



## UN-HABITAT URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES PROGRAM AND PILOT PROJECTS

### PROGRAMME DE LIAISONS URBAIN-RURAL ET PROJETS PILOTES DE L'ONU-HABITAT

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#### ABSTRACT

This chapter presents UN-Habitat Urban-Rural Linkages: Guiding Principles Program and Projects. It begins by presenting an overview of the development of the program and its relations with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda. The paper then presents the developing process of the Urban-Rural Linkages: Guiding Principles and Framework of Action (URL-GP). This process was initiated in 2018 and culminated in 2019 with over 130 stakeholders from UN agencies, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector agreeing to ten Guiding Principles and eleven entry points in a Framework for Action to strengthening urban-rural linkages. After the successful launch of the URL-GP, the main task for UN-Habitat has been to guide member states, local governments, and territorial actors for strengthening urban-rural linkages by applying the Guiding Principles and the Framework for Action. The last section of this paper presents the learning materials and tools that UN-Habitat has developed with inputs from experts for applying the URL-GP to actual geographic locations at different scales (small, intermediate, and large cities, territories, countries).

**Keywords:** UN-Habitat, Urban-Rural Linkages, Program and Projects, ecosystem services, Sustainable Development.

## **RESUME**

Ce chapitre présente les liens urbains-ruraux d'ONU-Habitat : programme et projets de principes directeurs. Il commence par présenter un aperçu de l'évolution du programme et de ses relations avec l'Agenda 2030 pour le développement durable et le Nouvel Agenda urbain. L'article présente ensuite le processus de développement des liens urbain-rural : principes directeurs et cadre d'action (URL-GP). Ce processus a été lancé en 2018 et a culminé en 2019 avec plus de 130 parties prenantes d'agences des Nations Unies, d'organisations internationales, de la société civile et du secteur privé acceptant dix principes directeurs et onze points d'entrée dans un cadre d'action pour renforcer les liens urbains-ruraux. Après le lancement réussi de l'URL-GP, la tâche principale d'ONU-Habitat a été de guider les États membres, les gouvernements locaux et les acteurs territoriaux pour renforcer les liens urbains-ruraux en appliquant les Principes directeurs et le Cadre d'action. La dernière section de ce document présente les matériels et outils d'apprentissage qu'ONU-Habitat a développés avec des contributions d'experts pour appliquer l'URL-GP à des emplacements géographiques réels à différentes échelles (petites, intermédiaires et grandes villes, territoires, pays).

**Mots-clés :** ONU-Habitat, Liens urbain-rural, Programme et projets, services éco systémiques.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Urban-rural linkages refer to **complementary and synergetic functions and flows** of people, natural resources, capital, goods, employment, ecosystem services, information and technology between rural, peri-urban and urban areas.

Sustainable Development Goal 11 is “the urban goal” and aims to “make cities and human settlements more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. Target 11.a requests to “support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.” With target 11.a, Member States acknowledged the importance of the linkages between urban and rural areas and lay the foundation for an integrated territorial approach. Urban-Rural linkages have again come into focus, not only for achieving SDG 11, but also SDGs 2, 9 and 12 among others.

Building on previous work, **in 2015** UN-Habitat took the lead during the formulation process of the New Urban Agenda and coordinated with different UN-agencies such as Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to jointly draft the Habitat III Issue Paper Number 10 on Urban-Rural Linkages. This paper was a guiding document for the Special Session on Urban-Rural Linkages during the Habitat III conference.

As a follow-up to the session, the respective agencies, development partners and other stakeholders are now exploring a global network for Urban-Rural Linkages advocating for an **integrated territorial development** and aiming to **provide support, guidance and tools to Member States and local authorities for strengthening their Urban-Rural Linkages from multiple perspectives and with different mandates.**

In October 2015, Expert Group meeting (EGM) was convened in Monteria, Colombia with the overall goal to exchange practices and experiences on strengthening URLs with special attention to small and intermediate cities (SICs). Participating experts discussed experiences from different regions and countries promoting urban-rural linkages and highlighting the importance of the systems of small and intermediate cities together with rural areas between them as critical spaces for enhancing URLs. The Monteria Communique, the outcome of the EGM, informed the deliberations of the group setting up indicators for the SDG 11.a. and contributed to habitat III processes, particularly to the relevant policy units and regional and thematic meetings to ensure inclusion of URLs, SICs and integrated territorial development in the New Urban Agenda (NUA) the outcome of Habitat III in Quito, Ecuador in 2016. It was also during this meeting that recommendations were delivered to develop **principles and a framework for action, roadmaps for partnerships and normative guidance** articulating a new narrative on URLs in coming years.

The NUA, an action oriented and people centred agenda, is not only about everything urban but also about all spaces and all sizes of human settlements. The development gap between urban and rural areas is still great and urgently needs to be bridged. The evidence is clear that urban growth has positive impact on economic development, but still most of the world's poor live in rural areas. Many rural communities and smaller settlements lack access to basic services, including food, water and sanitation, energy, education, medical and social services. Strengthening urban-rural linkages to address these gaps is one way of implementing the NUA and making sure no one is left behind.

The challenges that urban-rural linkages can address include a wide variety of thematic issues. Strategies for enhancing those linkages cannot be developed only through single sectoral or siloed thinking. A multi-sector integrated approach is thus recognized as essential. The NUA explicitly invites “international and regional organizations and bodies, including those of the United Nations system and multilateral environmental agreements, development partners, international and multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, the private sector, and other stakeholders, to enhance the coordination of their urban and rural development strategies and programmes to apply an integrated approach to sustainable urbanization, mainstreaming the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.” (para 82, New Urban Agenda, Quito, 2016).

UN-Habitat developed a paper published in 2017 which gives an overview of the 10 thematic entry points to Urban-Rural Linkages along with recommended necessary interventions. The paper presents numerous case studies of successful strategies and actions taken by different actors from national levels to subnational local authorities. It shows opportunities and challenges for Urban-Rural Linkages. It also presents different

areas of expertise within UN-Habitat and introduces tools such as the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, National Urban Policies and the Global Land Tool Network among others. Nonetheless a set of principles and actions were still needed for strengthening URLs.



**Figure 1: Urban rural linkages paper and International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning**

### **DEVELOPING THE URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES: GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORK OF ACTION**

Responding to this need in January 2018, UN-Habitat convened a participatory process for developing “Urban-Rural Linkages: Guiding Principles and a Framework for Action for Advancing Integrated Territorial development” with a first working session parallel to the World Urban Forum (WUF9) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Twenty-five participants in the first consultation provided inputs to a zero draft of the URL-GP. Over 100 stakeholders in UN agencies and regional commissions, international development partners, national and local governments, private sector and donor organizations, academic and research organizations, civil society, and the private sector, provided comments for subsequent drafts over the following year.

In June 2018 an expert group meeting (EGM) was held in La Paz, Bolivia in where a second draft was reviewed, and recommendations were offered to strengthen URL for the government of Bolivia developed. It was after several drafts produced and shared by

various stakeholders that the final URL-GP launched during the UN-Habitat Assembly in **May 2019**. The structure of the URL-GP consists of 10 short principles (GP) that ideally are the foundation for strengthening urban-rural linkages within and across sectors such as planning, finance, economic development, health, environment, transport, agriculture, etc. Equally important and even more concrete for implementers (planners, programme managers, development agencies, donors, etc.) are the 11 entry points in the Framework for Action (FfA). The final text of the URL-GP is thus a two-part tool for implementation, first, applying the guiding principles to projects and programmes, and second, incorporating URLs into specific interventions in concrete spatial and functional applications at the national or subnational level.

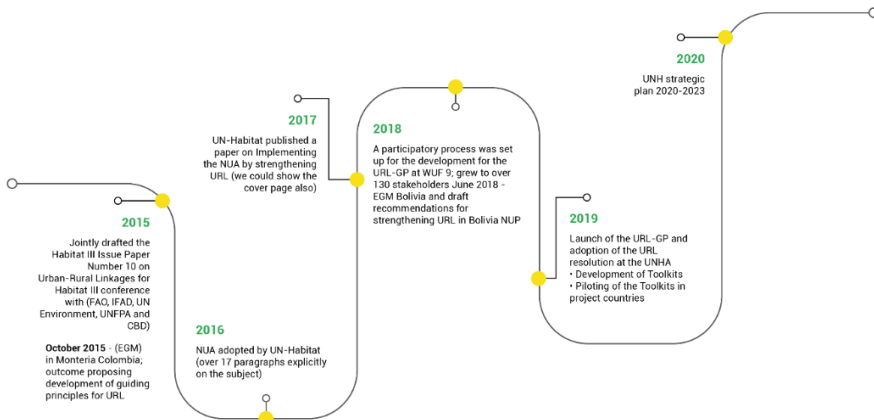


**Photo 1: Working session at WUF 9 at Kuala Lumpur**



**Figure 2: The 10 principles of strengthening urban-rural linkages**

In 2020, UN-Habitat launched a new Strategic Plan which outlines four domains of change or goals. Two of the domains of change address urban-rural linkages 1) reducing spatial connectivity and poverty 2) enhancing cities and regions prosperity. The tools and methodologies under the URL-GP all seek to support member states reduce the urban-rural divide and promote cities and regions prosperity. This URL strategy thus feeds to the overall strategy for implementing the strategic plan 2020-2023.



**Figure 3: History of UN-Habitat urban-rural linkages work**

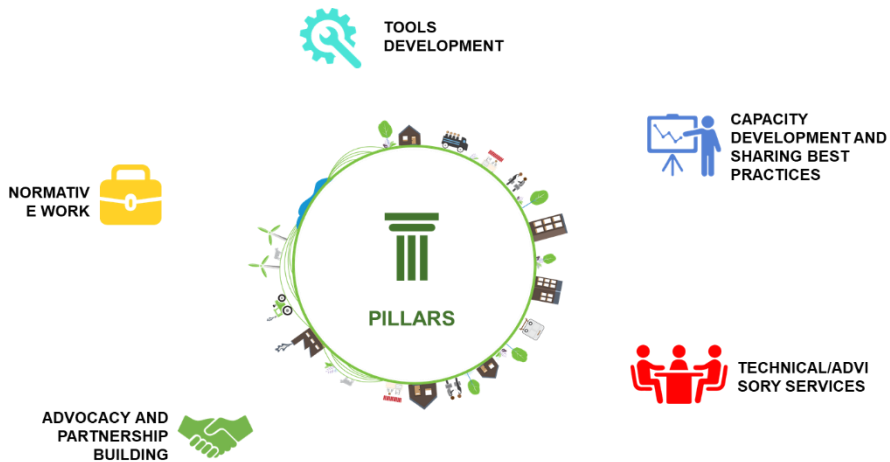
The URL-GP is available in seven languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russia, Chinese and Arabic). Presently UN-Habitat is developing mechanisms, tools, methodologies to support member states in the implementation of the URL-GP which describes the strategy of URL-GP.

### EXPLORING THE UN-HABITAT URL PROGRAM

After successful launch of the URL-GP, the main task for UN-Habitat has been to provide guidance for implementation and localization by partners, local governments and member states. The application of the URL-GP to actual geographic locations at different scales (small, intermediate or large cities, territories, countries) requires another set of learning materials and tools which UN-Habitat has developed with inputs from experts. From expert meetings and workshops with both national and subnational agencies a set of assessment tools, thematic guides, case studies and a learning manual are being developed to support national and subnational actors who are conveners or facilitators of inclusive urban and rural processes to identify challenges, opportunities, capacity needs and stakeholder engagement, data needs and policy options. These tools are designed to be used where appropriate in conjunction with policy (National/Sub-national Urban Policy (NUP) processes. NUP was identified as a key pathway to the localization of the SDGs

and the NUA and a set of tools have been developed to support URLs in the context of revising or developing NUPs.

In addition to the NUP and related policy guidance emphasizing URLs and integrated territorial development, there has been significant global and regional interest in URLs and territorial governance in the context of COVID-19 and 2021 review of global agendas including food systems, biodiversity, ecosystem restoration and climate change. From this context of early tools and methodology the URL program pursues five broad tracks of work:



**Figure 4: Pillars of UN-Habitat URL Work**

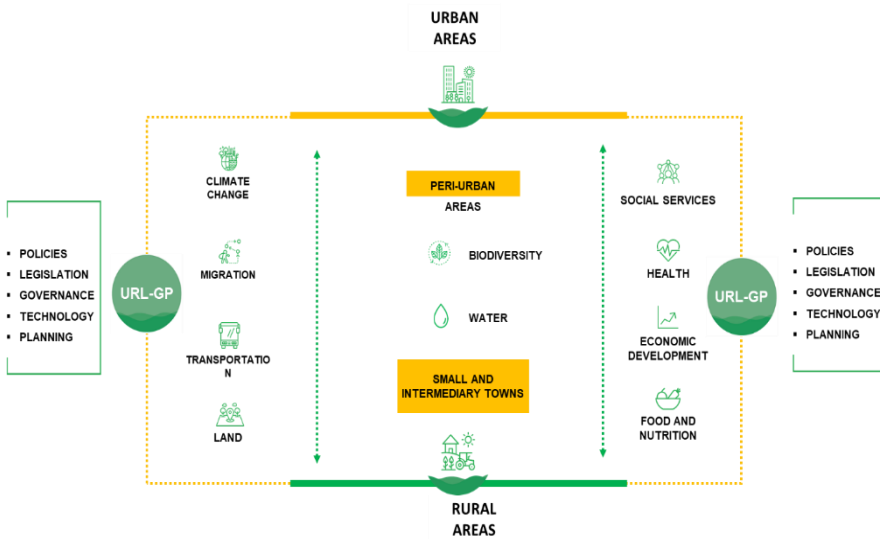
### **Normative Work**

Normative work is comprised of products and materials to assist member states and partners in implementing Urban-Rural Linkages (URL) activities. They include standards, methodologies, regulatory frameworks, and a growing collection of good practices on URL at global, regional and national levels. Some of the materials that under development include URL thematic papers, discussion papers, policy and issue briefs and other related guidelines. For example, UN-Habitat has contributed to papers with partners including UNSCN, OECD, GIZ, FAO, UNCCD, AGRA, and the World Bank among others.

UN-Habitat has developed a guide to mainstreaming URLs in National Urban Policies. This is part of a series of thematic practical guides by policy makers. Other practical materials, papers and guides that UN-Habitat is in the process of developing include: thematic papers/guides on URLs and food systems and nutrition, ecosystem restoration, biodiversity, climate change, migration, and health, among others that may arise based on demand. The URL thematic guides have been developed with and sometimes published

by partners, and a framework for thematic guides has been developed by UN-Habitat (see Annex 1).

Another set of normative material that UN-Habitat has already embarked on is the **dissemination of good practices**. This is through a series of compendia of case studies on URL in different regions and contexts. Two editions have been published as of early 2021, including submissions from partners and other stakeholders working on related work. The compendia include existing projects, policies and activities shared as inspiring practices for replication, adoption etc.



### Technical Assistance and Advisory Services

This is key to supporting Member State implementation of the URL-GP in their policies, plans and strategies. This could be related to member states who are already developing their policies, plans, strategies among others but also those who just intend to strengthen their URL. This thus means that the technical services varies from policy support to actual projects proposals and appropriate support. These are this in most cases relates to project support by UN-Habitat in different country contexts.

Knowledge creation and sharing on the other hand will be key to address any upcoming demands by Member States, local and regional governments and stakeholders. This will be accomplished through developing materials and normative products based on stakeholder needs. Currently UN-Habitat is supporting 11 countries on strengthening URL: Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mozambique, Cameroon, Niger state, Zanzibar, DRC, Mali, Colombia and Bolivia.



## Tool Development

The normative guidance and case studies on URLs bring the principles and actions from the URL-GP closer to concrete challenges and entry points for solutions that planners and programme managers must confront. It is however the adaptive, interactive tools for participatory work in urban and rural settings by convenors and agencies at different levels of governance and in other field applications with partners, that a set of URL tools have begun to be developed.

The 10 principles and 11 actions of the URL-GP can be applied to many different particular contexts at different scales. The tools are organized for different phases of engagement, from early assessment of challenges and possible solutions to stakeholder engagement, capacity development, policy review and data collection and management.

**URL Toolbox:** A set of draft tools have been designed to be used either in sequence or individually depending on the context. Each of the tools will be availed for use as hard copy checklists or templates in a workshop setting, or through online webtool formats using mobile phones/tablets/laptops. All the tools utilize the URL-GP to provide a foundation, and build toward identification of policy recommendations and an approach monitor progress over time. The tools below are described with examples from a pilot project (mentioned in part II) in four countries: Cameroon, Guinea Conakry, Niger state and Zanzibar.

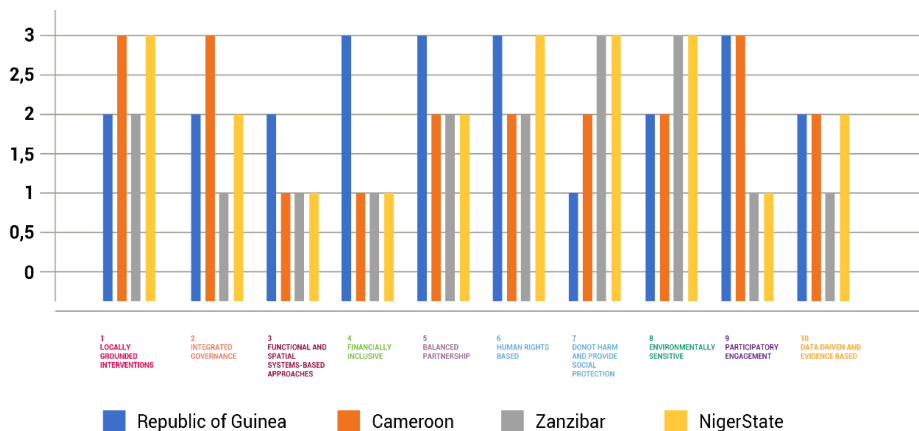
a) **URL Stakeholder analysis checklist:** this tool helps map who should be engaged in different levels of government and different sectors and actors across the urban-rural continuum. Figure 5 is an example from Niger state

Priority URL challenge: Inadequate infrastructure and social services	
Stakeholder categories	Specific stakeholders
National level	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development
Sub-national government authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Niger state Ministry of Lands and Housing</li> <li>• Niger State Bureau of Statistic</li> <li>• Niger State Urban Development Board (NSUDB)</li> <li>• Niger State Water Board (NSWB)</li> <li>• Niger State Environmental Protection Agency (NISEPA)</li> <li>• Niger State Housing Corporation (NSHC)</li> <li>• Niger state Ministry of Youth Affairs</li> <li>• Niger state Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs</li> <li>• Niger state Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</li> <li>• Niger State Planning Commission</li> <li>• Niger State Emergency Management Agency</li> <li>• Niger state Road Access Mobility Project (RAMP)</li> <li>• Niger State Rural Water and Sanitation Agency</li> </ul>
Local government	All the 25 Local Governments in Niger State
Academia	Federal University of Technology Minna; Ibrahim Babangida University , Lapai
Civil society	Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE Minna); African Youth Empowerment in Agriculture and Industrial Development
Community groups	
Private sector	Nigerian Association of Chamber of Commerce (Niger State Chapter)
Vulnerable groups	National Council of Women Society
International organizations	UN-Habit Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

**Figure 5: URL Stakeholder analysis checklist – Example from Niger State**

b) **URL-GP Checklist:** Using the URL-GP assessment tool the priority principles for a particular context can be defined. This means that in the context of strengthening URL the selected principles would be useful in implementing projects and programs thereof. Figure 6 is an illustration of the priority principles in the four countries, these are:

- Cameroon: Locally grounded interventions, integrated governance and participatory engagement
- In Guinea Conakry: Financially inclusive, balanced partnership, human rights based and participatory engagements
- Zanzibar: local grounded interventions, integrated governance, financially inclusive, balanced partnership, Do no harm and provide social protection, Environmental sensitivity, participatory engagement, data driven and evidence based (all apart for C and F)
- Niger state: Locally grounded interventions, Do no harm and provide social protection, Environmental sensitivity and human rights based



**Figure 6: Priority principles in four selected countries**

c) **Framework for Action Checklist:** This checklist provides an opportunity to identify existing activities that are linked to the entry points for strengthening urban-rural linkages towards integrated territorial development. The framework for action is comprised of five areas of creating and enabling environment and six sectoral entry points. Figure 7 shows the entry points to strengthening urban-rural linkages in Guinea Conakry, Cameroon, Zanzibar and Niger state:

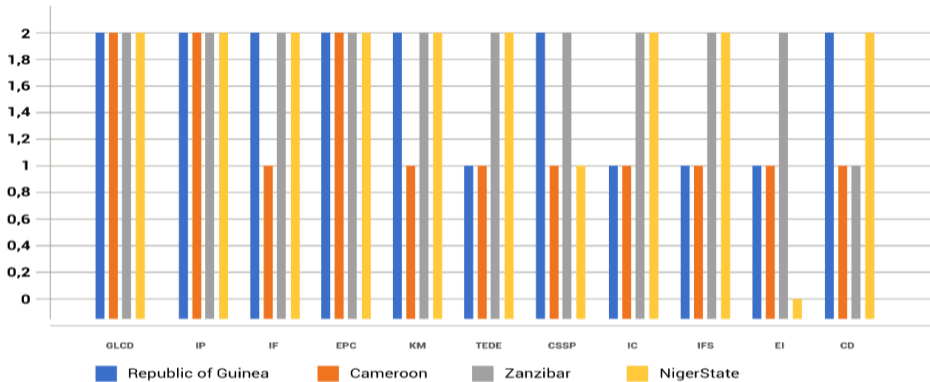
**Cameroon:** Governance, legislation and capacity development, Integrated planning across the urban-rural continuum, Empower people and communities

**Guinea Conakry:** Governance, legislation and capacity development, Integrated planning across the urban-rural continuum, Investment and finance for inclusive urban-

rural development, Empower people and communities, Knowledge/data management for dynamic spatial flows of people, products, services and information, Coherent approaches to social service provision, Environmental impact and natural resource and land management, The urban-rural continuum in the face of conflict and disaster

**Zanzibar:** Governance, legislation and capacity development, Integrated planning across the urban-rural continuum, Investment and finance for inclusive urban-rural development, Empower people and communities, Territorial economic development and employment, Coherent approaches to social service provision, Infrastructure and communications, Integrated approaches for food security, nutrition, and public health, Environmental impact and natural resource and land management, The urban-rural continuum in the face of conflict and disaster

**Niger state:** Governance, legislation and capacity development, Integrated planning across the urban-rural continuum, Investment and finance for inclusive urban-rural development, Empower people and communities, Knowledge/data management for dynamic spatial flows of people, products, services and information, Territorial economic development and employment, Infrastructure and communications, Integrated approaches for food security, nutrition, and public health, Environmental impact and natural resource and land management, The urban-rural continuum in the face of conflict and disaster



**Figure 7: Entry points to strengthening urban-rural linkages in Guinea Conakry, Cameroon, Zanzibar and Niger state**

d) **URL Spatial Assessment:** designed to bring an understanding of the tangible and intangible spatial flows in the urban-rural continuum. Figure 8 shows the activity by Guinea Conakry participants in a workshop on the spatial flow between Boke and Conakry town.

**Legend**

**GLOD:** Governance, legislation and capacity development, Integrated planning across the urban-rural continuum

**IP:** Investment and finance for inclusive urban-rural development

**EPC:** Empower people and communities

**KM:** Knowledge/data management for dynamic spatial flows of people, products, services and information

**CSSP:** Coherent approaches to social service provision

**TEDE:** Territorial economic development and employment

**IC:** Infrastructure and communications

**IFS:** Integrated approaches for food security, nutrition, and public health,

EI: Environmental impact and natural resource and land management

CD: Conflict and disaster

CATEGORY OF THE SPATIAL FLOW	FROM CONAKRY TO BOKE	FROM BOKE TO CONAKRY
PEOPLE (REASONS FOR THE FLOW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Leisure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Business</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Airport</li> <li>• Access to the sea Port</li> </ul>
GOODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm inputs</li> <li>• University</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction materials</li> <li>• Food</li> </ul>
INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovations for farming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market trends</li> <li>• Technology</li> </ul>

**Figure 8: Outputs of URL Spatial Assessment in Guinea Conakry**

e) **Rapid Assessment Tool:** This is a rapid check of the issues that are a major cause for relationship between urban and rural areas in the particular context. Figure 9 is an excerpt of the URL challenges tool in the context of spatial flow between Minna and Beji in Niger state

CATEGORY OF THE SPATIAL FLOW	CHALLENGES to URL		RECCOMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES	
	Minna	Beji	Minna	Beji
PEOPLE e.g business, employment, education, health,	Energy, road and security	Road and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewable energy</li> <li>Improved communication between Urban &amp; Rural (URL)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved communication</li> <li>Strengthen security (URL)</li> </ul>
GOODS e.g farm inputs, water, construction materials, food		Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve connectivity and transport system (URL)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve connectivity and transport system (URL)</li> </ul>
WASTE e.g solid waste, liquid waste	Lack of well established solid waste management site		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve waste management system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve agricultural storage system (URL)</li> </ul>
INFORMATION e.g innovations for farming, market trends,	Limited capacity of extension officers Inadequate work tools/equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative information on farming (ongoing through Schools Empowerment and Nutritional Supplementation through Agriculture)</li> <li>Improved capacity for extension officers</li> <li>Provision of work tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

**Figure 9: URL challenges tool in the context of spatial flow between Minna and Beji in Niger state**

- f) **URL Challenges and Opportunities Tool:** This is comprised of various questions which will assist in defining the overall urban-rural dependencies in a deductive approach rather than inductive. In this context, then, various questions are to be answered to arrive at the conclusion that a particular thematic issue is a priority for urban-rural linkages in the specific geographical location
- g) **URL Capacity Gaps Assessment:** This tool is designed to bring to the surface the institutional, technical, human and financial capacity including local knowledge and expertise that is available, or gaps that need to be addressed. UN-Habitat has developed a template for this assessment, see Figure 10 the case for Niger state.

Country	URL Priority challenges	URL Human capacity gaps	URL Institutional capacity gaps	URL Financial capacity gaps	URL Technical capacity gaps
Niger state	Inadequate infrastructure and social services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate skills/knowledge /awareness/approach</li> <li>Inadequate data management expertise/capacity</li> <li>Insufficient ICT expertise</li> <li>Insufficient personnel/human resources</li> </ul> At the local and regional authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited intersectoral collaboration/coordination among plans/policies</li> <li>Limited collaboration/coordination across levels (top-down decision-making)</li> <li>Weak institutional capacity for implementation</li> </ul> At the local and regional authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient budget allocations</li> <li>Limited budget allocations</li> <li>Sudden Shortage of budget allocations</li> <li>Limited mechanisms to incorporate/incentivise external funding (e.g. PPPs, private funding)</li> </ul> At the local and regional authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited relevant/up-to-date data</li> <li>Data collection mechanism not addressing/defining rural, peri-urban and urban areas</li> <li>Insufficient coordination in aggregation of decentralised data collection</li> <li>Limited ICT infrastructure for data collection, storage and management</li> </ul> At the local level

**Figure 10: URL Capacity gaps Assessment for Niger state**

h) **URL Policy Review and Assessment:** This tool begins with identifying existing relevant policies or strategies/documents and how the Urban and rural integration is or is not addressed.

**Survey Tools**

i) **URL Data Collection checklist** starts with an assessment of the already existing data and helps define the methodology for data collection, indicator development and evaluation methods (Figure 11).

PRIORITY URL CHALLENGE	DATA NEEDS	METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION	STAKEHOLDERS TO INVOLVE
Infrastructure and social Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development pattern</li> <li>• Population</li> <li>• Occupation etc</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Sanitation</li> <li>• Electricity/energy</li> <li>• Markets</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote Sensing(RS) &amp; Geographic Information System (GIS)</li> <li>• Demography and Household survey</li> </ul>	Niger state ministry of lands Niger State Geographic Information System Niger State Urban Development Board Niger State Bureau of Statistics Rural Access and Mobility Project Federal Ministry of Agriculture Traditional institutions
Human Security	Hazard and Disaster Profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main Hazard</li> <li>• Disaster risk profile</li> <li>• Vulnerable</li> <li>• Impacts of main hazard</li> <li>• Other causes of insecurity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RS and GIS</li> <li>• Secondary source</li> </ul>	Niger State Emergency Management Agency Niger State Environmental Protection Agency Niger State Ministry of Health Nigerian Police Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corp Federal Road Safety Corp Non Governmental Organisations Community Based Organisations Niger State Bureau of Statistics Niger State Ministry of Land & Housing Traditional Institutions

**Figure 11: URL Data Collection checklist**

**Training and Capacity Development**

One of the objectives of the URL Program is to strengthen the capacity of actors in major cities, small and intermediate cities and rural areas on pathways to improve URLs. This requires development of learning materials for the URL-GP that have been tested in different contexts and regions, including adaptations for use by partners in different communities of practice (for example by FAO for agricultural ministries or UNEP for environmental ministries, etc.

Country application of the URL-GP tools and training materials, the COVID pandemic experiences and other cases for subnational and national approaches to URLs have influenced the development of a next general of learning materials based on multiple contexts, entry points and governance levels. One main lesson from early applications of the URL-GP is that there are no two situations that are alike, and the learning materials must be flexible and highly adaptive to the priorities and challenges on the ground.

The learning materials currently being developed are mainly directed to and relevant for convenors of formal planning processes at different governance levels and for policy makers. UN-Habitat will develop a **learning manual** in two parts, the first a **participant**

**guide** and the second an **instructor guide**. The two formats aim to build the capacity for trainees to become trainers after having gone through the training successfully.

- I. **The participant guide:** should be comprised of questions after a set of sessions to help the participant assesses their level of understanding. This version therefore has detailed description of the subject.
- II. **The instructor guide:** targets those who convene, facilitate, coordinate or otherwise apply the URL-GP in either national or subnational contexts. It should be comprised of guidelines to conduct a training including activities and group discussions to engage the participants. It also has questions and answers to guide the trainer or facilitator in learning sessions. It also provides a menu of step-by-step instructions, pre- and post-workshop evaluations, case study examples as optional exercises and modules for each of the assessment tools listed above.

There will also be an **online version** of the participant guide; this version mainly aims at those interested in the subject but may not be able to attend a physical training/workshop.

### **Partnership and advocacy for URLs**

**Partnership** is key to strengthening urban-rural linkages -- on many levels. The URL-GP would not exist in its current form without the many actors from different sectors who contributed to both the principles and actions. Partnership is the goal for urban and rural communities, many of which have not known equal, inclusive, mutually beneficial partnership. Partnership is essential across departments and agencies at each level of governance and in international organizations and development agencies. Partnership is needed across levels of governance, from local to national and international.

During the current period of URL-GP implementation from 2020-2023 partners are critical in each phase of implementation, from normative work to tool development, training and capacity development and advocacy. Some partners are working on all these phases, others only on one or two. Currently UN-Habitat is working closely with various partners including:

- FAO on food systems and nutrition and URL
- CBD- on mainly Biodiversity and URL
- UNCCD on URLs and ecosystem restoration
- UN Nutrition – on nutrition and URLs
- Songyang County government – for IFURL 1 and 2
- Academic institutions such as Urban Rural Assembly/University of Berlin, Tsingua University and the University of Lisbon, among others
- Civil Society organizations such as Slow Food International, Project for Public Space and Healthbridge
- Research organizations such as the Latin American Centre for Rural Development (Rimisp)
- Private sector organizations such as AGRA on URLs and feeding African cities

**Advocacy** in the context of promoting the URL-GP is communication for increased awareness of the importance of urban-rural linkages for sustainable territorial development. This requires communication and outreach strategies using diverse approaches and mechanisms. This will be a continuous **action learning process** for every geographic region through diverse thematic entry points. Different approaches to advocacy include: social media, webinar series, newsletters, international forums on URL, conferences contributions, publications, exhibitions with partners among others. This thus requires a wide range of support from partners from relevant sectors and regions. UN-Habitat has launched a series of newsletters, webinars and International Forums on URL (link).

## REFERENCES

<https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/urban-rural-linkages/>





*UN-Habitat urban-rural linkages program and pilot projects*

