



**United Cities and Local Governments**  
**Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis**  
**Ciudades y Gobiernos Locales Unidos**

## **Policy recommendations on urban strategic planning**

They are conceived as key orientations to ensure local government's access to strategic planning and concerns different actors represented by the following letters:

### **1. Africa**

- In both countries, municipalities **recognize the need for planning in general and strategic planning specifically**. Municipalities are: leaders, politicians, technicians, and stakeholder.
- It is important that the **planning process is valued, and that necessary time and resources for effective planning are duly allocated** to this. In developing countries, the pressure to deliver and to be seen to deliver quickly on electoral promises has sometimes led to a short-circuiting planning, research and development, often with unintended consequences.<sup>1</sup>
- Mechanisms need to be put in place to **increase the revenue raising ability** of municipalities and reduce their reliance on central government transfers, and on donor funding. At the same time, **clear and transparent criteria for funding from central government** need to be put in place, to ensure stability and facilitate strategic planning.
- There are difficulties in **aligning the planning and actions** of all players at local level, and a strong framework for all municipalities is needed to structure intergovernmental relations and promote cooperative governance, , always with the principle of subsidiary. Doubling of functions should be avoided, or being limited in time.
- **Small, rural municipalities usually require specific attention and national interventions**, given their limited revenue raising potential, high poverty levels, and high levels of service backlogs. Planning tools related to transfers of funds, and capacity building efforts from central government are necessary over the long term.
- Associated with this, there is a need to **clarify the roles and responsibilities**, or powers and functions, of all parties, and to make sure that local government is provided with the necessary resources to develop the capacity needed to perform its mandate.
- Strategic planning needs to be **tied to the budget, and to the performance** of senior municipal personnel (through Performance Management Systems).
- To a certain extent it is **necessary to 'sell' the concept of strategic planning**, and the central significance of municipal planning, particularly to national government. Besides the framework, a possibility could be strategic inter regional dialogues that also involve provincial and central governments to listen to "ideas from the ground"
- In both countries, **spatial planning** needs to improve in order to achieve the goals of strategic plans.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, in South Africa, the rapid construction of large low income housing developments on the outskirts of urban areas may well compromise the municipality's ability to deliver services in a sustainable manner over the long term, possibly with negative political consequences in future. More thorough and intensive planning could obviate this.

- Developmental local government and decentralization means that in planning the citizen is seen as the focus or target. This requires a **participatory approach**, and “ownership” of the planning process by local officials, politicians and residents. Associated with enhanced public participation is **increased accountability** of municipal officials to local residents. This can be addressed through the use of techniques such as the citizen report card, or quality of life survey.
- Strategic plans need to be **short and clear**, and easily communicated. Local government in recognizes the need to increase ownership of their strategic planning process, and thus to emphasize **in-house planning**, reducing the reliance on external consultants. Associated with enhanced public participation is increased accountability of municipal officials.
- Developmental local government requires **greater levels of capacity and resources** at local level than has been the case before. This includes needing to develop effective financial management systems and budgeting processes.
- The **institutional arrangements** associated with strategic planning for local development need careful attention. In many municipalities in Mozambique there is no separate planning department, and planning is done on an ad hoc basis. In South African municipalities, there should be an Integrated Development Planning manager, in addition to a municipal planning department. However, the seniority and experience of the IDP manager is not always in line with the importance that should be granted to strategic planning.
- In all municipalities, **local leadership and political support** at all levels are critical to achieving effective strategic planning. Leaders and senior personal could be rewarded and have access to specific capacity building on strategies
- Strategic planning involves **making strategic choices**, recognizing that it is impossible for even the most capacitated municipality to accomplish all its goals alone. **Partnerships and strategic choices** therefore need to be made, in line with the overall strategic plan and vision of the municipality.
- It is important that international **partnerships** link and support existing strategies to be implemented, and are conducted in conjunction with municipal representatives, and that mechanisms are put in place for **sharing experiences** (both positive and negative) across municipalities within, and between, each country.
- For strategic planning to result in greater local development, it is important that it is accompanied by **implementation plans** which deliver improved service delivery.

## 2. Latin America

### Urban Strategic Planning is crucial to:

- Further the decentralization process, because it helps to channel new competences at the local level and it contributes to renewed inter-governmental relations.
- Promote Public-Private partnerships by making sure that the terms of the venture are discussed with and agreed upon by the local governments, giving that the fields traditionally covered by such projects are core competences of local authorities. The commitment process of the private and the public sector on PPP should go through a social, environmental and financial diagnosis, to result in clear agreements on an action plan and on the mitigation of its negative impacts and build consensus on medium and long term strategies, evacuating the daily trouble shooting perspective”.
- Direct the budget of the local governments (1) on the short term, to set up structuring and integrating projects and (2) on the long term, to align with national priorities and to better the process of local democracy.

- We Promote not only a balanced and effective provision of public services but also improve the integration of the lowest classes through innovative solutions in the access to such services and to sustainable urban housing directed towards social cohesion.
- Help to build new spatial patterns for the use of land and urban form, respecting the principles of property, social mixing, limitation of urban sprawl and variety of usages.
- Emphasize that environmental issues are not only second-plan challenges but crucial points to promote urban sustainable development and encourage adapted in-house solutions such as local energy markets, biodiversity protection plans, waste management facilities, housing GHG emissions reduction...
- Build capacities and social strengths leading to a greater territorial integration and governance, allowing in return the participation and articulation of actors within the objectives and projects of transformation This will reinforce the feeling of belonging and identity among the citizens, through a collective city project,
- Address and work transversally, and in an integrated manner, on various dimensions of the urban and territorial problem (economic, social, institutional, cultural and environmental)
- Manage the cities in a globalized environment and help them to face the changes with the necessary flexibility and adaptability
- Put the citizens in the centre of attention, relating their needs rights and duties to space, territory, time and social fabric (Medellin)

#### Recommendations and suggestions:

- Land should not be monopolized nor segregated but should instead reflect the openness and the plurality of society.
- *The inequalities remain in the cities and must be overcome, by encouraging inclusion and integration and mitigating the effects of speculation especially on the housing sector.*
- (B) Local Authorities are best indicated to lead Urban Strategic Planning. Strong leadership, confirmed by local elections, public participation and commitment, ensures that the process is owned by the citizens and the local public administration and not seen as an external procedure.

#### To private sector

- Land should not be monopolized nor segregated but should instead reflect the openness and the plurality of society. Land property and development implies social and environmental responsibilities that adapt to a long term compact city model and enables sustainable urban housing and development.
- *The identity of a city is also expressed by the constructions and build environment. Design competitions and design guidelines transmit the public interest in quality of live for all and should be respected and developed jointly with interest groups*

### **Recommendations related to LED and decent work (proposition)**

- *Urban spaces and neighbourhood should be vital, safe and beautiful, and hold the identify of its location; not only as a matter of aesthetics, but of economics and competitiveness to attract people and capital and root social interaction to keep productive population in the cities.*

- *(on ppp) Further, we encourage involving voluntary and community organizations into service delivery, so introducing more contestability in the delivery at the local level.*
- *The informal economy undertakes many activities that are, even if in a low-key way, important assets to the local economy. Through planning, negotiation, simplified regulation and assistance in upgrading activities those become strong and sustainable.*
- All municipalities have a responsibility to procure goods and services and can influence the amount of employment generated in making public purchases. They can also ensure the established standards for working conditions rather than unrestricted competition and downward pressure (decent work principles). The procurement in construction can become a potentially important mechanism for the implementation of labour standards.
- Starting from local skills and the knowledge and experience of local businesses, efforts should go into building on these, creating 'clusters' that can synergise and interconnect into a broader capacity to increase market share in sectors where enterprises in the city already have a presence.

**Environmental related to environment and urban food supply**

*Planning avoids scarcity, degradation and contamination of land, water and forest resources and prevents the risk of disasters of predominantly poor populations exposed to floods and landslides.*

*Sustainable building will contribute to a better management of natural resources and energy efficiency, and should correspond to the principle of recycling and regeneration of urban areas and public transport.*

*In order to ensure access of the urban population to safe food and healthy and secure environments, rural and urban local governments cooperate to create favorable conditions to produce, process and distribute food in favor of local markets.*

*In national funding schemes and incentives, legal and fiscal changes should promote regeneration as equally contributing to local economic development, both regarding development areas or business incentives. Incentives for regenerating, repairing and restoring are equally important to incentives for new development, and prepare to adapt to change.*

Trends achievements and challenges in the regions

	Governance and Institutional aspects , finance	population and migration social inclusion and cohesion	Environment al quality	spatial development, land management and control	economic stability and growth	quality of live in cities (identity perception)
Latin America	Decentralization settled, but fiscal initial planning binding for LG relation, planning departments and tools in place public service such as water and electricity 10% waste and waste water problems	75% population is urban municipalities are urban-rural in most countries High gap of income between rich poor rural urban Segregated cities Many inclusive local policy and	Problems on water bodies, deforestation and disaster prevention lack of green space problems of air pollution private transport	Planes de ordenamiento allow control and facilitate development control land use and service license land markets are accelerated Compact city model is increasingly dominant	Growth rate small but constant Large Cities grow more (Financial admin and academic hubs) but middle sized cities are upcoming Large cities	Increasing quality perceived by middle class: more control, security green space lower class groups more service of social and basic infrastructure and transport but less jobs Higher Spatial identity in

		proceeding			increase connectivity and become regional hubs advantage	colonial city centre's Upcoming social Identity
Africa	<p>Decentralization more formal than real large city budget high due taxes, middle and small LG very low income and tasks Lack of Basic service for rural</p> <p>Little value to planning: Planning departments are frequently understaffed and under-budgeted</p>	<p>Migration from rural to cities to break poverty cycle is not yet concluded currently ,30, % urban</p> <p>Low income and immigrants gather in Slums</p> <p>Rural urban interdependence of food and remittance</p>	<p>Pollution uncontrolled production, if in place under standard lack of waste with impact on soil and air</p> <p>Green spaces exist but are not protected or valued</p>	<p>Low density and uncontrolled land markets Spatial plans were used to orientate large infrastructure, no incidence on fe housing or neighborhoods, building permits only in large cities</p>	<p>Cities are the engines, of growth, even if much of the growth is construction and informal economy</p> <p>rural places jobless produce only large scale farming with little LED chains connected</p>	<p>Main problems related to infrastructure, no service, no transport Large cities suffer of transit problems Segregated city models, with poor living in large distances to working place and no land security (resettled) Little Public space Spatial difference business districts and homelands</p>
Europe	<p>Planning and fiscal decentralization in place, generally LG adjust and increase efficiency through new technology</p> <p>Lack of interest and increasing apathy Intergovernmental dialogues with other LGs</p> <p>Central funds for large scale development policy from EU</p>	<p>Rural population is rel high, many could be considered suburban due borders Population is going back to the city centers mostly single and students High immigration rate in cities, poverty pockets, aging</p>	<p>Cities have more pollution than rural, and lack of public space is problematic, increasing value of hinterland recycling massive. Transport investment (metro train bus) and in individual (bike) has improved air quality and health</p>	<p>Spatial model differ form north (garden city) to South (compact city) control of land usually working through long term spatial planning on land. LGS have little influence in housing and real estate. Old urban systems needing reforms, infrastructures have to catch up with the needs and the new standards in order to ensure sustainable development.</p>	<p>Cities are stronger than LGs but the gap is smaller than in other regions High unemployment rates rely on LG social budgets. Economical crises impacts cities</p>	<p>Lack of integration Of environment efficiency</p> <p>Spatial identity oriented to historic centre development</p> <p>Cultural agenda and knowledge become factor of competitiveness</p> <p>Quality of life has been addressed in the last decade, first as markets, than as lifestyle</p>