning environmental protection and resource management. The Habitat Agenda has provided an important step towards public awareness on need for better environmental management in most countries; reports are also indicating that it has facilitated the implementation of Agenda 21.

73. The significant presence of dispersed populations makes it difficult to develop geographically balanced settlements. There is need for more resources to cater for dispersed and nomadic populations. It is necessary to promote systematic urban development patterns that involve the citizenry. It is recommended to take cognizance of the specific social and cultural characteristics of areas so as to establish best strategies for balanced area development. Countries report that actions for addressing the issues of water resource management are isolated resulting in low impact. Weak management capacity, misuse of water resources and pollution of water resources has been cited as major weaknesses. Other obstacles include weak technical and institutional capacities, high costs of and scarcity of resources required for upgrading of water systems to cope with rapid urban growth. Trends indicate that rapid population growth has continued to create a very large demand for basic services mainly such as water, fuel for cooking and wastes disposal. African countries are increasingly faced with the problems of urban pollution, including mounting urban wastes problems, and deteriorating air and water conditions particularly in overcrowded urban areas. Only few countries report on efforts made towards minimizing and where possible preventing discharge of hazardous substances, and biological materials from industrial plants.

74. Drought, flooding and landslides due to El Nino rains, and human-made disasters are taking a heavy toll on the development prospects of the African region. Despite early warning on the occurrence of most of typical natural events, opportune and effective prevention and mitigation measures have been limited, leading to high social and economic losses and compounding existing development problems in the region: latest example in Mozambique. Widespread recognition and understanding of the negative environmental and economic development impacts on the overuse of the private cars to meet travel needs within countries in the region must receive increased attention. Providing appropriate transport infrastructure for non-motorized modes of transport remains a priority to serve the transport needs of the urban poor.

75. In the field of environmental management; countries recognize the value of consensus building through involving a wide range of actors concerned with, and have information and interest on the relevant issues and in strategy and decision making and implementation. Local development plans and local agenda 21 initiatives often offer an opportunity to engage in such participatory processes and have proved to be an efficient way to improve performances towards sustainable development and, provide a better living environment.

76. Progress has been made in a number of countries for instance by undertaking national settlement policies whose main thrust is to develop geographically balanced and thereby more sustainable human settlements, including provision of infrastructure and services to various levels of settlements. National urban and regional planning Acts have been enacted in some cases. Comprehensive water resource management plans have been prepared in some sub-regions with the aim of securing water resources and maintaining sound quality. Governments are trying to improve the water supply systems through modernization. More progress has also been noted where local authorities and communities

have been involved. Improvement in the management of supply and demand for water was also supported through the Habitat/UNEP initiative 'Water for African Cities'. The new demand-side focus of the programme has generated considerable interest and expectation among city professionals and policy makers. Participating governments have demonstrated their commitment through secured counterpart budgetary provisions; as well as the establishment of comprehensive water resource management plans and water policies. Since 1996 increasingly countries have undertaken studies/assessments to identify and assess the various problems related to rapid urbanization. Programmes that address air and water pollution; and improved solid waste management were intensified since Habitat II. Increasingly countries have enforced and conducted environmental impact assessments. Many solid waste management projects have been implemented and these include new initiatives for landfill sites, waste segregation and recycling and composting projects to effect plans for environmentally acceptable disposal of solid waste.

77. Several countries like Kenya, Uganda, Namibia, Mozambique³⁸ and Central-African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, are now developing national plans for disaster vulnerability reduction and response. But additional efforts have to be made to translate such plans and strategies into concrete and efficient institutional arrangements and operational capacities. Awareness raising, and emergency preparedness and response are some of the areas where governments in the region are presently focusing their priority. Carefully regulating and limiting the overall use of private automobiles remains one pressing priority for the region in the crucial transport development sector. Viable and realistic alternatives for a variety of travel options for a wide scope of trip purposes and income levels are the keys to sustainable transport developments in the future. Legislation remains one of the major implementation instruments in improving the urban environment. However other instruments such as economic incentive,

awareness through information campaigns and strategic investments must also be used to address environmental concerns. Significant efforts have been made in environmental resource management in the context of the development planning process. In Africa, a number of countries have shown particular interest and concern for better urban environmental management through accepting development- environment interaction, and introducing stakeholder based, bottom-up and cross-sectoral approaches; such countries include Tanzania, Nigeria, Senegal and Zambia.

3.1 Promote geographically balanced settlement structures

78. African countries recognize the current trends and patterns that show that more and more people are moving to urban areas. It has been acknowledged that countries will continue to witness a lot of concentration of people and industries in metropolitan areas and increasingly large cities hence the need to plan for and manage this phenomenon. Other trends show that decentralization plays a major role in adapting new patterns of urban development. As a consequence regional and local authorities will have to influence fair distribution of resources in order to bring about the geographical balance.

79. Countries have undertaken national settlement policies whose main thrust is to develop explicit on geographically balanced and thereby more sustainable human settlements, including provision of infrastructure and services to the various levels of settlements. National Urban and Regional Planning Acts have been enacted. Programmes undertaken include for example residential environmental improvements for urban low-income groups; and upgrading of villages classified as primary centers with potential for investments as in the case of Botswana.

80. Countries are also developing policies that will harmonize standards of rural and urban settlements. Creation of the Ministry for cities

in Cameroon³⁹ is part of the effort to create a national and regional balance with regard to rural and urban growth. Other policy changes include channeling more government resources to low income housing in both urban and rural areas and ensuring equal distribution. Creation of national observatories of human settlements aimed at assisting in analyzing trends has also influenced policy changes.

81. Morocco⁴⁰ has experienced a high population growth and unsustainable economic growth that put a lot of pressures on natural resources and lead to a gradual degradation of the environment. Public authorities have therefore developed and adopted an action plan including new strategies based on a global and integrated vision of the environment to clarify collective and individual shared responsibilities.

82. In the context of the “Plan Quinquennal de développement économique et social 2001-2004”, the Department of Environment launched a process of elaboration of an environment action plan to identify national priorities in terms of protection and environment management. The global costs of such an action plan was 380 Million Dirhams shared between the Government, with a governmental contribution of 160 Mio Dirhams, and a fund raising campaign, for the rest.

83. High levels of dispersed population makes it difficult to develop geographically balanced settlements. There is need for more resources to cater for dispersed and nomadic populations. On the other hand countries such as Angola have experienced migratory influx from the rural to urban area due to the rekindling of armed conflict. This has placed new challenges on the administration of the cities and the whole society. These challenges include dealing with increased pollution and enormous concentration of solid waste and liquid residue as excessive utilization of the existing social services.

84. It is therefore necessary to promote systematic urban development patterns that

involves the citizenry. It is recommended to take cognizance of the specific and social and cultural characteristics of areas towards establishing best strategies for balanced area development.

3.2 Manage supply and demand for water in an effective manner.

85. The ‘Water for African Cities Programme is a collaborative initiative of UNCHS (Habitat) and UNEP within the framework of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, and is a direct follow-up of the Cape Town Declaration(1997), adopted by African Ministers addressing the urgent need for managing water for African cities. The programme intervention is the first comprehensive initiative to support African countries to effectively manage the growing urban water crisis and protect Africa’s threatened water resources and aquatic ecosystems from the increasing volume of land-based pollution from the cities. The programme began implementation on two parallel tracks: (a) city demonstrations in the seven participating cities (Abidjan, Accra, Addis Ababa, Dakar, Johannesburg, Lusaka and Nairobi), and (b) regional activities focusing on information sharing and awareness creation on urban water management. The programme developed an on-line network of African sector professionals (WACWeb and WACNet).

86. Mitigating the impact of urbanization on freshwater resources and aquatic ecosystems: The programme is assisting African countries to put in place in four river and lake basins early warning mechanisms for timely detection of potential problem areas, where sustainability is likely to be threatened; the programme will also facilitate the assessment of long-term environmental impact of the growing ecological impact of large cities on the continent's water resources.

87. The new demand-side focus of the programme has generated considerable interest and expectation among city professionals and policy makers. Participating

governments have demonstrated their commitments through secured budgetary secured provisions. Comprehensive water resource management plans have been prepared in some sub-regions with the aim of securing water resources and maintaining sound quality. Governments are improving the water supply systems through modernization. More progress has also been noted where local authorities and communities have been involved.

88. Countries report that actions addressing the issues of water resource management are too isolated hence having low impact. Weak management capacity, misuse and pollution of water resources have all been cited as major weaknesses. Other obstacles include weak technical institutional capacities and high costs and scarcity of resources required for upgrading of water systems.

3.3 Reduce Urban Pollution

89. Since 1996 increasingly African countries have undertaken studies/assessments to identify and assess the various problems related to urban growth. Trends indicate that rapid population growth has continued to create a very large demand for basic services mainly such as water, fuel for cooking and wastes disposal. Programmes that address air and water pollution; solid waste management were intensified since Habitat II. African countries have increasingly been faced with the problems of urban pollution, including mounting urban waste problems, and deteriorating air and water conditions particularly in overcrowded urban areas. Only few countries report on efforts made towards minimizing and where possible preventing discharge of hazardous substances, and biological materials from industrial plants.

90. Increasingly countries have enforced and conducted environmental impact assessments. Many solid waste management projects have been implemented and these include new initiatives for landfill sites, waste segregation and recycling and composting projects to

effect plans for environmentally acceptable disposal of solid waste.

91. Policy changes have included setting up of Environmental Protection Councils, drafting of Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines and developing Environmental Vision 21 long-term plans for environmental conservation policies on the promotion of the use of renewable energy sources and natural gas have also been formulated. This includes the development of national energy strategies aimed at encouraging the introduction of energy saving techniques/utilities in settlements. These include promoting use of solar and wind energy and biogas.

92. In order to be undertaken successfully; environmental policies need to be decentralized and implemented at the local level. Inadequate capacity for effective implementation of EIA policies has been identified as an obstacle i.e. maintaining databases to enhance monitoring, assessment and evaluation. Capacity for technology transfer has been another area of concern.

93. A major lesson learnt is that collaboration between the various partners involved in the implementation of community based environmental management initiatives will ensure higher degree of sustainability.

3.4 Prevent disasters and rebuild settlements.

94. Drought, events of flooding and landslides due to El Nino rains and human-made disasters are taking a heavy toll on the development prospects of the African region. The rapid spread of HIV/AIDS, while not usually considered in the category of natural disasters, is assuming catastrophic proportions and wiping out large sectors of not least the urban population in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite early warning on the occurrence of most of natural events, opportune and effective prevention and mitigation measures have been limited, leading to high social and economic losses and compounding existing development problems in the region. Poor

location of housing and infrastructure and low quality of settlements due to poverty and unaffordable building materials have contributed to increasing vulnerability to natural disasters and other emergencies.

95. As in the case of the floods in Mozambique “most of the people affected lived in informal urban settlements in makeshift housing units. They, as the rural population living in houses built with the so-called ‘permanent’ but poor quality local materials, lost their dwellings together with most of their possessions”⁴¹. Several countries like Kenya, Uganda, Namibia, Mozambique and others, are now developing national plans for disaster vulnerability reduction and response.

96. Additional efforts have to be made to translate such plans and strategies into concrete and efficient institutional arrangements and operational capacities. Awareness raising, and emergency preparedness and response are some of the areas where governments in the region are presently focusing their priority. This needs to be complemented by other disaster management activities within the framework of local and national development plans, including poverty alleviation aspects and improved settlements management. Awareness promotion, emergency preparedness and crisis management in order to reduce the impact of potential disasters particularly in settlements must be a top priority in all the African countries.

3.5 Promote effective and environmentally sound transportation systems.

97. As the share of Global greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector in Africa continues to grow exponentially, further steps must be taken to reduce demand for transport and clean up the transport required through improved fuel mixes, alternative means and better public transport systems. Some countries within the region have recognized the rights of the urban poor for enhanced

access to affordable transport by passing legislation protecting ceilings for public transport fares and requiring appropriate transport access for new development. The role of walking (pedestrianization) in the overall urban transport fabric has been noted but hardly acted upon with relatively few localities enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access.

98. Overlapping jurisdictional responsibilities and management confusion among the wide variety of public and private entities involved in providing urban transport and regulating it, continues to plague the urban transport delivery sector within the region. Compounding this problem is the purely sectoral approach still taken by many planners and engineers when the interactions between land use and transport are not properly and appropriately accounted for in transport programme design.

99. Among the lessons learnt is that while the scope, scale and overall cost of urban transport infrastructure expansion may dictate national and multi-lateral financial assistance, economic sustainability dictates that urban transport be planned, operated, managed and regulated at the local level. Where national-level action is most necessary is in ensuring that appropriate levels of environmental quality are planned for and maintained.

100. Widespread recognition and understanding of the negative environmental and economic development impacts on the overuse of the private automobile to meet regional travel needs, must receive increased attention. Carefully regulating and limiting the overall amount of the transport demand relegated to the private automobile remains a pressing priority for the region in this crucial development sector. Viable and realistic alternatives for a variety of travel options for a wide scope of trip purposes and income levels are the keys to sustainable developments in the future. Providing appropriate transport infrastructure for non-motorized modes of transport remain a priority to serve the transport needs of the urban poor.

3.6 Support mechanisms to prepare and implement local environmental plans and local agenda 21 initiatives.

101. Support mechanisms for implementation of Local Agenda 21 initiatives have been increasingly established and strengthened and new initiatives formulated. However, there has been continuous need to concretize ideas and agreements into Agenda 21 actions. Specific environmental planning and management programmes aimed at improving the access of the urban poor to shelter; to basic infrastructure and to services through the implementation of broad-based participatory environmental improvement plans have been undertaken in a number of countries notably Tanzania, Nigeria, Senegal and Zambia. In Kenya for example, strategic plans developed by some municipalities together with community-based initiatives have directly benefited the residents of low-income settlements. Typical income generating projects initiated by women groups are improvements in solid waste collection, and protection of water sources.

102. Policy changes have involved establishment of enabling framework and of Ministries of Environment/ Environmental Affairs Agencies and national committees for implementation of Local Agendas 21, including the launching of National Agenda 21 initiatives although many of them still need to be concretized into action and mobilization of resources for their implementation. However, in many African countries there is a rising awareness that environmental and human settlement policies are not only intertwined but are parts of the same whole. It has also been acknowledged that environmental management cannot be limited to responses to individual development proposals but has to be linked to both long-term environmental resource requirements and with development needs at large.

103. In order to implement environmental policies successfully there is need to

decentralize and countries are advocating environmental management to be transferred to the local governments. With increased decentralization the local level therefore needs awareness rising, and considerable capacity building.

104. Lesson learnt indicate that empowering communities, equipping them with information/ capacities and implementation facilitation increases long term sustainability of the development initiatives undertaken in the area. There is need to establish local environment standards taking into account social and economic characteristics of each area. For better environmental management all countries furthermore need to recognise the critical importance of addressing institutional issues, primacy of information for better planning, the crucial role of public information, environmental education and communication, importance of political will, and appropriate role of technology. What is urgently needed is resource allocation.

Chapter 4

Economic Development

105. The Habitat Agenda, in its recommendations for Urban Economic Development, urged governments at the appropriate levels, including local authorities, and in cooperation with other stakeholders, to strive to create more productive employment through public-private partnerships. Additionally, they are requested to institute enabling policies to stimulate establishment of micro and medium-size and cooperative enterprises, including those developed by women, grant fiscal, financial and regulatory incentives to the informal sector to enable it be more productive as well as review the regulatory framework to attract and encourage private investments.

106. African governments and their development partners are in agreement that improvement of the standard of living of the people is the overarching objective of development in the region. This objective has been underlined at every major forum of the region's leaders in the last five years including at the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II) of 1998.

107. Using continent-wide averages for the region, over the past five years, gross domestic product (GDP) in Africa grew faster than population, contrasting markedly with a decade and half of declining per capita income. This growth in African economies (3.3% in 1998 contrasted with 2.9% in 1997 which was the highest among regions of the world) is all the more remarkable considering the declining momentum in global growth. Inflation declined from 15 % in 1997 to 12% in 1998.

108. Using continent –wide averages however, can be misleading in Africa, because substantial population and GDP differences exist among the constituent sub-regions. For example, only the North and Central African sub-regions grew in 1998. There were declines in the eastern, western and southern sub-regional rates of growth but the 33 Least Developed Countries increased their GDP growth rates from 2.4 in 1997 to 4.1 in 1998.

109. The informal sector which dominates in the micro- and small-scale enterprises category contributes significantly to socio-economic development in Africa. It is estimated that this informal sector in Africa accounts for about 20% of GDP and employs about 30% of the total and more than 60% of urban labour force. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone, the informal sector accounts for 42.5 per cent of non-agricultural GDP and about 78 percent of non-agricultural employment. It is further estimated that in the next decade, more than 90% of additional jobs in urban areas in Africa will have to come from micro-and small -scale enterprises in the informal sector.

110. Although the African economy overall

grew positively over the 1997-2000 period, and the ECA (1999, p.16) projects the growth in 1999-2000 at 4 per cent, the level of growth was and would at this rate be below the 7% per annum growth rate necessary for a significant impact on poverty. This is the major challenge for African policy –makers and their development partners.

111. There continued to be serious pressure on the balance of payments of African countries and declines in export revenues. External debt continued to weigh heavily on the economies, with debt service increasing to over \$35.0 billion or over 31% of export earnings. On-going debt reduction initiatives did not significantly affect the debt burden on countries.

112. The ECA report notes that although the medium-term prospects of African economies are brightened by the past five years of sustained GDP growth, two key determinants of future growth are the weather and the international economic environment – both of which are exogenously determined. ECA (1999 p.14) notes however that despite the substantial disequilibrium on the external front and significant contraction of foreign resource inflows, macroeconomic stability was sustained over the 1997-1999 period and the rate of inflation declined by close to 20 per cent from around 15 per cent in 1997 to 12 per cent in 1998.

113. It is also noted that three conditions are considered necessary for economic growth, namely: a minimum degree of social stability, a minimum degree of macro economic stability and a minimum degree of allocative efficiency. Applying these criteria, it has been estimated that barely 15 per cent of Africa's population currently live in an environment considered minimally adequate for sustainable growth and development. Countries of the Africa Region therefore need to give priority to maintenance of these necessary conditions⁴².

4.1 Strengthening small and micro enterprises, particularly those developed by women.

114. Most economies in the region are still experiencing a downturn and the challenge for governments in the region is poverty reduction. This is visible from the number of countries that have undertaken poverty eradication programmes. Countries have undertaken specific activities and programmes to improve the urban economy, employment and income. This has included establishment of potentially effective financial bases for urban development such as forging of partnerships with the private sector; provision of opportunities for productive employment and private investment through provision of micro credit to small local associations, cooperatives and women groups. Informal sector development is being promoted in several countries (Kenya, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana etc) and is being supported through micro-credit schemes. An area of concern is that women who earn their livelihood mainly from the informal economy often do not have acceptable collaterals to enable them access meaningful credit facilities.

115. The trend for most governments has been to encourage self-employment, as job opportunities in the formal sector are very limited. Informal sector and small scale-entrepreneurship is already providing employment for a significant proportion of the urban labour force.

116. In Morocco some NGO's have been engaged in poverty reduction through micro-credit; technical support to micro-enterprises; literacy and financial management courses for credit- entrepreneurs.

117. Guinea is implementing a framework to facilitate development of micro-enterprises and strengthen initiatives for entrepreneurs to ensure efficient management of the private sector.

118. Several Governments have formulated and are implementing micro-enterprise support policies for women. Kenya reported a revamped policy and strategic framework for small and medium enterprise development, creating a conducive environment for women in industrial development. In Angola a national programme of experimental micro-credit with the support of the government has been operational since 1999, with an experimental basis of 2 years. The programme is directed at a population target of countrywomen, sales women and refugees. As of July 2000, the programme had benefited 705 women from which 56 were from in the commercial area. Other countries are putting in place, legislative and regulatory provisions that are more friendly and conducive to the informal economy.

119. Lack of planning and management capacity however, within the small and micro enterprises has been identified as a weakness. Extremely inadequate infrastructure and utility services have greatly constrained general economic development and productivity.

120. It has also been cited that while governments try to realize the employment and support for women and disabled people, social consciousness on the issue has not matured sufficiently hence there has been limited success.

121. Priority action in this regard should focus on the provision and improvement of basic economic and social infrastructures and services – namely roads, electric power supplies, water supplies etc. Given adequate availability of these, the private and other non-governmental sectors, including the community sector would be enabled to generate a lot more economic activities and improved incomes.

122. Another area of priority focus should be that of improving macroeconomic management with a view to bringing down inflation and interest rate levels. These would help spur more investments and productivity. Lower interest rates would contribute to

improving access to credit to a wider spectrum of the population, including women.

Chapter 5

Governance

123. Most African countries have made good progress in the area of fostering good urban governance. This has been achieved mainly in the area of decentralization, local government reforms, ensuring transparent, accountable and efficient management of urban areas, private sector involvement and community participation.

124. Several countries have undertaken constitutional reviews, which have made provision for a decentralized system of governance. In some countries, this has led to local government reforms whose objectives include, promoting good governance, determining appropriate and cost-effective organizational structures for local government and improving the management of finances. In Uganda, for instance, a National Programme and Action plan on democratic governance was prepared in 1997. The Action Plan identifies decentralization, democratization, transparency and accountability and public information as key areas in good governance.

125. In the Constitution of the Republic of Guinea there are recommendations to implement a legal and institution framework to ensure the necessary participation and civil engagement of the population.

126. In Tanzania, the main principles of the Local Government Reform process have been published in a Governments Policy Paper in 1998. These principles include people's participation in local government at the local level, bringing public services under the control of the citizens through their local councils, giving power to local councils over financial resources and creating a new central-

local relation based on legislation and negotiation.

127. In the context of current pressures of decentralization and democratization in many African countries, local governments are in the process of developing innovative approaches for the management of cities. Public-Private partnerships in the delivery of urban services such as solid waste management, management of markets, car/bus-parks, public toilets and public housing have been set up in many local authorities. Public-Private Partnerships are seen to be key instruments for mobilizing public and private skills, and funding of development in an effective manner and reducing the budgetary constraints on the local bodies involved. It is however necessary to have well coordinated participatory methodologies in which the state, the private sector and civil society organize themselves to explore grassroots solutions to issues of governance, poverty alleviation and sustainable Human Settlement. The private sector according to the Malawi national report ⁴³ has not participated fully and there is need for sensitization.

128. In many African countries most local authorities have already realised the importance of community participation and civic engagement in governance. However, in most countries, there is no legislation guiding the involvement of communities in human settlements management. Community based organizations respond to urban problems, as they arise, but not within a policy framework.

129. In spite of the major efforts to adopt the main tenets of good governance in the management of human settlements, most African countries have continued to experience institutional weaknesses and to encounter some obstacles. The relationship between Central Government and Local Authorities is still poorly developed even in some countries where decentralization is enshrined in national constitutions.

5.1 Promote decentralization and strengthen local authorities

130. Countries have made progress in terms of fostering some of the basic tenets of good governance. Amongst these are constitutional reforms that provide periodic elections, independent parliament, devolution of power, and functions and responsibilities to local governments. In post conflict countries such as Rwanda other areas of governance have included rehabilitating and restructuring of the judicial systems. In order to facilitate this devolution countries have adopted decentralization policies that will allow certain functions, tasks and powers to be decentralized to local governments and other actors. These include non-commercial organizations and non-governmental organizations. The need to strengthen the local authorities' ability to handle responsibilities that have been transferred to them has been identified as very crucial. This calls for strengthening of the various capacities including training of local leaders in local authorities. In Madagascar, for example, local governments have been entrusted the task of local development and local urban management, according to a decentralization policy adopted since Habitat II, by the central Government. This situation requires more competent handling with the local governments on issues, of their responsibility. Two ministries have been entrusted with the responsibility of coordination and cooperation with local governments: the Office of the Vice-Premier Minister, in charge of the budget and the development of local government, and the Ministry of Territorial Management and Cities.

131. Promotion of policies that support the transfer of administrative functions and tasks from central to local governments have been undertaken. Such powers are enshrined in constitutions and spelt out in various instruments such as the decentralization policies and local government acts. However, despite the quantitative transfer of tasks to local authorities this has not matched the administrative and financial support required.

The local authorities have low management and administrative capacity; the resources available to them are meager and in some countries the political structure and vested interest and allegiance of the ruling elite at the local level continue to retard development. Promoting bottom-up type of governance and strengthening of local authorities is one way to move towards sustainable human settlement development and it is with this view that decentralization should be considered as a base for efficient governance.

5.2 Encourage and support participation and civic engagement.

132. It has been recognized that growth of citizen consciousness activates local government performance and encourages issues of transparency. One of the concerns is how to broaden consultation mechanisms and allow maximum participation at the local level in elaboration, decision making and follow-up of development policies and projects. What emerges from the reports is that countries recognize that citizen participation is likely to promote efficiency and productivity, prompt service delivery and increase production as well as resource mobilization and accountability.

133. It has been acknowledged that so far ongoing process of decentralization in most countries has led to more focused programmes and action at the local level. The challenge however, remains on how local and national partners can ensure that decisions are made in full collaboration with women's groups, neighbourhood organizations, and associations of small businesses and Non Government Organization (NGOs). Additional challenge is designing forums for multi actor participation.

134. Among the important lessons learnt, is to recognize that citizen participation contributes towards the improvement of transparency, democracy and efficient administration in the long term.

Chapter 6

International cooperation

135. Following the Habitat II Conference in Istanbul, Governments of countries in the African Region consider international financial and technical assistance to be of particular importance for implementing their national plans of action. African Ministers responsible for housing and urban development held a first round of consultations in Nairobi in May 1999 with the objective of establishing common positions on priorities for implementing the Habitat Agenda. These consultations were continued with the help of several regional events, which took place in the course of the year 2000. These include the Afri-cities Summit in Windhoek in May 2000, the Conference on African Solutions to Urbanization in Johannesburg in June 2000, and the consultations with local authorities on the draft World Charter on Local Self-Government which took place in Accra in March 2000. Considerably more intensive efforts are needed to provide targeted multilateral and bilateral support to national and local Governments in the shelter sector, infrastructure improvements, urban management and urban governance as well as post-conflict rehabilitation. Algeria⁴⁴ has intensified efforts with the countries of The Arab League, to unify their efforts in housing by identifying capacities and know-how available in the Arab region for the benefit of their towns. By using external funds (World Bank, Arab League, European Union, UNDP), the Government has been implementing an evaluation programme of the country's building system, the promotion of private sector in housing and the improvement of performance indicators in relation to housing issues. More efforts are also needed by the international community to revise their cooperation programmes with the Africa

Recovery Programme of the Secretary General.

136. The most important strategic initiative for international cooperation is provided by the Cities Alliance Global Partnership programme which is jointly coordinated by the World Bank and UNCHS (Habitat). Under the Cities Alliance umbrella, intensive consultations on urban slum upgrading took place in Johannesburg in September 2000. That conference was also instrumental in stepping up the global campaign on secure tenure in countries of the Africa Region. However, it should be also noted here that, according to bilateral and multilateral organizations, more attention to Habitat Agenda issues would need to be given by many countries in the African Region when setting priorities for national development during negotiations on international assistance.

137. A number of countries have reported on policy developments and specific projects which are currently carried out under their Habitat Agenda national plans of action. The international cooperation focus on poverty eradication has allowed governments in the Africa Region to include urban poverty reduction initiatives into their poverty eradication strategies. Particularly the highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) have a range of opportunities to incorporate the Habitat Agenda goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable urban development into the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility offered by the large multilateral finance institutions, IMF and World Bank. Apart from the Cities Alliance, this is likely to become the most effective vehicle for channeling international cooperation to Habitat Agenda priorities. The co-ordination of multi-partner initiatives remains the most important challenge to enhancing the complementarity and overall effectiveness of international cooperation.

138. International cooperation on Habitat Agenda priorities is gaining momentum through the commitment of various NGO networks. The Africaucus has become a

useful vehicle for sharing of experience at the local level and in promoting strategic partnerships with civil society. Africaucus now operates networks of information exchange with international organizations, community groups, researchers, urban associations, regional and national institutions, in order to raise awareness on the Habitat Agenda and the need for coordinated international cooperation. Several countries have also noted that very little international assistance has so far been provided for the implementation of National Plans of Action, and called for increased technical assistance in building up capacities of relevant national institutions.

Annex 1

Table 1: Projected increase in number of households, ECA region (1990-2020)

	Projected no. of households				Projected annual rate of growth (%)		
	1990	2000	2010	2020	1990-2000	2000-2010	2000-2020
Eastern Africa	36,931,513	48,064,987	62,954,498	83,329,946	2.63	2.70	2.80
Middle Africa	13,439,070	19,827,678	27,777,557	40,628,376	3.89	3.37	3.80
Northern Africa	23,846,889	29,941,341	38,530,536	47,112,041	2.28	2.52	2.01
Southern Africa	5,507,835	13,540,102	20,595,881	23,067,191	8.99	4.19	1.13
Western Africa	30,220,570	45,637,680	66,384,556	89,270,536	4.12	3.75	2.96
Total ECA area	128,284,932	173,413,027	234,177,684	307,452,940	3.01	3.00	2.72

Source: Based on data to be published in the forthcoming Global Report on Human Settlements, 2001

Table 2: Projected Population Growth, ECA region (1990-2020)

	Projected population				Projected annual rate of population growth (%)		
	1990	2000	2010	2020	1990-2000	2000-2010	2000-2020
Eastern Africa	191,647,942	246,891,462	310,011,600	386,043,526	2.53	2.28	2.19
Middle Africa	70,259,429	95,506,153	126,025,601	163,918,096	3.07	2.77	2.63
Northern Africa	142,039,939	173,265,225	205,737,230	235,079,474	1.99	1.72	1.33
Southern Africa	39,112,814	46,885,115	50,182,919	53,691,956	1.81	0.68	0.68
Western Africa	171,514,404	221,666,581	281,089,625	348,385,533	2.57	2.37	2.15
Total ECA area	717,501,653	910,594,646	1,128,601,286	1,368,506,103	2.38	2.15	1.93

Source: Based on data to be published in the forthcoming Global Report on Human Settlements, 2001

Annex 2

List of member states that have submitted their reports as of May 2001.

Algeria
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Cameroon
Central African Republic
Chad
Cote d'Ivoire
Democratic Republic of Congo
Djibouti
Egypt
Ethiopia
Gabon
Guinea
Kenya
Lesotho
Liberia
Madagascar
Mali
Malawi
Morocco
Mozambique
Namibia
Niger
Nigeria
Rwanda
Senegal
South Africa
Sudan
Tanzania
Togo
Tunisia
Uganda
Zambia

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- ⁴ Centre-african Republic National Report
- ⁵ Mali: Rapport sur les indicateurs urbains du Programme pour l'habitat
- ⁶ Niger National Report
- ⁷ Togo National Report
- ⁸ Madagascar National Report
- ⁹ Botswana: Report for the First Preparatory Meeting of Istanbul May 2000
- ¹⁰ Egypt draft national report.
- ¹¹ Burkina Faso: Rapport du Burkina Faso, Résumé
- ¹² Rwanda: Online Reporting Form
- ¹³ Gabon: Rapport National
- ¹⁴ Namibia: Overview of Progress on the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda
- ¹⁵ Ethiopia: Draft Report on the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda, May 2000
- ¹⁶ Botswana: Report of the First Preparatory Meeting of Istanbul + 5
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- ¹⁹ Uganda: Report on the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda
- ²⁰ Speech delivered by Tanzania Delegation at the First preparatory Meeting of Istanbul +5, May 2000.
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- ²⁵ Ditto
- ²⁶ Ditto
- ²⁷ Ditto
- ²⁸ Ditto
- ²⁹ Housing Finance for Low-income Communities, Sina, September, 1998
- ³⁰ Republique du Tchad: Istanbul + 5 Rapport National, Fevrier 2000
- ³¹ Uganda National Report Istanbul+5
- ³² Mali National Report
- ³³ Arusha Peace Agreement on Burundi
- ³⁴ Nigeria National Report
- ³⁵ Uganda National Report Istanbul+5
- ³⁶ Rwanda National report

³⁷ Guinea National Report

³⁸ Mozambique National Report

³⁹ Cameroon National Report

⁴⁰ Morocco National Report

⁴¹ UNEP/UNCHS mission report to Mozambique March 2000

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