

# NATIONAL URBAN POLICY (NUP)

**A National Urban Policy (NUP)** is a tool for governments to direct and manage urbanization for the better. Under the leadership of the national government, and with the input from the regional and local levels and other stakeholders, it encourages a coherent set of decisions towards a long-term common vision that promotes transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development.

In order to manage modern exponential urban expansion, urban policy and planning must now reach **beyond the traditional physical and institutional boundaries of a city**. Planning and policy must now address **wider-ranging questions**, which require a higher level of vertical and horizontal coordination.

Governments and other stakeholders often need new sets of specialized skills to be able successfully undertake this complex policy development or revision process.

Despite the clear benefits of an effective NUP to promote coordinated and connected urban development, the process of policy formation can be time-consuming and complex.

## UN-HABITAT'S APPROACH

In consultation with partners, UN-Habitat is developing tools to enable countries to develop National Urban Policies, particularly with the feasibility, diagnostic, formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation stages of the process.

The UN-Habitat approach to NUP development is based on three pillars and five principles:

- Three pillars: participation, capacity development and 'acupuncture' projects – grounding policy in specifically selected projects in order to translate policy into direct action.
- Five principles: iterative and forward thinking, implementable, joined up, evidence-based, and action-oriented.

The three key thematic areas of the **3-pronged approach** (urban legislation, urban economy, and urban planning and design) should be addressed through NUP.

Additionally, in order to ensure a participatory and inclusive process, the NUP process accounts for youth, gender, human rights, and climate change.

UN-Habitat approach to NUP development is based on

## 3 Pillars

- Participation
- Capacity development and
- "Acupuncture" projects

## 5 Principles

- Iterative and forward thinking
- Implementable
- Joined up
- Evidence-based
- Action-oriented

**26** The number of countries that UN-Habitat is currently working in to support the development of National Urban Policies.

## IMPACT

A coordinated, overarching and transformative urban policy can document good public policy processes, such as participatory and capacity development mechanisms, that can be used during NUP development. The institutionalization of these processes can truly make NUP **transformative**.

1. UN-Habitat has been working for more than **five years** to develop tools to support NUP development and build a foundation of evidence to support informed policy.
2. UN-Habitat has also been working to **build partnerships** between international organizations working on NUP and to connect practitioners working on NUP in order to **encourage peer-to-peer learning**.
3. UN-Habitat is currently working in **26 countries** to support the development of National Urban Policies.
4. Activities and engagement by UN-Habitat in the NUP process include (but are not limited to):
  - country feasibility and diagnosis assessments and reports;
  - technical support to the policy formulation and implementation process;
  - policy review evaluation, and the design of policy monitoring frameworks;
  - advice on setting up national processes and stakeholder participation, such as through National Urban Forums;
  - capacity development in the NUP processes for government officials and other stakeholders;
  - documentation of good practices to support national policy processes, including the development of case studies, regional reports, and a global State of NUP report.