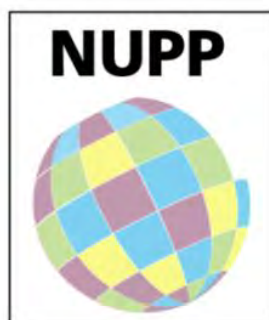


The National Urban Policy Programme

Overview



October 2019

UN-Habitat, OECD, Cities Alliance

Background

Addressing the challenges of urbanisation in a sustainable and equitable manner requires a cross-sectoral approach to urban policies and increased vertical and horizontal coordination. Facilitating collaborative efforts among all levels of government, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders through National Urban Policies (NUP) is critical to make this happen.

A NUP – defined as the coherent set of decisions from a government led process of co-ordinating various actors for a common vision that will promote more productive, inclusive and resilient urban development – has been recognised by the international community as an essential policy instrument to harness the dynamics of urbanisation. This is in order to achieve national and global goals by supporting the creation of an enabling, collaborative and cooperative institutional environment (OECD, 2017; United Nations, 2016a; UN Habitat, 2015). In preparation for Habitat III, NUP was selected as one of ten thematic Policy Units, affirming its instrumental nature for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (United Nations, 2016a). Subsequently, the NUA has given explicit emphasis to the importance of NUPs as one of the five implementation pillars, and commits to taking measures to enhance governments' ability to develop and implement over-arching policies (United Nations, 2016b). NUPs have also been proposed as a monitoring tool for the SDGs through Indicator 11.a.1.

Well-designed NUPs can help countries and cities achieve economic growth, environmental sustainability and social inclusion (OECD, 2014; OECD, 2015, United Nations, 2016a) through the alignment of different sectoral policies and by ensuring that all urban policies are coherent in their support of cities and residents. NUPs can also connect all levels of government and other stakeholders by providing forums for a shared vision and a framework, which enables them to move as one towards the same goals. A NUP does not replace local urban policies, but complements them to create the necessary coordinating conditions for sustainable urban development.

In many countries, however, there is a lack of such NUPs. National and subnational governments may not have sufficient capacity, resources and specialised skills to successfully undertake the NUP process without outside guidance, as they often lack the data and knowledge required for the development and implementation of an effective NUP.

In order to address this challenge, the UN-Habitat, the OECD and Cities Alliance created the National Urban Policy Programme (NUPP), a global initiative to support countries' efforts to develop and implement NUPs. It was launched at the Habitat III Conference in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016.

Programme Objectives

The NUPP bridges the abovementioned gaps observed in many countries in developing and implementing NUPs. To do so, the NUPP has the following five pillars (Figure 1 below):

- To enhance **knowledge (creation, exchange and management) on NUP** at all levels of government, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders. The Programme will encourage countries' and cities' peer-to-peer learning and exchange of good practice, while addressing local contexts. Through these knowledge-based activities, the Programme supports evidence-based NUP making processes.
- To help **increase the capacity (human, financial, and institutional)** of policy makers at the national and sub-national level to develop and progressively implement urban policies, particularly in the form of NUP, by providing a platform for capacity development activities.
- To provide **country support for NUP** making processes (on demand), to ensure involvement of all relevant stakeholders (ministries, subnational governments, civil society etc.) and participatory processes as appropriate.

- To **monitor the progress of NUP** in its role as part of the monitoring process of the New Urban Agenda / Sustainable Development Goals, through a global review and country specific reviews on NUP.
- To provide a **platform for dialogue and advocacy** for all levels of government, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders to network and engage in developing and implementing NUP. The platform can engage in advocacy activities through periodic global/regional/national/sub-national forums with a broad base of stakeholders in order to communicate the importance of NUP and its ability to initiate dialogue on how to better manage urbanisation

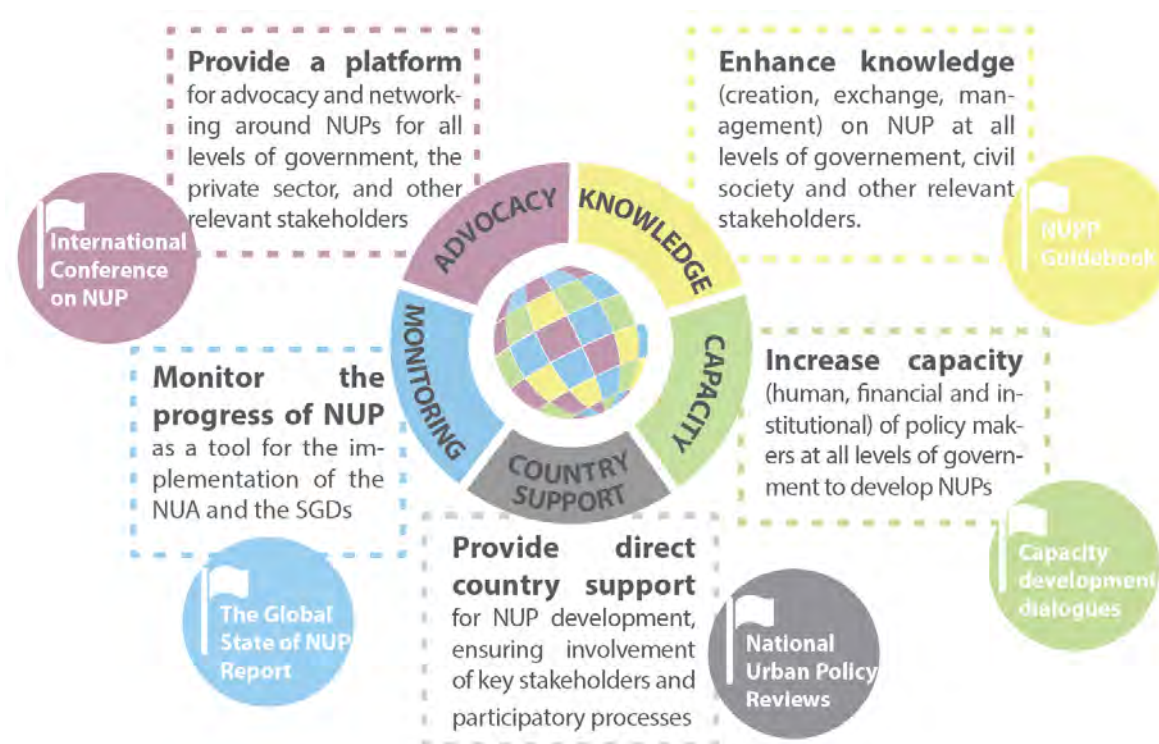


Figure 1: The pillars and flagship products of the National Urban Policy Programme

Programme Content

In order to meet its objectives, the NUPP will provide the following activities. This list is not exhaustive; a wider range of activities can be proposed and carried out reflecting demand from participating governments and relevant stakeholders. A work plan with a more concrete list of activities may be prepared for a specific time (e.g. for 2019-20).

A) Knowledge creation and management

Creating and managing NUP knowledge is essential to ensure that urban policy and planning are evidence based. The Programme will directly support national governments by collecting data, best

practices, and other knowledge on NUP from across the world and by sharing them through peer learning and exchange activities.

- **Online Resource Portal**

The NUP Online Resource Portal will serve as a knowledge hub and provide an online forum for related resources and tools, including:

- Online NUP Toolkits
- Online Interactive NUP Map
- Online NUP Database (link to NUPs in different countries, including the policy documents, the leading ministry, etc.)
- Existing literature, research and policy guidelines related to NUPs (e.g. International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning)
- Information on International Conferences on NUP
- Various resources on NUP and related tools such as dialogues and videos

- **Developing datasets and indicators on urban and metropolitan areas**

The NUPP can develop internationally comparative datasets and indicators at urban areas beyond (historically defined) administrative borders, by applying the concept of Functional Urban Areas (defined as urban cores and integrated commuting zones). Such datasets and indicators can better inform policymakers and support evidence-based policy making at the right scale. For example, the OECD has recently analysed Columbia, Morocco (Casablanca) and Viet Nam and identified their respective Functional Urban Areas.

- **Policy relevant research related to NUPs**

The NUPP will also undertake a wide range of research activities in order to support central and local governments.

B) A platform for capacity development

Capacity building at all levels of government is necessary for sustainable urban policy and planning. Through both the assessment and development of human, financial, and institutional capacity, it is possible to ensure that a NUP can be successfully developed, implemented, and monitored and evaluated by all levels of government.

A lack of skills and capacity has been highlighted as one of the key challenges to developing and successfully implementing a NUP, and therefore also to achieving more coordinated governance between the national and sub-national levels. This portion of the NUPP offers capacity development, by which government officials (and other relevant stakeholders) can work to improve their skills to develop, implement, and monitor and evaluate NUPs. The Programme will also encourage peer-to-peer learning, particularly through international study visits. It is recognised that the development of a NUP and capacity development for NUPs is a long and complex process. Capacity development approaches in the NUPP will offer both pre and post engagement in order to encourage long-term commitment to capacity development within the NUP process. This way the NUPP can support capacity development needs throughout the duration of its development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as encouraging the institutionalisation of capacity development mechanisms.

- **Capacity development sessions and seminars**

Capacity development sessions and seminars can be held for national and subnational policy makers and practitioners to learn key principles on NUPs, good practices from other countries, etc. For example, key materials can include:

- Global State of National Urban Policy (UN-Habitat and OECD)

- International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (UN-Habitat)
- Building Successful Cities: A National Urban Policy Framework (OECD)
- Toolkit for the OECD Principles on Effective Public Investment Across Levels of Government (OECD)
- The National Urban Policy Guiding Framework (UN-Habitat)
- Thematic platforms

Thematic platforms provide tools for policy implementation. For example; Cities Alliance is currently developing through their members 2 platforms: A resilience platform (by UN-Habitat) and a platform on City Development Strategies (by IHS).
- Study visits and peer-to-peer learning exchange

The NUPP can organise study visits so that policy makers and other stakeholders can learn about urbanisation and other country's urban policies.

C) Country support to increase urban governance through NUP

Engagement at national level will assist NUPs in reflecting local contexts. The development of a NUP will enhance urban governance coordination across levels of government, civil society, the private sectors and other relevant stakeholders within the participating countries. Enhanced governance coordination can support the development of more sustainable and inclusive urban policy and urban planning practices.

- Policy reviews

The NUPP can provide country-specific assessment of existing or newly prepared NUP based on a consistent method (e.g., cross-country comparisons and benchmarking, recommendations on improving the integration of sectoral policies and strengthening urban governance). The OECD's National Urban Policy Reviews and the diagnostic review of the UN-Habitat could be adapted for this purpose. As a pilot activity, the OECD has collaborated with UN-Habitat to conduct the National Urban Policy Reviews of Viet Nam in 2016-17. Similar reviews could be conducted (one or two reviews each year) as a flagship activity of the NUPP, depending on demand from countries and financing capacity.
- Technical assistance

Technical assistance can be provided on demand through UN-Habitat (Headquarters, Regional, and Country offices), OECD, Cities Alliance and other partner organisations. It can include support throughout the NUP process, including formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the policy.
- Multi-level policy dialogues

The NUPP, in collaboration with networks of subnational governments such as UCLG, can create a space for policy dialogues to exchange views and ideas among national and subnational governments. Such dialogues could be combined with other country specific supporting tools. Facilitating multi-level policy dialogues will help national and local policy-makers understand different NUP perspectives and develop more effective processes.

D) Monitoring progress

As a NUP is a key implementation tool of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, monitoring progress is essential. The NUPP provides global assessment of NUPs and supports countries' monitoring and evaluation processes through reviews.

- Global State of National Urban Policy Report

Under the NUPP, the current global status of NUPs is collected regularly and analysed systematically with a common methodology. Results will be published in the Global State of National Urban Policy Report. The first report was launched at the 9th World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in February 2018. The second edition is currently being prepared with strengthened assessment on the SDG indicator and in-depth analysis on NUP contribution to climate policies.

- Monitoring reviews by country/region

The NUPP can also support countries to monitor the progress of NUP and provide specific recommendations, through the OECD's National Urban Policy Reviews or similar studies. Monitoring reviews could be conducted at a regional scale (e.g. Latin America, Arab States, etc.) in partnership with UN Economic Commissions and UN Habitat's Regional offices).

E) Engaging stakeholders, networking and partnership building

Collaboration amongst all levels of government, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders is essential to NUP. The NUPP thus aims to provide a platform for networking and engagement in the process of designing and implementing NUP. Ultimately, the NUPP aims to strengthen partnerships between all stakeholders that are working on the development and implementation.

- International Conference

The International Conference on NUP will be a unique forum to facilitate high-level policy dialogues among stakeholders including policy makers of national and sub-national governments, NGOs, academia, civil society and the private sector. It is also an opportunity to present research results and periodically benchmark and monitor progress of NUPs. By bringing different stakeholders together to discuss NUP, the Conference will build new partnerships and strengthen existing ones. The Conference could be organised every two or three years and hosted by a country. The first Conference was organised by UN-Habitat, the Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements and The Korea Research Institute of Civil Engineering and Building Technologies, and supported by the Government of Korea (Incheon, Korea, 12- 13 December 2015). The Second Conference was co-hosted by the OECD and UN Habitat and supported by Cities Alliance (Paris, France, 15-18 May 2017).

- Advocacy of NUP via stakeholder networks and global processes

The NUPP aims to systematically engage a wide range of stakeholders on urban issues in a given country (e.g. all levels of government, civil society, the private sector, multi-lateral donors, networks of cities, etc.) so that the NUPP can be designed and implemented within their partnerships. It will also be important to promote the agenda of NUP in different global processes such as the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Agreement.

Administration of the Programme

The NUPP is designed as a long-term initiative to support the implementation of a global urban agenda for sustainable urbanisation, including the New Urban Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

The NUPP will take a flexible administrative form so that all the institutions who are interested in benefitting from and/or contributing to the Programme can do so. More specifically, it could consist of a wide range of

contributors and users as members and several administrative functions including **NUPP Coordinators**, **NUPP Supporting Partners** and **NUPP Networking Partners**.

NUPP Coordinators

NUPP Coordinators are comprised of three international organisations: UN Habitat, OECD and Cities Alliance, all of which have extensive expertise in the development, implementation and monitoring of urban policy, and have their respective areas of specialty when it comes to National Urban Policies:

- **UN Habitat** has been a leader in the provision of support to the development and implementation of NUPs for the past six years. Over this period, and in consultation with partners, UN Habitat has informed global debates, consolidated normative knowledge and developed tools that support countries with undertaking the NUP process. This work includes a wide variety of tools to support the feasibility, diagnostic, formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation phases and other important elements of the policy process, including supporting capacity development programmes at country level and supporting participatory policy processes through the organisation of workshops and national level forums. This normative knowledge then informs country level technical support for the NUP process. UN Habitat is currently supporting a global portfolio of work on NUPs, with active projects related to NUPs in more than 45 countries, including sub-national programmes. UN-Habitat is also implementing regional programmes on NUP, such as the UN Habitat NUP Arab States and in Sub-Saharan Africa .
- The **OECD** has been at the forefront of research and analysis on urban development for the past 30 years. Our in-depth analyses involve reviews of cities and metropolitan areas to evaluate current policies and propose strategies for boosting economic growth, improving environmental performance and fostering social inclusion. The organisation has produced extensive thematic work on urban development and regional governance looking at how cities can be most effective in tackling climate change and achieving greener growth; the links that can be adopted between urban and rural areas to boost a region's economic potential, as well as how cities can better adapt to demographic change. The OECD has also developed statistical databases to answer the increasing demand for statistical information at the regional and metropolitan levels helping cities to benchmark their performance against others at the right spatial scale. Since 2010, the OECD has conducted National Urban Policy Reviews in seven countries so far, including Poland (2011), Korea (2012), Chile (2013), Mexico (2015), China (2015), Kazakhstan (2017) and Viet Nam (2018). During the preparation process of the Habitat III Conference, the OECD co-led the Policy Unit 3 on NUP together with UN-Habitat and produced the policy paper on NUP, which was an important building block to formulate the New Urban Agenda.
- **Cities Alliance**, hosted by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), is the global partnership and multi-donor fund for promoting the role of cities in poverty reduction and sustainable development. With a strong track record in grant making, the partnership supports strategic city planning, slum upgrading strategies and national policies designed to make cities more inclusive and sustainable. With operations in over 61 countries, the Cities Alliance has supported the development of National Urban Policies in its country programmes in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, Tunisia, Uganda and Vietnam.

Based on a foundation of close organisational collaboration, NUPP Coordinators will work to ensure **cooperation, communication** and **coordination** amongst NUPP Supporting/Networking Partners through providing opportunities for collaborative activities, advocacy initiatives and monitoring programmes:

- **Cooperation:** bringing together and building on the organisational strengths of each partner through providing opportunities for synergy of work in the five component areas of the NUPP.
- **Communication:** promoting cross-organisational communication on topics related to National Urban Policies between NUPP Supporting/Networking Partners and other stakeholders, allowing for consistency in approaches and coordination of partners.
- **Coordination:** working to ensure a coordinated effort to support NUPs globally and, while working with NUPP Supporting/Networking Partners, preventing overlap and duplication of work.

NUPP Coordinators will oversee the management of the Programme, and will form the decision making body of the NUPP. They will develop NUPP annual work plans and budget following input from NUPP Supporting Partners.

NUPP Supporting Partners:

NUPP Supporting Partners lend support to the NUPP through financial and/or in-kind contribution to overall or specific activities of the Programme. In addition, NUPP Supporting Partners play a key role in the definition of the strategy and direction of the NUPP. They work closely with NUPP Coordinators to advise on annual work plans and budget, policies, operational strategies and projects and to inform necessary decisions.

More specifically, below are examples of expected roles for Supporting Partners:

- Provide financial and/or in-kind contribution to overall or specific activities of the Programme;
- Provide advice to NUPP Coordinators on how to better understand global urban policy issues; how to ensure the relevance of the NUPP to address them;
- Participate in NUPP Supporting Partners' meetings (physically or virtually);
- Provide inputs to NUPP work plans and budget;
- Participate in the NUPP's projects as peer-reviewers and provide and share knowledge and lessons learned;
- Serve as ambassadors for the NUPP and advocate for the Programme to other potential partners, therefore helping to ensure ongoing publicity for the Programme on the global stage; and
- Assist in identifying and acquiring (when appropriate) external resources to support NUPP work plans and budget.

NUPP Supporting Partners receive specialised recognition regarding their contribution to the NUPP, by being acknowledged through NUPP products and other media, according to the types of contribution. Their logos will appear in NUPP materials, as acknowledgment of support.

NUPP Networking Partners:

NUPP Networking Partners lend support to the NUPP by sharing information on NUPP activities with their own network and by sharing information on their own NUP-related activities with NUPP Coordinators, NUPP Supporting Partners and other NUPP Networking Partners.

NUPP Network partners are notified of NUPP activities via a mailing list and are welcome to engage in all public NUPP activities. Networking Partners could include media partners. The logos of NUPP Networking Partners will be included in NUPP materials, as acknowledgment of support.

Operation of the NUPP

The activities of the NUPP are operated through NUPP Workplans. The NUPP Coordinators will prepare a NUPP Workplan every two years and consult NUPP Supporting and Networking Partners for their input. A NUPP Workplan will include the strategic direction of the NUPP for the next two years and a list of proposed actions.

The activities of the NUPP will rely on financial support from Supporting Partners.

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