A National Urban Policy for Liberia | Discussion Paper

A NATIONAL URBAN POLICY FOR LIBERIA: DISCUSSION PAPER

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1
Ebola crisis: 2014-2015

2
civil wars
1989 — 1997 1999 → 2003

4 million
total population *(LISGIS[1], 2016)*

15
counties

40.6%
of Liberians were under 15 years of age
(LISGIS, 2008)

5.6%
annual GDP growth
(World Bank, 2017)

40%
of the national population lives in Monrovia
(National Report for HIII, 2016)

60
years: life expectancy at birth
(Source: World Bank, 2014)

42
inhabitants per square/km²
(LISGIS, 2016)

66%
of the urban population lives in slums
(Source: World Bank, 2014)

580km
coastline

68%
of all employment is informal
(Source: LISGIS, 2011)

881 US$
GDP per capita
(Source: International Monetary Fund, 2016)

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[1]   Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)

Infographic by Cities Alliance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After two destructive civil conflicts between 1989 and 2003, Liberia's proactive efforts to revive its economy and development are reflected by the improvements and reconstruction taking place in its cities. With a return to democratic rule have come notable progressive strides towards economic recovery, rehabilitation of public infrastructure services, and inclusive governance. There has also been a disproportionate rate of urbanisation and urban primacy; Monrovia, the capital, is home to 40 per cent of the national population and a commercial, international, trade and economic nucleus of the country. As a result, challenges generated by unplanned urbanisation are significant and threaten to impede national development.

If Liberia is to achieve inclusive economic growth and sustainable urban development, it urgently needs an enabling framework to provide coordination among different sectors and ministries, address urban challenges, and maximise the opportunities offered by urbanisation, while mitigating potential adverse externalities. A National Urban Policy (NUP) is such a framework and mechanism for coordination.

A NUP is a coherent set of decisions derived through a deliberate, government-led process of coordinating and rallying various actors for a common vision and goal that will promote more transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development in the long term. Developing

the NUP for Liberia is expected to coordinate the work of different sectors, establish incentives for more sustainable practices, and spur a balanced system of cities and towns through strengthening urban-rural linkages and equitable resources allocation. This will not only help reduce urban and territorial disparities within and among regions, but also promote institutional collaboration and policy coherence towards achievement of the Liberia National Vision 2030.

As the United Nations focal point for sustainable urbanisation and human settlements, UN-Habitat has been supporting the NUP development process in Liberia launched by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at the first National Urban Forum in 2015. Since 2016, UN-Habitat has further renewed its commitment to promote NUP as a mainstream tool for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially target 11.b. The ongoing policy development in partnership with the Ministry of Internal Affairs is part of a broader endeavour to support poverty reduction by integrating the urban economy into national development policies and the development of sustainable, resilient Liberian cities.

UN-Habitat suggests five phases for the NUP development process to ensure the quality of to the policy: 1) feasibility, 2) diagnostic, 3) formulation, 4) implementation, 5) monitoring and evaluation. To initiate development of a NUP

BOX 1   Ten Policy Focus Areas and Three Overarching Interventions Proposed by the Liberia NUP Discussion Paper

Ten policy focus areas are proposed to promote a NUP for Liberia that is forward-looking, focused on poverty reduction, and considers cross-cutting issues:

1. Strengthening small and intermediate cities

2. Focusing on the Greater Monrovia District

3. Encouraging spatial development strategies

4. Restoring infrastructure and basic services

5. Prioritising education and employment

6. Emphasising on land and housing

7. Recognising the significance and relevance of environment

8. Reinforcing demographic planning, regulation and monitoring

9. Promoting jurisdictional coordination and policy coherence

10. Institutionalising political, financial, technical and participatory mechanisms

for Liberia, this Discussion Paper, a key output of the feasibility phase, explains the context in which the policy will operate. The paper is the result of a wide range of research and consultations on the demographic, socio-economic, and physical environment aspects of the country. It also provides preliminary policy recommendations (Box 1) for further analysis in the subsequent NUP development processes. The paper will be distributed to all urban stakeholders, including national governments, local authorities, civil societies, planning professionals, and the private sector to build consensus on what has been discussed and agreed and to stimulate active support for further diagnostic, policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Development of the NUP for Liberia is designed to complement and operationalise Liberia's long-term national development framework *Liberia National Vision 2030*, which seeks to propel Liberia to middle-income status by 2030. It is also expected to help achieve goals set out in the *Vision 2030* by creating conditions that will make the desired urban future a reality.

This paper emphasises that crafting a NUP for Liberia must directly involve all actors responsible for urban affairs – central government, local authorities, ministries and agencies, civil society, private sector and academic institutions. This participatory spirit resonates with the proposals by major global agendas such as the *African Agenda 2063 Framework* which advocates, as one of its seven aspirations, development that is people-driven and relies on their potential.[2] Consultations have been, and will continue to be, organised to ensure wide stakeholder participation to safeguard an open, collaborative, peaceful policy-making process (Box 2).

The Paper calls on all stakeholders to collaborate closely and effectively with the Government of Liberia to develop and implement this NUP.

BOX 2   Institutional Setups, Steps and Key Events on NUP Discussion Paper for Liberia

1. **June 2016 – The National Habitat Committee (NHC)** is set up as the political supervision and decision-making body for the policy development process.

2. **June 2016 – Awareness Raising Campaign and Stakeholder Consultation** are conducted in Monrovia to discuss the critical contributions the policy could make to guiding Liberia's sustainable urbanisation.

3. **Aug 2016 – The Technical Support Team (TST)** is established to provide expertise and technical guidance for the development of the policy. It is also functionally linked with the NHC to maintain high-level political support and vision.

4. **Feb 2017 – Training and Policy Dialogues** are organised in Monrovia to deepen urban actors' understanding of the policy-shaping process and to stimulate in-depth discussion on sectorial policies and legislative frameworks.

5. **May 2017 – Peer Learning and Experience Sharing** through the participation of Liberian delegates at the OECD's Second International Conference on National Urban Policies in Paris, France.

6. **April to July 2017 – Three validation workshops** on the paper are convened with various levels (sectors) of stakeholder groups, including mayors, the urban poor community, and young planners.

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[2]   African Union. (2015). *Agenda 2063: the Africa we want*. Addis Ababa: African Union.

INTRODUCTION

A National Urban Policy is the overarching coordinating framework that supports the spatial organisation and operation of a system of cities. It functions to promote the positive role of urbanisation in national socio-economic development through maximising the benefits of urbanisation, reducing inequalities, mitigating potential adverse externalities, reasserting urban space, and rallying various urban actors. It is both a product and process to harness the dynamism of cities and urbanisation.

The NUP has been recognised internationally as a tool for implementing and monitoring global urban agendas including the SDGs (particularly SDG-11) (Figure 1), the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework and the African Agenda 2063 Framework. Through the NUA, United Nations member states commit to developing and implementing NUPs and to building integrated national systems of cities and human settlements while working towards achieving national development targets. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat, Dr. Joan Clos, has described the NUP as "the most relevant part of the New Urban Agenda".

The challenges and opportunities for NUPs are specific to context, and responses should vary accordingly. The NUP for Liberia must be tailored to respond to the conditions of the country, which calls for considerable understanding of its social, economic, physical and natural aspects. It is also crucial to understand and assess the demographic pattern and trends, legislative and administrative frameworks, and vital urban problems that need to be urgently addressed.

The complexity of urban threats and opportunities posed by rapid urban growth in Liberia – especially considering the preceding civil conflicts – demands that the policy preparation process not be rushed. This paper enhances our understanding of the Liberian context by investigating and analysing available resources, institutional arrangements, and political appetites. It also examines urbanisation trends and dynamics, and offers initial policy recommendations for further assessment and consideration. Together with the policy, this paper is part of a process that channels communication and collaboration between urban actors and sensitises all tiers of government to the potential of urbanisation.

FIGURE 1
Relevance of the NUP to the Sustainable Development Goals

PARTNERSHIP WITH UN-HABITAT

UN-Habitat is a leader in supporting the development and implementation of NUPs globally, and has developed tools to aid countries with undertaking a NUP. It currently supports 32 countries with the development of NUPs (Figure 2) and manages an active portfolio for NUP development with a budget over US$ 7 million. In 2015, UN-Habitat joined the Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme, which is an umbrella framework that brings together a network of development partners in the country. One of the programme's three pillars is enhancing the national enabling environment for resilient, inclusive urbanisation that benefits local governments, economic growth, and the urban poor.[3] This collaboration has further strengthened the capacity of UN-Habitat as the international partner best positioned to support development of a NUP that fits Liberia's context.

This paper is based on review of a wide range of documents. It builds on the national development framework Liberia Vision 2030 and the complementary five-year strategic development plan Agenda for Transformation. This study also draws on the guiding principles of major global agendas such as the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, and the African Agenda 2063 Framework.

The major research limitation faced by the study is the shortage of up-to-date data on most key sectors. Such statistics are crucial in projecting urban trends to guide national strategies and plans in meeting the urban demand. As an example, the Liberian national census is conducted every ten years and the next survey will take place in 2018. As a result, most of the official data used is from 2008 and likely out of context.

In terms of structure, this Paper first looks at demographic features and trends so as to understand the most fundamental population characteristic and subsequent demand. Secondly, it synthesises the administrative framework of the country and existing sectorial policies, with an analysis of the institutional policies and functions. It also assesses inclusiveness of urban governance, collaborations between development partners and devolution of both power and resources. Thirdly, dissection of urbanisation trends in Liberia is conducted, giving key emphasis on existing challenges and opportunities. The Paper concludes by proposing some preliminary policy recommendations that are based on analysis of the preceding research findings. To guide future actions, a roadmap and set of guidance on way-forward are provided for future actions.

FIGURE 2
UN-HABITAT Supporting Countries on National Urban Policy

Updated in July 2017

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

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[3]   Cities Alliance. (2017, 06). *The Liberia Country Programme*. Retrieved from Cities Alliance Official Website: http://www.citiesalliance.org/Liberia-CP-page

1 DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS

Population is the pivotal element of a country's development, perceived as both an asset and the root of sequential urban issues. Population increases pose massive sustainability challenges in terms of housing, infrastructure, basic services, food security, health, education, decent jobs, safety and natural resources, among others. They also bring collective knowledge, capital, and multidimensional resources which endow cities with the capacity to mitigate and solve emerging problems.

For this reason, if well managed, urbanisation can unleash a nation's development potential. The Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda[4] recognises the importance of demography by mandating that current and future trends of population composition, distribution, and medium and long-term demographic projections with geographic disaggregation must be taken in account while formulating a people-oriented national policy on urban development.

This chapter examines Liberia's demographic trends, including population size, distribution, density, growth rates, fertility levels, as well as relevance for education and employment, urban and rural population differences, the population threshold to define an urban area, and urban population in the capital city.

1.1 Population Size

According to the 2008 national census on population and housing conducted by the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)[5], the country's total population in March 2008 was 3,476,608. Compared to other post-conflict countries in the region, the population size is relatively small (Figure 3).

Historically, population growth in Liberia was repressed by the first civil war between 1989 and 1997. Towards the end of the conflict, the population being growing, and that growth continues today despite minor fluctuations (Figure 4).

FIGURE 3
Populations of Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa
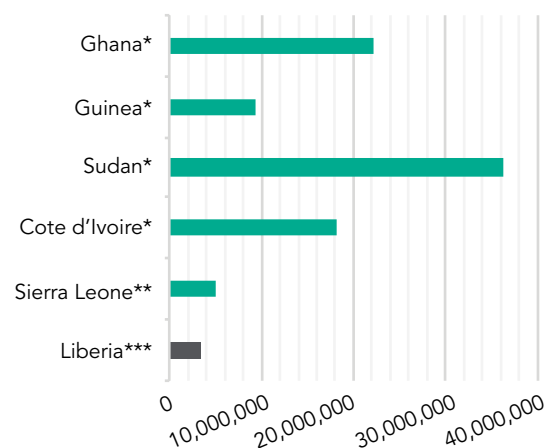
Data Source:
* United Nations World Population Policies 2005
** Sierra Leone 2004 Population and Housing Census
*** Liberia 2008 National Population and Housing Census

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4   UN-Habitat. (2016). *Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda.* Nairobi. Item 1.1.

5   Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). (2009). *2008 Population and Housing Census: Final Results*. Monrovia.

Total Population of Liberia, 1960-2014
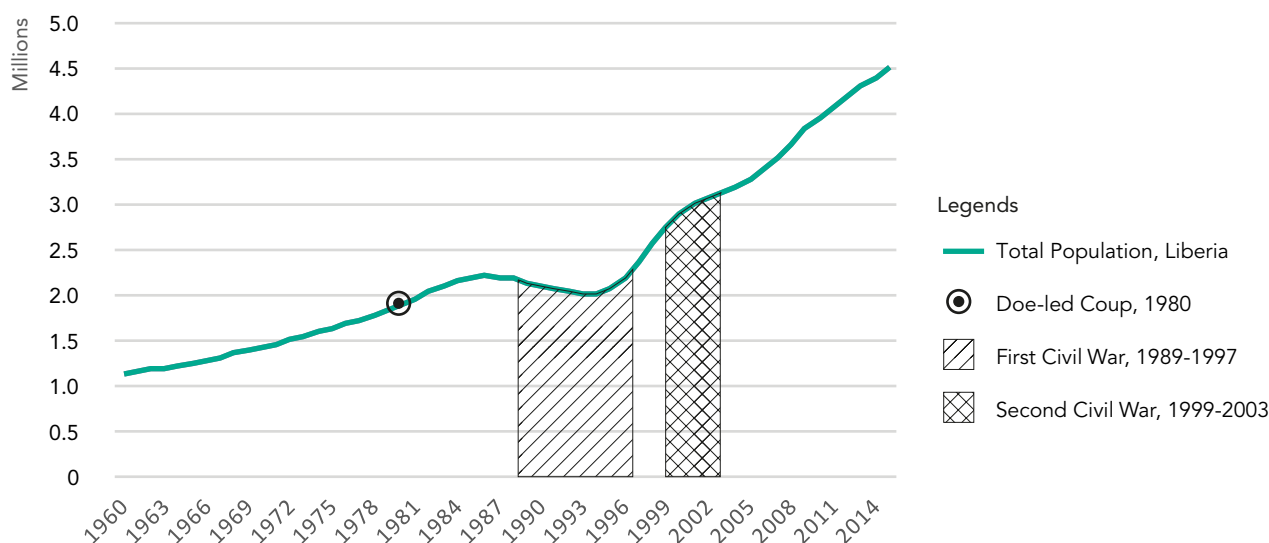
Data Source: World Bank Open Data

1.2 Population Growth Rate

Despite its relatively small population, high growth rates mean Liberia has the potential to grow its population significantly. Despite having dropped significantly from 3.4 to 2.1 per cent (Figure 5) between 1989 and 1997, due to the population exodus and losses during the first civil war, the yearly population growth rate of Liberia is on the high side compared to similar post-conflict countries in Africa (Figure 6). According to an estimate by the World Bank, Liberia's annual population growth rate reached 2.4 per cent in 2015, signifying a resurgent population boom after the civil wars.[6] The high population growth rate will continue to impact Liberia's urban settlements and fundamentally determine its urbanisation features – making the development of a NUP to assess Liberia's current urban capacity and fill the demand and supply gaps in the foreseeable future increasingly urgent.

FIGURE 5
Average Annual Rate of Population Growth in Liberia
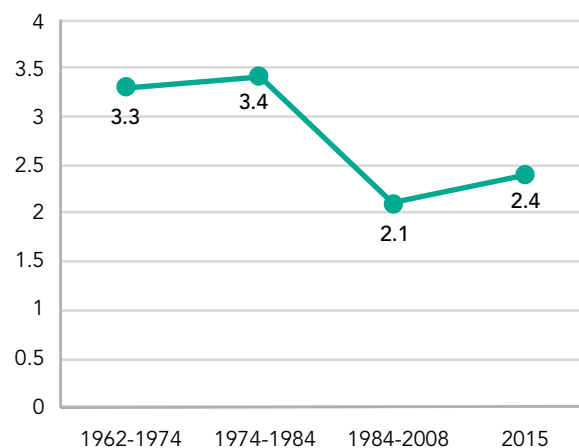
Data Source: Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030 (1962-2008) & World Bank (2015)

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[6]   World Bank. (2015). *Population growth (annual per centage) Liberia*. Retrieved 02 03, 2017, from World Bank Open Data: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW?locations=LR

Map 1 breaks down the previous analysis of population growth rate by county. It shows that currently depopulated areas such as Grand Gedeh, Gbarpolu, River Gee, Rivercess and Sinoe are most likely to bear a much heavier population burden in the coming decades. Such urban agglomeration trends suggest that urban growth in these counties will continue to accelerate, whether in a planned manner or simply spread that aggravates urban sprawl.
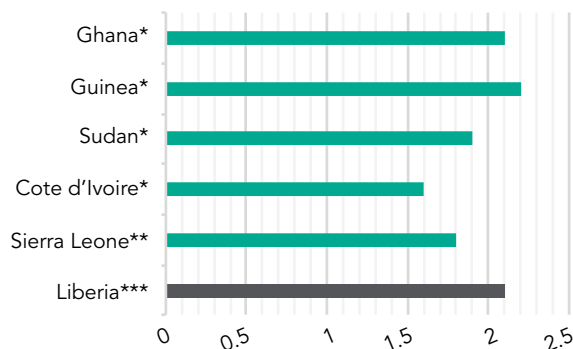
MAP 1
Population Growth Rate by County, Liberia

Population Growth Rate 1984-2008

County	Growth Rate
Grand kru	-0.4
Bomi	0.9
Bong	1.0
Margibi	1.1
Lofa	1.3
Grand Bassa	1.4
Nimba	1.7
Grand Cape Mount	2.0
Sinoe	2.1
Rivergee	2.2
Gbarpolu	2.3
Rivercess	2.3
Maryland	2.8
Grand Gedeh	2.9
Montserrado	3.5
TOTAL	2.1
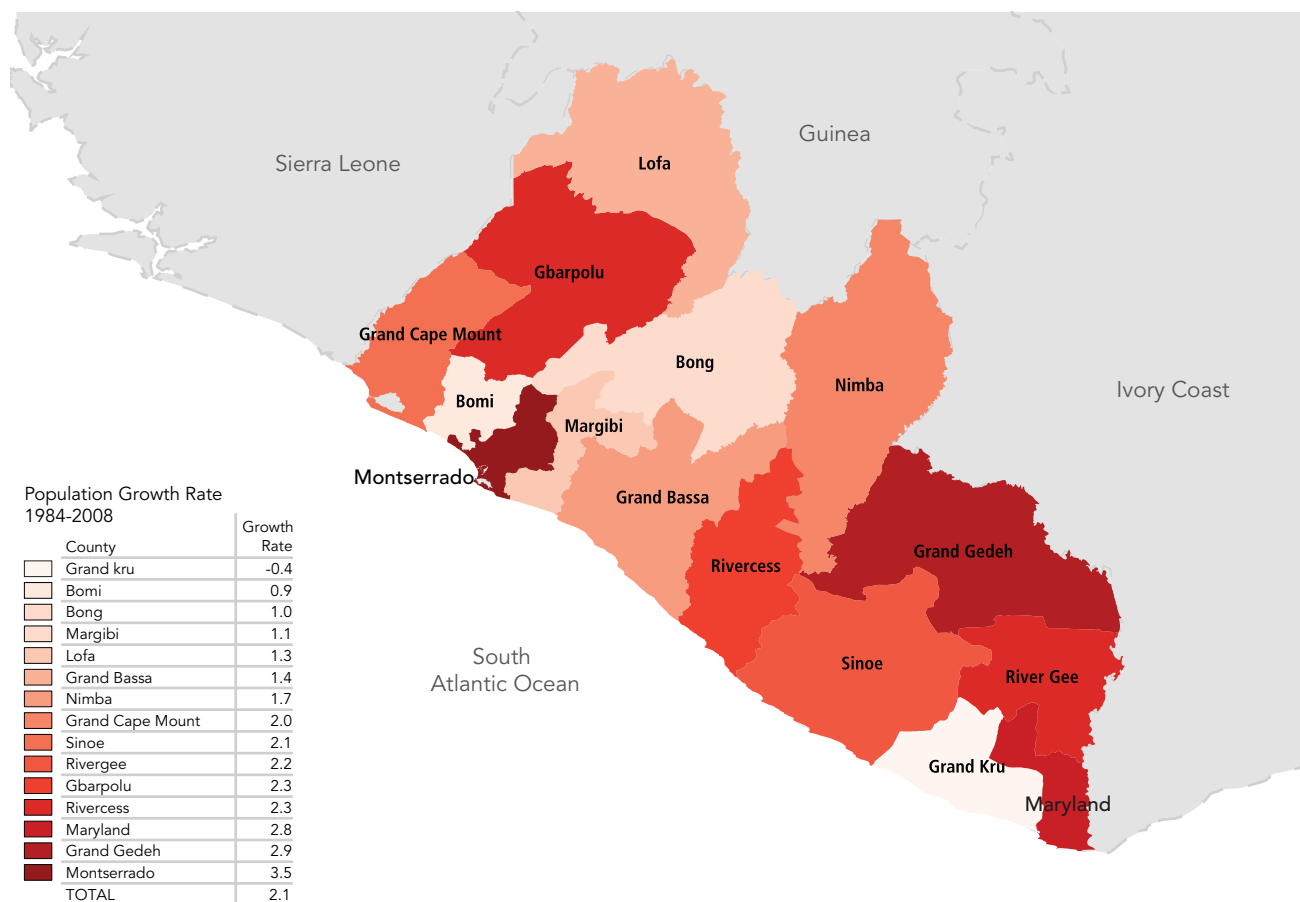
Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census

1.3 Fertility Levels

Liberia's substantial fertility levels are the primary cause of its high population growth rate. Its fertility levels remain considerable, despite having dropped from 7.1 in 1984 to 5.2 in 2008 (Figure 7).

This reduction was accompanied by a decrease in infant mortality, which was halved between 1984 and 2008 (Figure 8). As a result, the combination of relatively high fertility levels and reduced infant mortality rate led to a surging young population and a change in its age structure.

FIGURE 7
Fertility rate, total (births per woman), 1960-2014

Legends

— Fertility Levels, Liberia

⊙ Doe-led Coup, 1980

▨ First Civil War, 1989-1997

▨ Second Civil War, 1999-2003
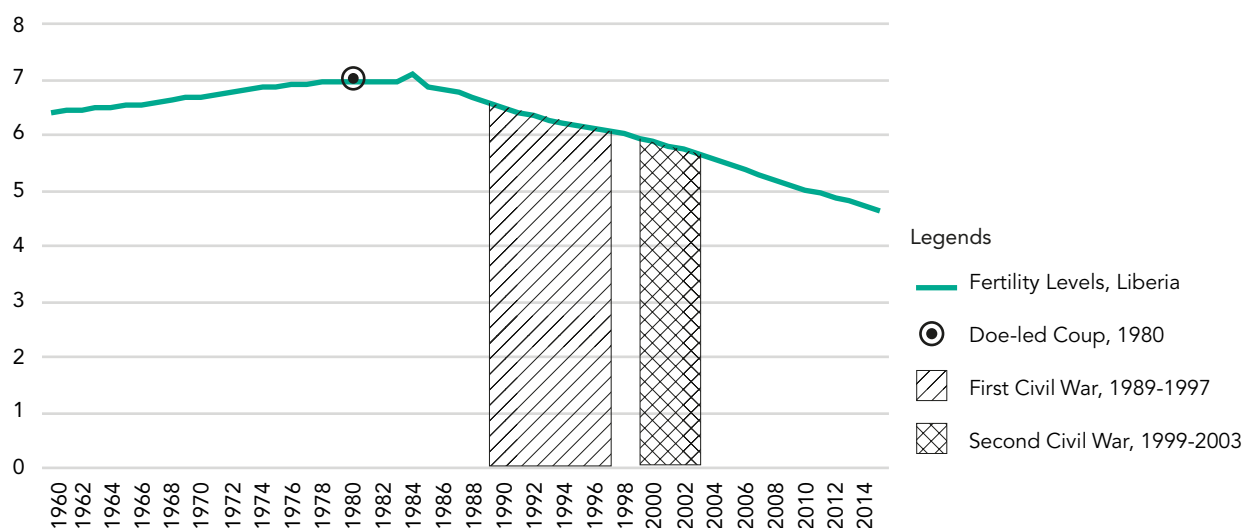
Data Source: World Bank Open Data

FIGURE 8
Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 live births), 1960-2014

Legends

— Infant Mortality, Liberia

⊙ Doe-led Coup, 1980

▨ First Civil War, 1989-1997

▨ Second Civil War, 1999-2003
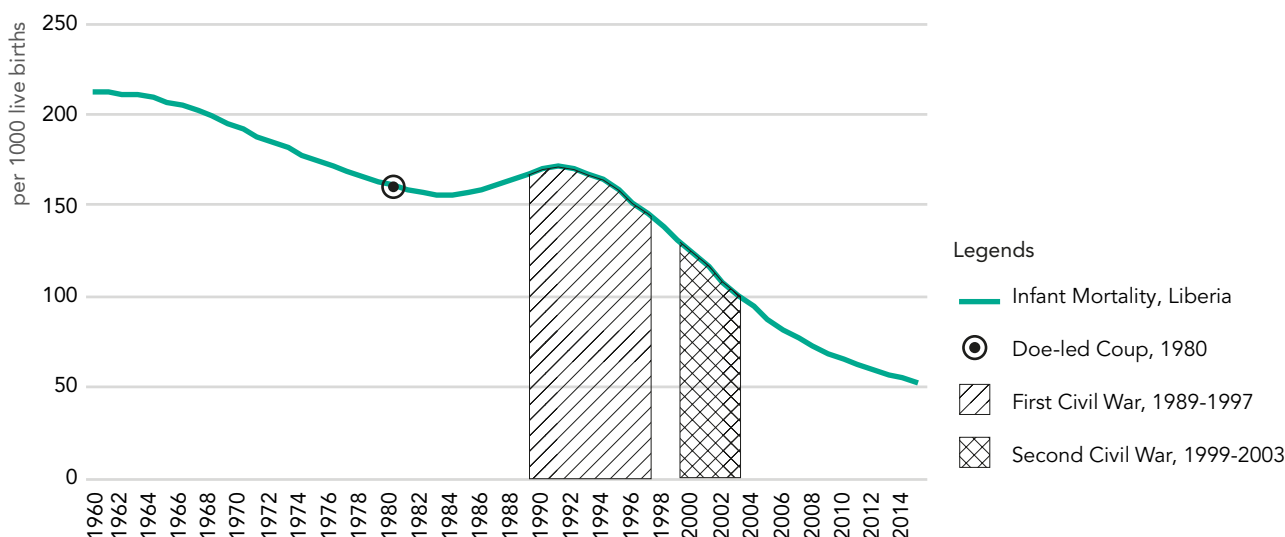
Data Source: World Bank Open Data

The Age/Sex Pyramid of the Resident Population of Liberia (Figure 9) shows that the country has a relatively equal number of men and women. However, according to the 2008 Census, 42 per cent of Liberians are under 15 years of age. Such an unbalanced age composition leads to escalated demand for basic provisions such as education, health, facilities, employment, accommodation and food. Furthermore, the accompanying high dependency ratio means that the momentum of having a large dependent population in relation to the working-age population will continue for decades, before Liberia benefits from a demographic dividend/accelerated economic growth.[7]

As the key determinant of population levels and trends, the pace of fertility primarily determines the corresponding needs of resources in the decades to come. Resonating directly with the Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda[8] and SDG Indicator 11.a.1, the Liberia Vision 3030 strategically simulates various scenarios of demographic projection (Figure 10) to enable evidence-based demographic planning and sequential supply of resources. As indicated in Figure 11, whether the fertility rate of 5.2 in 2008 drops to the low scenario rate of 2.4, the medium scenario rate of 3.5, or the high scenario rate of 4.2 could mean the difference between 53, 79 or 90 per cent population growth in 30 years.[9]

FIGURE 9
Age/Sex Pyramid of the Resident Population of Liberia
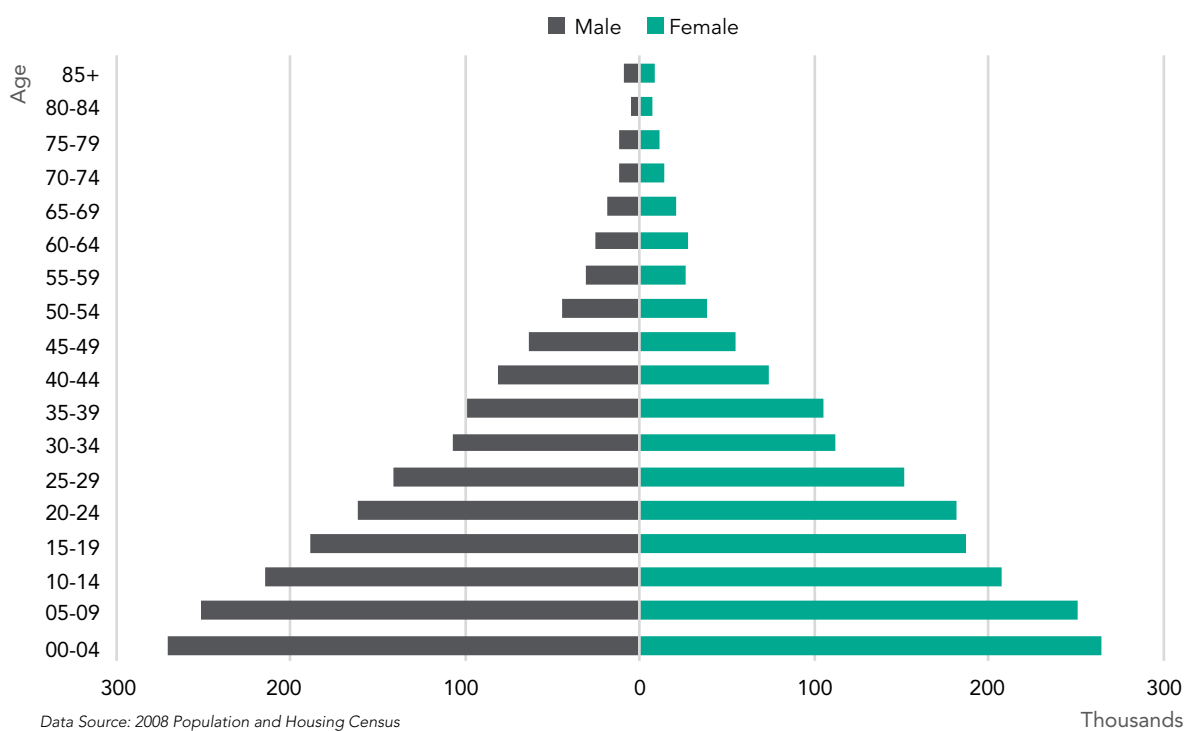
Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census

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[7] Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia.

[8] UN-Habitat. (2016). *Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda*. Nairobi. Item 1.1

[9] Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Liberia. (2011). *Retrospective Analysis of the Liberian People*.

FIGURE 10
Total Population Projections of Liberia under Three Fertility Scenarios
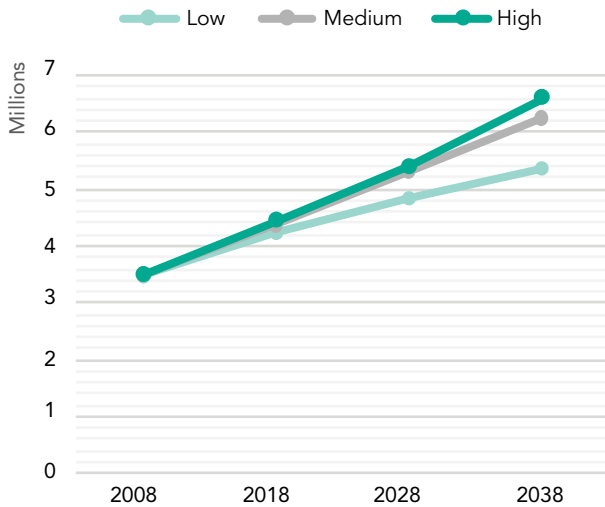
Data Source: 2011 Retrospective Analysis of the Liberian People

FIGURE 11
Total Population Growth Per centage of Liberia by 2038 under Three Fertility Scenarios
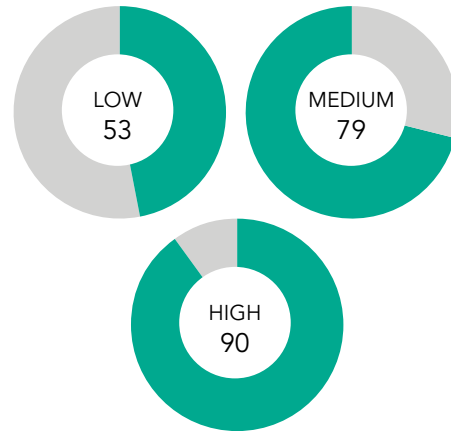
Data Source: 2011 Retrospective Analysis of the Liberian People

1.4 Relevance of Fertility Levels to Education and Employment

Moderating Liberia's population growth rate by regulating its fertility levels is closely tied to improving education and employment levels. Providing adequate education contributes to sensible household decision making, which could lower the fertility rate.[10] Figure 12 reveals that the fertility rate drops significantly (by two per cent)

as the education level of mothers rises from none to primary. As the education level of mothers continues to rise, the fertility rate moves up, which is likely stimulated by the overall improvement of living conditions and financial capacity to raise children.

Meanwhile, improved education levels increase employment rates and generate more job opportunities. This contributes to achieving gender equality and empowering women through ensuring their full and effective participation in the labour force as promoted in the New Urban Agenda.[11]

FIGURE 12
Education Level of Mother and Fertility Rate of Liberia
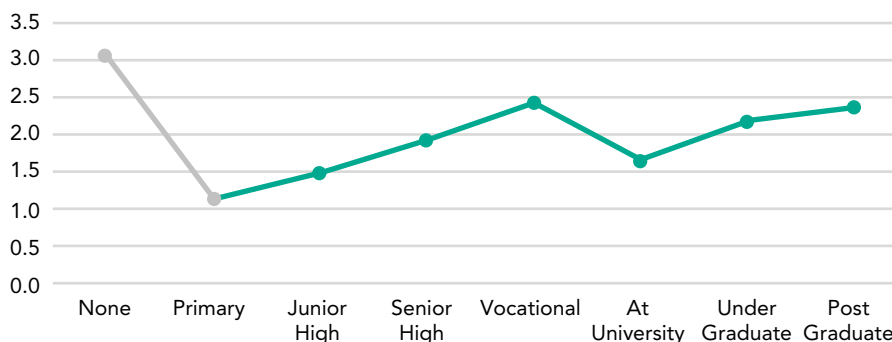
Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census

[10] Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia.

[11] United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 13c.

1.5 Population in Urban and Rural Contexts

Fertility rates vary greatly between urban (4.9) and rural areas (6.5), possibly because of the low level of education and employment opportunity in rural areas. Disparities between the contexts have further intensified the population growth rate in cities due to rural to urban migration. This trend was most pronounced during the civil war, when scarce resources were only available in urban areas, especially in Monrovia. The phenomenon has lingered thanks to the persistent deficiency of economic opportunities and service provision in relatively remote areas. As of 2008, it was estimated that 49 per cent of households lived in urban areas (Figure 13).[12]

Bridging the gap between urban and rural areas requires an actionable NUP to:

1. Mitigate the urban-rural difference through balanced resources allocation;

2. Support municipalities to enable the positive contribution of migrations to cities; and

3. Strengthen urban-rural linkages.[13]

FIGURE 13
Urban Population Per centage of Liberia

Legends

— Urban Population Percentage, Liberia

◉ Doe-led Coup, 1980

▨ First Civil War, 1989-1997

▨ Second Civil War, 1999-2003
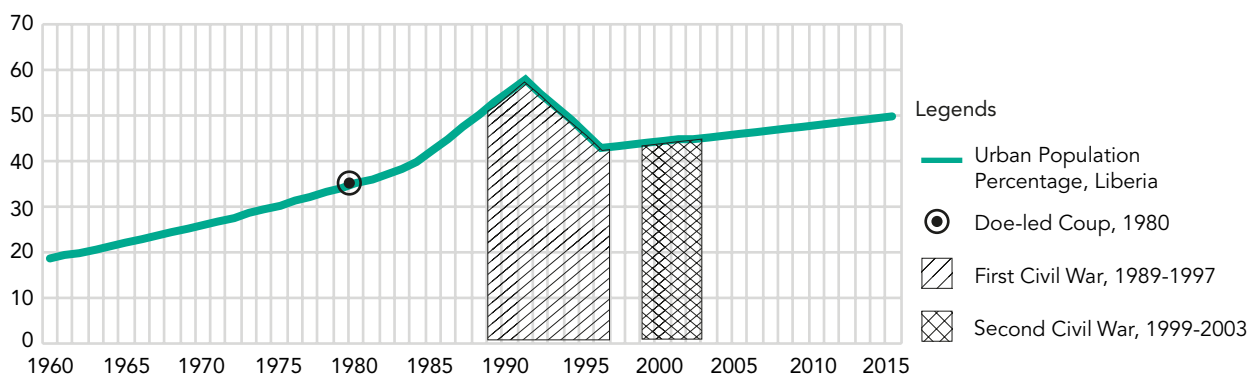
Data Source: United Nations World Urbanisation Prospects

1.6 Population Threshold to Define "Urban"

The relatively high per centage of urban population in Liberia does not necessarily relate to improved living conditions. This is because the minimum population threshold to define "urban" in Liberia begins as low as 2,000 people (Figure 14), which allows more areas to be categorised as "urban" while not necessarily meeting the socio-economic/ functional criterion of cities such as the presence of basic infrastructure, education or health services.

A key priority while establishing the NUP for Liberia could be to underpin the importance of equipping all urban areas with compatible essential provisions such as roads, schools and medical amenities. New thresholds of 25,000 persons for cities and 10,000 persons for townships have been set in the draft Local Government Act of 2015, which has yet to be passed into law. The draft Act also defines the functional criteria for urban settlements and demographic requirements.

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[12] Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). (2009). *2008 Population and Housing Census: Final Results*. Monrovia.

[13] United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 28.

FIGURE 14
Population Thresholds to Define "Urban" among African Countries
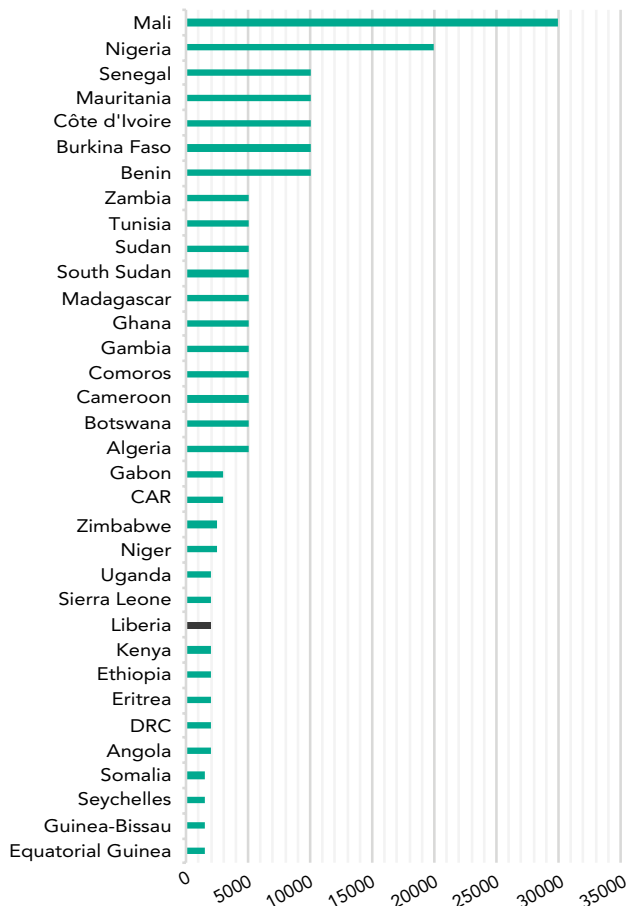
Data Source: 2015 African Urban Dynamics: Facts & Figures[14]

1.7 Urban Population in the Largest City

Another distinguishing feature of Liberia's urbanisation is the concentration of the nation's urban population in its largest city, Monrovia. According to the 2008 census, 56.7 per cent of the country's urban population lived in the Greater Monrovia District – a very high per centage in both global and African contexts (Map 2). Countries with multiple metropolitan areas such as the United States, China, and Algeria pose a striking contrast to Liberia, which is dependent primarily on its capital Monrovia to accommodate urban populations and provide infrastructure and services. In contrast, most secondary cities and smaller towns have limited basic infrastructural provisions and social amenities. The imbalanced development reality in the country indicates the need for an integrated urbanisation approach to rebalance the development of cities, which aligns with the Liberia National Vision 2030's objective to achieve balanced growth. The pursuit towards unbiased growth also complies with the Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda,[15] which promotes a framework to reduce urban and territorial disparities within and among regions.

MAP 2
Per centage of Urban Population in the Largest City, Liberia
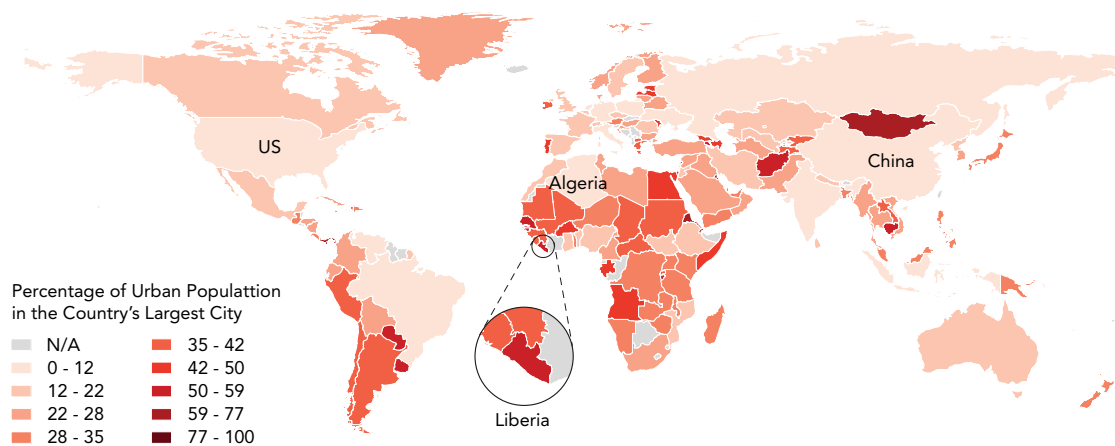
Data Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (2014)

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[14] Mo Ibrahim Foundation. (2015). *2015 African Urban Dynamics: Facts & Figures*. United Kingdom

[15] UN-Habitat. (2016). *Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda*. Nairobi. Item 1.4

1.8 Population Distribution

The population spread living in Liberia's geographic subdivisions requires spatial interpretation to enable informed and county-specific analysis. Map 3 illustrates the unevenly distributed population among 15 counties. The 'big six' counties include Monteserrado, Nimbo, Bong, Lofa, Grand Bassa and Margibi, which hold 75.4 per cent of the total population. On the other end of the spectrum, the 'small five' counties together hold only 10.5 per cent of the national count.[16]

MAP 3
Distribution of Population Aggregates, Liberia

Population Distribution

County	Population	Percentage
Grand kru	57,913	2%
Rivergee	66,789	2%
Rivercess	71,509	2%
Gbarpolu	83,388	2%
Bomi	84,119	2%
Sinoe	102,391	3%
Grand Gedeh	125,258	4%
Grand Cape	127,076	4%
Maryland	135,938	4%
Margibi	209,923	6%
Grand Bassa	221,693	6%
Lofa	276,863	8%
Bong	333,481	10%
Nimba	462,026	13%
Montserrado	1,118,241	32%
TOTAL	3,476,608	100%
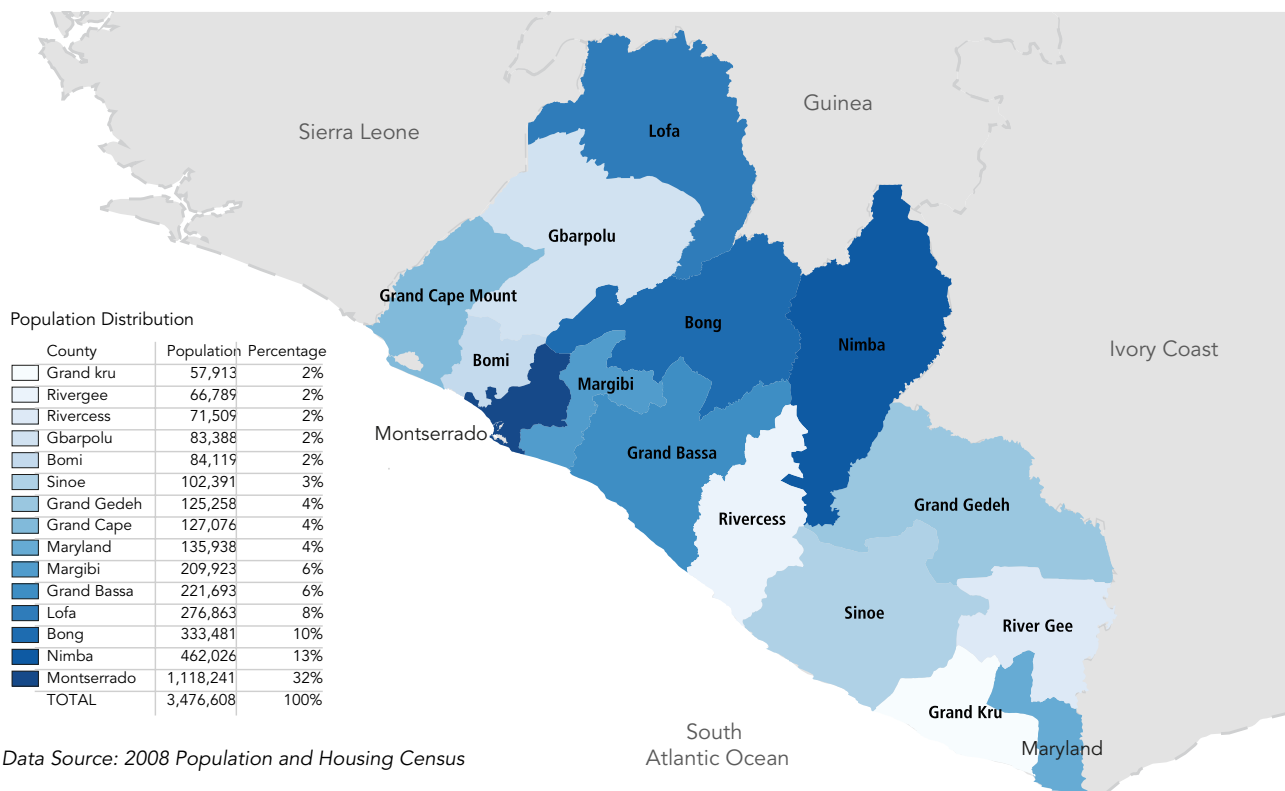
Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census

1.9 Population Density

Population density illustrates the intensity of agglomeration by measuring the number of people over land area. The national population density has grown from 56 people per square mile in 1984 to 93 in 2008. This density is considered merely moderate when similar post-conflict countries in the region are taken into account (Figure 15), which implies possible further densification. The national density level was only exceeded in five counties including Montserrado, Margibi, Maryland, Bomi, Nima and Bong, which are all located in the western populated half of the nation, except for Maryland in the eastern depopulated corner of the country (Map 4). Bomi exemplifies that counties with comparatively small populations could have highly compact aggregation, which lays the foundation for developing cost-effective infrastructure and other public amenities.

FIGURE 15
Population Density of some Sub-Saharan Countries
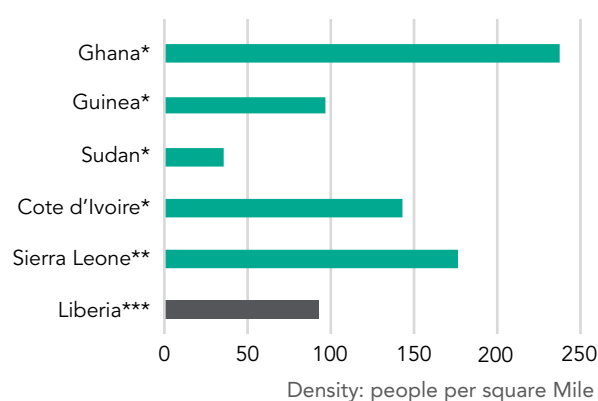
Density: people per square Mile

Data Source:
 *United Nations World Population Policies 2005
 ** Sierra Leone 2004 Population and Housing Census
 *** Liberia 2008 National Population and Housing Census

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[16] Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). (2009). *2008 Population and Housing Census: Final Results*. Monrovia.

MAP 4
Population Density by County, Liberia

Population Density
(people/sq mile)

- 22
- 27
- 30
- 33
- 34
- 39
- 69
- 72
- 73
- 99
- 104
- 113
- 153
- 202
- 1540

Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census
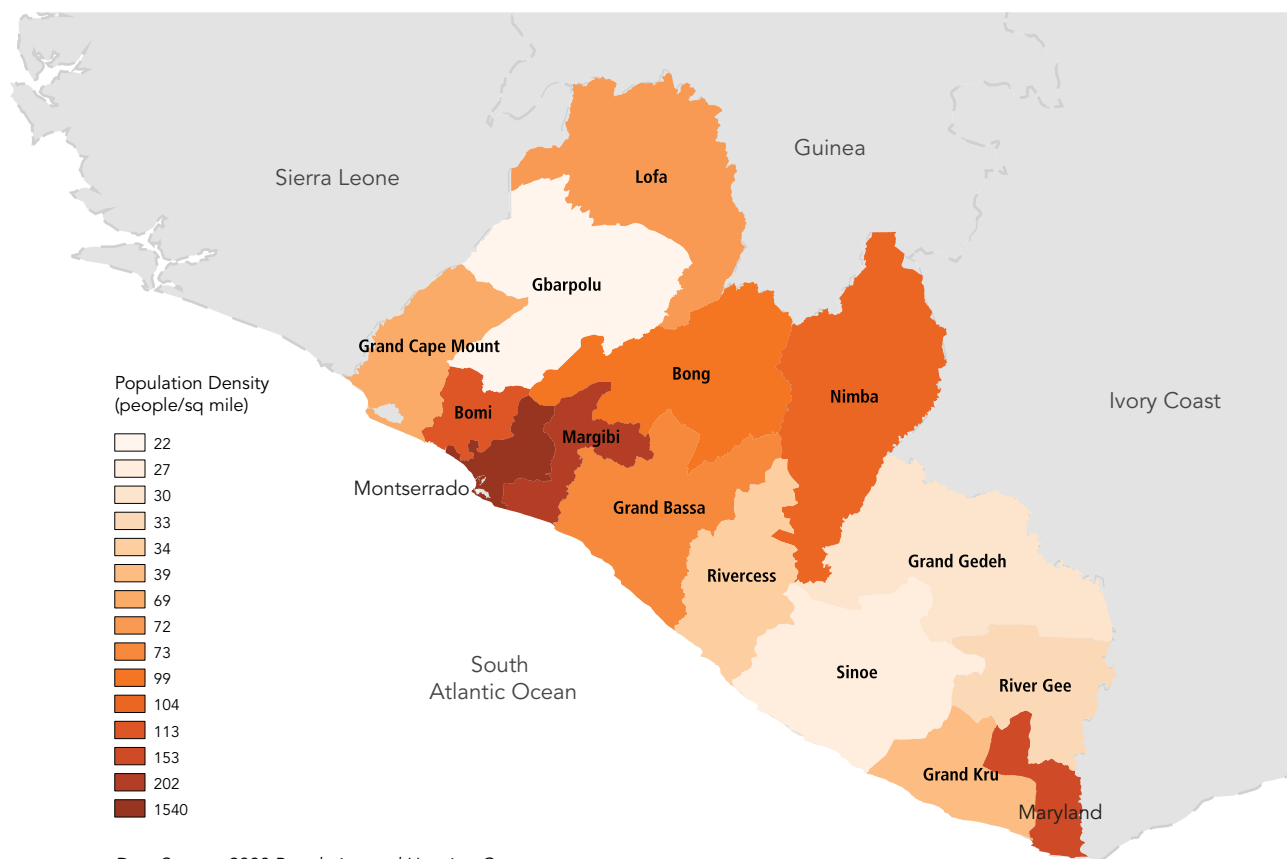
1.10   Concluding Remarks

Urbanisation is hinged on the agglomeration of population. This has made demographic dissection a prerequisite for understanding and planning for human settlements. Liberia has a relatively small population of 3.5 million, with considerable growth potential due to high fertility levels and declining infant mortality rates. The subsequent biased demographic structure with a heavy and surging young population continues to burden its national economy with a large dependent population, especially in the urban areas.

Correlations between fertility levels and education/employment have been identified. Population continues to grow rapidly in the urban areas because of rural-to-urban migration, mainly caused by resource disparities between rural areas and cities. The current population threshold used to define urban areas is set too low for the contemporary urbanisation scale and is inadequate consideration for the socio-economic criterion of cities. Urbanisation in the country depends heavily on the capital, Monrovia, which accommodates 56.7 per cent of its urban population. The spread of population is distributed unevenly over Liberia's 15 counties, with 75.4 per cent of total population living in six counties.

2 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT, SECTORIAL POLICIES AND GOVERNANCE

In addition to fundamental demographic studies, the NUP requires a thorough analysis of the Liberian legislative and administrative landscapes. This means mapping and interpreting Liberia's institutional structure and sectorial policies. The complex nature of urbanisation entails urban actors developing joint strategies and actions in addressing common issues. Promoting such jurisdictional coordination and coherence requires understanding the functions and responsibilities that ministries, autonomous agencies, commissions and other actors have in the urban development process and the respective sectorial policies.[17]

Under the mandate of the Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda,[18] a NUP sets out the roles and responsibilities for all spheres of government and for public participation as applied to urbanisation and urban management. In this spirit, Chapter 2 reviews the institutional framework and the mainstreamed policies in a collective manner to unite key actors and align seemingly distant sectorial policies towards tackling shared urban challenges. It also discusses how inclusive urban governance can be achieved through participation, collaboration and decentralisation.

2.1 Ministries, Agencies, Commissions and Sectorial Policies

Liberia follows the principles of power separation with legislative, executive and judicial powers of government vested in separate bodies (Figure 16). The system consists of 19 functional ministries, a few autonomous agencies, and commissions created to specifically address major issues during development. For example, the Governance Commission (previously known as Governance Reform Commission) was formed to oversee the architecture of governance, monitor and assess the performance of governmental institutions.[19]

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17 UN-Habitat. (2016). *Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda.* Nairobi. Item 1.5

18 UN-Habitat. (2016). *Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda.* Nairobi. Item 1.2

19 Governance Commission Liberia. (2017). *Mandate and Function*. Retrieved from Governance Commission Liberia Official Website: http://governancecommissionlr.org/page_info.php?&7d5f44532cbfc489b8db9e12e44eb820=Mzlz

FIGURE 16
Liberia's Institutional Arrangement: Ministries, Selected Agencies and Commissions on Urban Issues

GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA		
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH	**EXECUTIVE BRANCH**	**JUDICIAL BRANCH**
MINISTRIES		**AGENCIES & COMMISSIONS**
Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Internal Affairs	Anti-Corruption Commission
Ministry of Commerce & Industry	Ministry of Justice	Civil Service Agency
Ministry of Defense	Ministry of Labor	Electricity Corporation
Ministry of Education	Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy	Forestry Development Authority
Ministry of Finance & Development Planning	Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs	General Auditing Commission
Ministry of Foreign Affair	Ministry of Public Works	General Services Agency
Ministry of Gender and Development	Ministry of Posts & Telecommunications	Governance Commission
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare	Ministry of State	Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services
Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism	Ministry of Transport	Land Authority
	Ministry of Youth and Sports	National Investment Commission
		Public Procurement & Contracts Commission
		Telecommunications Authority
		Water & Sewer Corporation

Autonomous agencies and commissions (Table 1) are appointed organisations in the government, responsible for oversight and administration of specific functions. These highly specialised and focused agencies produce data and research outputs that are prerequisites for further studies and activities. For instance, the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)[20] was mandated to survey and compile statistical data on demography and other socio-economic indicators to fill the void of data in the post-conflict period. The resulting statistics enable informed decision making and articulated governance. Detailed analysis of the roles of the agencies and commissions in the urbanisation process is synthesised in Appendix 3: Agencies, Commissions and Function in Urban Development.

Ministries are entitled to issue nationwide policies to declare the guiding principles and plans in thematic areas. These sectorial policies intend to extensively capture the problem domains and possible solutions. Table 2 and Appendix 4: Ministries, Functions in Urban Development and Sectorial Policies summarise the roles that ministries play in developing and managing cities, as well as the sectorial policies that they are leading and the respective objectives of the policies.

TABLE 1: Summary of Agencies and Commissions Relevant to Urban Affairs (for details refer to Appendix 3: Agencies, Commissions and Function in Urban Development)

	AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS
1	Central Bank of Liberia (CBL)
2	Civil Service Agency
3	Electricity Corporation
4	Forestry Development Authority
5	General Services Agency
6	Governance Commission
7	Institute for Public Administration
8	Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services
9	Land Authority
10	National Fires Services
11	National Housing Authority
12	National Investment Commission
13	National Police
14	National Social Security & Welfare Corporation
15	Telecommunications Authority/Corporation
16	WASH Consortium
17	Water & Sewer Corporation

[20] LISGIS. (2017). *About LISGIS*. Retrieved from Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) Offical Website

TABLE 2: Summary of Ministries and Sectorial Policies (for details refer to Appendix 4: Ministries, Functions in Urban Development and Sectorial Policies)

	MINISTRIES	SECTORIAL POLICIES
1	Agriculture	Urban Agriculture Policy
2	Commerce & Industry	*National Micro Small Medium Enterprise Policy*
3	Defence	Policies relevant to national sovereignty/territorial protection/disaster response)
4	Education	*National Policy on Girls' Education*
5	Finance & Development Planning	Policies relevant to national resource allocation/regional sectoral planning/socio-economic planning
6	Foreign Affairs	*National Environmental Policy*
7	Gender and Development	*National Gender Policy*
8	Health and Social Welfare	*National Health Policy*
9	Information, Culture & Tourism	Policies relevant to national public awareness/heritage promotion
10	Internal Affairs	*National Decentralisation Policy* *National Solid Waste Management Policy* *National Disaster Management Policy* Policies relevant to city & town (spatial) planning
11	Justice	Policies relevant to national Rule of law/stability
12	Labour	*National Employment Policy*
13	Lands, Mines and Energy	*Water Supply and Sanitation Policy* *National Energy Policy* Policies relevant to hydrological/metrological issues (climate change)
14	Planning and Economic Affairs	*National Capacity Development Strategy* *NP on Population for Social and Economic Development*
15	Public Works	Policies relevant to national truck infrastructure/physical planning
16	Posts & Telecommunications	*National Communication Policy*
17	Ministry of State	Policies relevant to national government coordination
18	Transport	*National Transport Master Plan*
19	Youth and Sports	*Revised National Youth Policy* *National Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Policy*

2.2 Methodology for Inter-Institutional Collaboration and Policy Coherence

Cooperation among different institutions is built on the premise of thorough understanding of key urban actors' responsibilities in urban development. Benefits of such collaboration include pooling resources, which amplifies the output in a way that is larger than the sum of its parts in achieving common urban goals. Figure 17 condenses the primary functions that ministries, key agencies and commissions perform in the urban development process of Liberia.

For ministries, their sectorial policies serve as tools in advocating for advancements in respective areas that overlap urban affairs. Adopting the reverse thinking method (Figure 18), thematic urban foci were used to link and align relevant policies in exploring confluence of actions and activities. This exemplifies how summarised urban foci of sectorial policies could link relevant policies and institutions which perform similar urban roles to identify partnerships for collaboration in achieving shared objectives. Developing a mechanism to consolidate sectorial policies is expected to promote institutional collaboration and policy coherence as set out in the Liberia National Vision 2030.

FIGURE 17
Institutions' Urban Duties, Liberia

MINISTRIES

MoArgriculture
- poverty reduction/climate change
- coastal communities promotion
- urban agriculture/food security

MoCommerce & Industry
- street vendors coordination
- small enterprises/informal urban economy
- urban poor productive livelihoods

MoDefence
- urban health emergencies/urban violence control
- military barracks facilities/coastal pollution defense
- civil works construction/urban waste removal

MoEducation
- education attainment improvement
- education facilities reconstruction
- education system management

MoInformation, Culture & Tourism
- awareness building/urban heritage
- social mobilization/public education
- standards for private beach operations

MoFinance & Development Planning
- alignment of spatial planning with socio-economic p
- resource allocation/block mapping
- national investment budgeting/sectoral planning

MoGender and Development
- participation of vulnerable groups
- capacity training
- awareness building

MoLabor
- urban workforce planning and research
- human capital development programs
- overall employment monitoring

MoForeign Affair
- international collaboration coordination
- foreign investment mobilization
- basic services restoration/coordination with ministries

MoPosts & Telecommunications
- internet regulations
- addressing/postal
- IT/GSM Technology

MoTransport
- transport fares regulationtransport
- policy coordinationurban
- transport planning

MoJustice
- urban land and property adjudication
- urban legislation/violence control/mass evictions
- rule of law/public safety/traffic control/immigration

MoPublic Works
- housing standards/zoning
- construction standards
- infrastructure & services

MoState
- overall public sector coordination
- highest decision making

MoInternal Affairs
- spatial planning (not performed since the civil war)
- urban governance and management
- manage urban disaster

MoPlanning and Economc Affairs
- overall development planning

MoLands, Mines and Energy
- land regulation
- energy research and development
- coastal area management

MoHealth and Social Welfare
- urban open defecation free (ODF) promotion
- urban water quality monitoring
- urban health/sanitation standards and compliance

MoYouth and Sports
- custodian of youth and education
- capacity training
- participation of youth

AGENCIES/COMMISSIONS

Civil Service Agency
- recruitment and selectionhuman
- resources management, services
- civil service

Electricity Corporation
- street lighting/block mapping
- household connections
- city power grid

Forestry Development Authority
- fire hydrants
- garden & parks
- urban afforestation

Governance Commission
- Dencentralization Policy
- Government Reform

LISGIS
- authoritative source provision
- national population & housing census

Land Authority
- urban land management & administration
- land reform
- urban land inventory

National Housing Authority
- data provision on land
- custodian of National Housing Policy
- urban housing and shelter policy

National Investment Commission
- diversification /employment
- manufacturing industry promotion

Liberia Water & Sewer Corporation
- household connections
- sewer treatment
- urban water supply

2.3 Urban Governance and Collaboration

Urban governance and the policy development process in Liberia has been controversial for inadequate public participation, insufficient transparency, and lack of gender sensitivity. Conventionally, citizens have been considered mere recipients of policies and strategies rather the owners and participants. Such exclusion has contributed to low acceptance and recognition of policies, making their implementation difficult. Separated from shaping policy, people tend to perceive government schemes as distant and irrelevant, which severely lowers the credibility of strategies.

The importance of an inclusive governance system is stressed in the African Agenda 2063 Framework, which functions as a strategic framework for socio-economic transformation of the continent over 50 years. Two of the seven "African Aspirations" in the agenda focus on building democratic governance and people-driven development, in details:[21]

- An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law

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21 African Union. (2015). *Agenda 2063: the Africa we want*. Addis Ababa: African Union.

FIGURE 18
Liberia's Sectorial Policies and Thematic Focuses

Sectorial Policies & Thematic Focuses
The Republic of Liberia
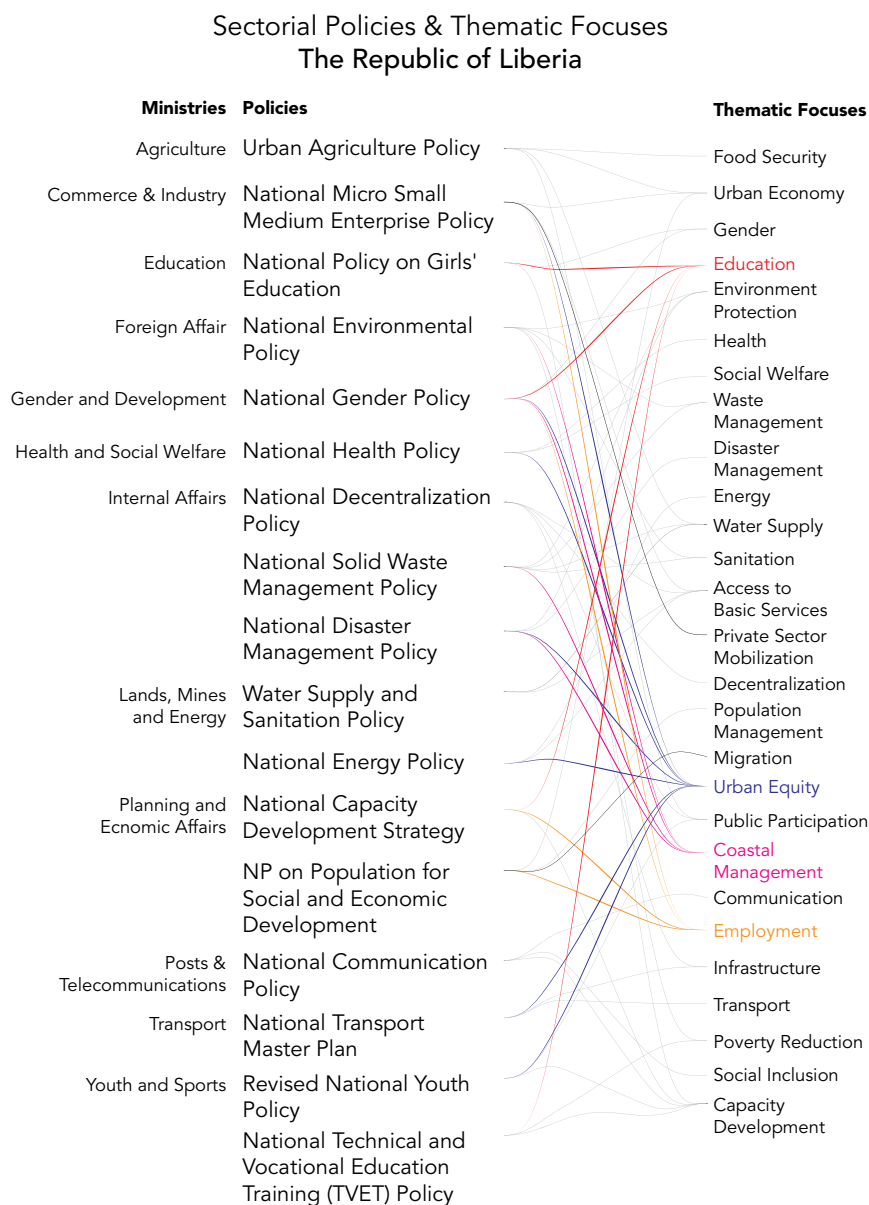
Source: UN-Habitat Liberia National Urban Policy Programme

- An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by people, especially its women and youth and caring for children

Apart from active citizenry consultation inclusive governance also means close partnerships with international organisations which have accumulated rich experience in assisting countries' development. Liberia faces development challenges similar to those of other nations.[22] Learning from international experience could mean the difference between wasting scarce recourses on uninformed experiments and specifically addressing key issues using tested methodologies.[23]

The Government of Liberia has been keen and active in partnering with development partners from all around the globe in responding to its emerging urbanisation issues. To facilitate the respective strengths of international partners, Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme has rallied a wide range of international organisations with a

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[22] Cobbett, William. (2017, February). *Opening remarks: Toward a city development strategy*. Presented at the Greater Monrovia City Forum, Monrovia, Liberia.

[23] UN-Habitat. (2014). *The Evolution of National Urban Policies: A Global Overview*. Nairobi. Foreword.

focus on various capacities to work collaboratively in securing Liberia's sustainable growth. Such a development network has embedded the multilateral organisation UN-Habitat and NGOs such as Housing for Humanity (HFHI), National Petty Trader Union of Liberia (NAPETUL), Slum Dwellers International (SDI), United Cities and Local Governments - Africa (UCLGA), and Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising (WIEGO) to jointly address issues such as human settlements, housing, slums, governance and gender. This coincides with the principle of the NUP for Liberia, which is to promote an active working partnership supported by long-term global and institutional commitments.

2.4 Devolution of Governance

Empowering municipalities to enable efficient, effective local governance has been at the centre of legislative reform in Liberia. Decentralised governance has many merits, including effective control and supervision, quick and locally-applicable decision making and actions, and reducing burden of the top executive level. While reshaping the legislative framework to permit the transfer of responsibility and authorities from central to local government institutions allows for more administrative autonomy, the capacity of municipalities will also need to be strengthened and enhanced to ensure they are able to deliver the envisioned results.[24]

The need for continuous improvement of other governing areas of Liberia also remains urgent. Figure 19 highlights the views of numerous enterprise, citizen and expert survey respondents, which indicate that Liberia lags behind the Sub-Saharan Africa average standard in political and social stability, regulatory quality, and rule of law. Moreover, it is observed that the control of corruption must be underpinned along with rapid economic growth.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

The complex nature of urbanisation means urban actors must develop joint strategies and actions to addressing common issues. The NUP requires a thorough analysis of the legislative and administrative landscapes, as laid out in this chapter. A key finding is that the conventional exclusive urban governance leads to low acceptance and recognition of policies, which results in dysfunctional plans and strategies.

A shared shortcoming manifested in many policies is a unilateral approach with poor multi-institutional coordination. Given the financial and technical constraints that Liberia faces after prolonged civil wars, the insufficient capacity that is widespread among governmental bodies is expected to be a persistent problem in the near and medium future. Resolving these issues requires coordination between institutions (including international development partners) to identify and mobilise scarce resources and addressing mutual urban development tasks.

FIGURE 19
Governance Indicator of Liberia Compared to Sub-Saharan Africa Overall

INDICATOR	COUNTRY	YEAR	PERCENTILE RANK
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism	Sub-Saharan Africa	2015	
	Liberia	2015	
Government Effectiveness	Sub-Saharan Africa	2015	
	Liberia	2015	
Regulatory Quality	Sub-Saharan Africa	2015	
	Liberia	2015	
Rule of Law	Sub-Saharan Africa	2015	
	Liberia	2015	
Control of Corruption	Sub-Saharan Africa	2015	
	Liberia	2015	

Source: Kaufmann D., A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi (2010), The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues'

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[24] Patsika, Charles. (2017, February). *Strengthening local government association: UCLGA*. Presented at the Greater Monrovia City Forum, Monrovia, Liberia.

3 MAJOR URBANISATION CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This chapter captures the key urbanisation challenges that were identified and prioritised during the numerous consultative sessions and research undertaken as part of the NUP development process in Liberia. This chapter echoes the advocacy of "a matrix that clearly articulates sectorial development plans (including energy, transport, housing, etc.)" by the Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda.[25] Extensive analysis was conducted on key urban issues identified as priorities: Education, employment, poverty, infrastructure, basic services, housing, land and the environment.

3.1 Education

35 per cent of Liberia's population comprises young adults between 15 and 34 years of age.[26] Of these, 33 per cent have no education, 31 per cent have only primary education, and 36 per cent have secondary and tertiary educations. As education is the best and most effective vehicle for changing mindsets, the need to improve Liberia's educational system has been repeatedly emphasised as a way to help achieve urban harmony, increased productivity and shared prosperity in cities and human settlements.

To improve education, the Ministry of Education has introduced various policies (Table 3) including ensuring gender parity in education, strengthening vocational training, empowering communities to manage and finance schools, and stimulating teachers to improve their capacity and quality. The Agenda for Transformation also recognises education as a national priority and aims "to ensure equal access to a high-quality free and compulsory basic education and to a variety of post-basic education and training opportunities that lead to an improved livelihood and/or tertiary education".

For higher and tertiary educations, curricula need to be structured in an evidence-based manner to reflect market demand while maintaining the overall balance. A clear example is in the urban planning profession, which has a shortfall of over 800 urban planners to drive sustainable urbanisation in Liberia due to insufficient planning education in the country. Such human capital gaps require regular communication mechanisms between academic and employment institutions, as well as guidance for senior secondary and university students in undertaking informed and strategic choices as per the labour requirements in the country.

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[25]   UN-Habitat. (2016). *Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda*. Nairobi. Item 1.3

[26]   Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). (2009). *2008 Population and Housing Census: Final Results*. Monrovia.

A study of school distribution and population growth patterns highlights the need for more schools across Liberia. Map 5 summarises school distribution compared to the population distribution in different counties. Synthesis of the two layers of information indicates insufficient schools in the fast-growing counties. Increasing the provision of schools in these regions could be given high priority in Liberia's NUP, which would resonate with the promotion of "safe and healthy journey to school for every child as a priority" as is inscribed in article 113 of the New Urban Agenda[27] and the strategy of reducing distances to school by the Ministry of Education.[28] It would also contribute to improving overall low educational attainment as identified in the Agenda for Transformation.[29]

TABLE 3: Liberia's Education Policies and Strategies

POLICIES	STRATEGIES	TARGETS	INTERVENTIONS
Free and compulsory basic education	Make learning and teaching free, reduce distance to school, increase incentive for teachers	Basic Education: Ensure that all children aged 6 to 14 (Grades 1-9) are in school	School grant, free learning materials, free meals
Girls' education	Increase gender parity at basic education level	Girls between the ages of 6 to 14 (Grades 1-9)	Provide take-home rations for girls, set up a girls' education unit, develop a girls' education policy, provide incentives to increase and improve women's participation in teaching, undertake studies to harmonise girls' participation in school with cultural requirements
Education governance	Decentralise school system	School management at community level	Empower community to decide teacher recruitment, manage school grants, develop school improvement plans, determine construction of education facilities
Teacher professional development	Teacher incentives	Teachers assigned in rural communities and sciences	Provide teacher housing (especially in cities), increased incentives
Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy	Increased opportunities for acquisition of technical and vocational skills	Junior secondary school students with interest in pursuing technical skills	Conduct national labour market and employment surveys and develop curricula accordingly

Source: Adapted from the Education for All 2015 National Report

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27   United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 113.

28   Ministry of Education, Liberia. (2015). *Education for All*. Monrovia. Page 9.

29   Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia. Page 6.

MAP 5
Depopulated Counties with High Population Growth Rates and Agglomerations of Schools, Liberia
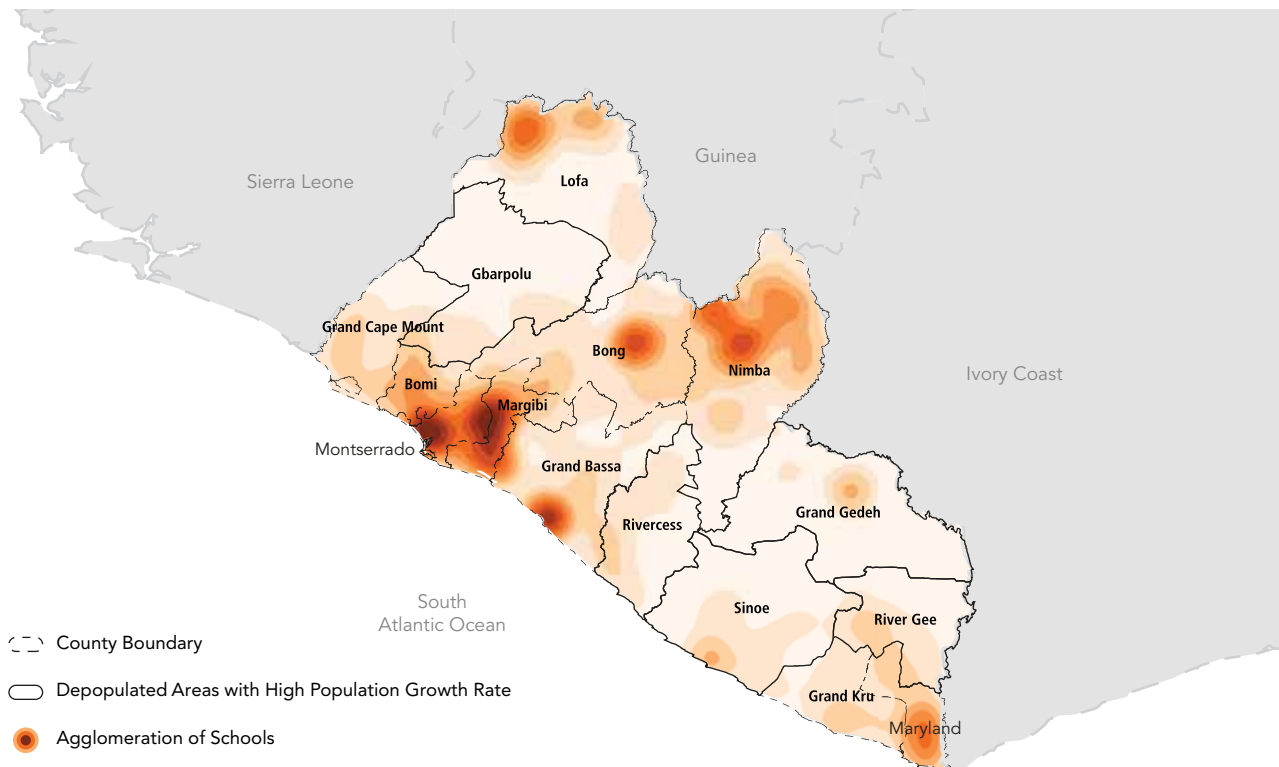
Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census, GIS data from Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme

3.2 Employment and Job Creation

At the height of the civil war in 1991–92, Liberia's unemployment rate reached 85 per cent. More recently, the 2010 Liberia Labour Survey conducted by LISGIS and the Ministry of Labour estimated the unemployment rate at 3.7 per cent.[30] Compared to the unemployment rates of Liberia's neighbours – Burkina Faso 2.4 per cent (1998), Côte d'Ivoire 4.1 per cent (1998), Ghana 10.4 per cent (2000), Mali 8.8 per cent (2004), and Sierra Leone 3.4 per cent (2004) – Liberia's figures seem moderate, which tends to disguise larger labour issues of informality and underemployment. The 2010 Labour Survey found that 68 per cent of employment was informal, which means that over three-quarters of workers are in informal sector without basic job security. Informal employment often means compromised wages and productivity, and it can threaten overall social impartiality, satisfaction and stability.

Employment is relevant to a wide range of socio-economic sectors, including education, poverty reduction, economic growth, gender, and youth. For instance, better education levels increase employment readiness, thus improving employment rate and creating job opportunities. This enhances overall economic performance, which in turn contributes to poverty reduction and regulating rural-urban migration. Adequate employment policies could further shield people against gender inequality and child labour and create more employment opportunities, particularly for youthful population and other vulnerable groups. Most Liberians consider reducing unemployment to be the most trustworthy indicator for improved household living standards,[31] and an unequivocal avenue towards raising people out of poverty and giving them a stake in overall national development.[32]

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[30] LISGIS. (2011). *Report on the Liberia Labour Force Survey 2010*. Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS).

[31] World Bank. (2010). *Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire survey*.

[32] Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia. Page 41.

TABLE 4: Key Ministries and Lead Actions in Employment Generation

AREA OF FOCUS	RESPONSIBLE MINISTRIES	LEAD ACTIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT GENERATION
Security	Ministry of Defence	Rapid training of security forces; training and job placement for ex-combatants in urban health emergencies, urban violence control, coastal pollution defence, civil works constructed and urban waste removal; innovative north-south partnerships to scale-up training and human resource development; job creation.
Economic Revitalisation	Ministry of Finance	Priority to rapid expansion of food crop production, the revision of key legislation (investment code; small and medium enterprises strategy, micro-finance law, and the tax code). Expansion of community credit unions and consideration of an Agricultural Development Bank.
Governance and Rule of Law	Ministry of Planning	Rapid training of governance personnel and public servants through short intensive courses for clerks of court, bailiffs and sheriffs for urban and rural areas, as part of ongoing governance programmes.
Infrastructure and Basic Services	Ministry of Public Works	Priority to scaled-up construction of rural roads and primary schools using labour-intensive methods. Enhanced efforts to standardise qualifications for vocational training in housing and construction standards, zoning and basic services, and rapid skills training in areas of labour demand.

Source: Ministry of Labour. (2009). Adapted from the Employment Policy. Government of Liberia.

The nexus of employment requires joint efforts to create more and better jobs. Table 4 exemplifies how key ministries could lead actions to generate employment opportunities in their respective areas of focus while collaborating with the Ministry of Labour.

Besides enhancing ministerial collaboration to improve employment, optimising the industrial setup to revitalise production is also key in generating economic activity. Figure 20 shows that Liberia imports about two to three times as much as it exports, which reflects the potential work opportunities that could be provided by strengthening production power. This is expected to lower Liberia's heavy reliance on external resources and foreign economic market through "improved satisfaction with Liberian products by domestic consumers".[33] It will also turn Liberia's single product economy into a durable industrial portfolio for greater international competitiveness. In the process of urbanisation and industrialisation, Liberian cities must play a more prominent role in promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, given the aggregation of resources and human capital in metropolises.[34]

FIGURE 20
Estimated Values of Exports and Imports of Liberia
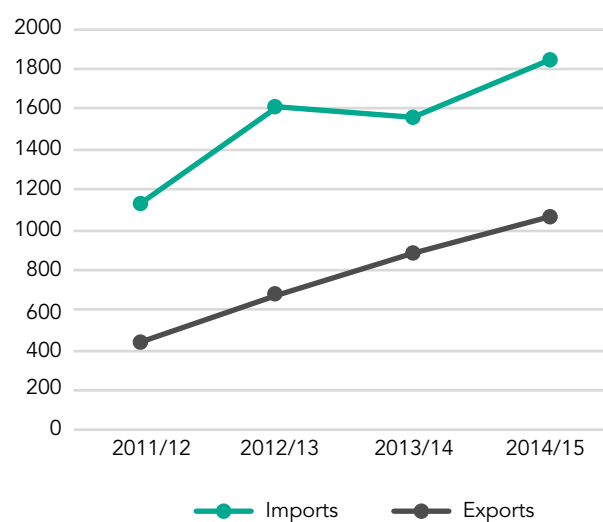
Data Source: Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030

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[33] Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia. Page 64.

[34] United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 14b.

3.3 Poverty and Economy

Improvements in education and employment share often aim to lift people out of poverty. Consecutive years of civil conflicts turned Liberia into one of the poorest countries in the world, with an estimated GDP per capita of US$ 556 in 2015, despite having recovered notably from its lowest level of US$ 66 in 1995 (Figure 21). It is estimated that approximately two thirds of all Liberians live in poverty, which is expressed in terms of low income and consumption, poor nutrition and food insecurity, poor health, inadequate education and infrastructure provision.[35] An acute expression of poverty is the significant increase of child labour. It is estimated that 300,000 children, equal to 40 per cent of the total population of children aged 5-14 years in 2010, were driven to work at an early age by extreme poverty and the dysfunctional education system.[36] This social phenomenon is more pronounced in cities such as Monrovia, where economic activities, a young population, and urban poverty concentrate.

The Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy launched in 2008 provides a framework for addressing the widespread poverty in the country. It proposes four pillars of action:

1. Ensuring secure and peaceful environment;

2. Revitalising pillar industries (Figure 22) such as forestry, manufacturing, agriculture and fisheries;

3. Building efficient and effective institutions and systems; and

4. Providing better infrastructure and basic services.

To oversee implementation of the framework, the Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee chaired by the president was formed with members ranging from ministries to international development partners.

FIGURE 21
GDP Per Capita (US$) of Liberia and Civil Conflicts

Legends

⊙ Doe-led Coup, 1980

▨ First Civil War, 1989-1997

▨ Second Civil War, 1999-2003

Data Source: World Bank national accounts data, and OECD National Accounts data files
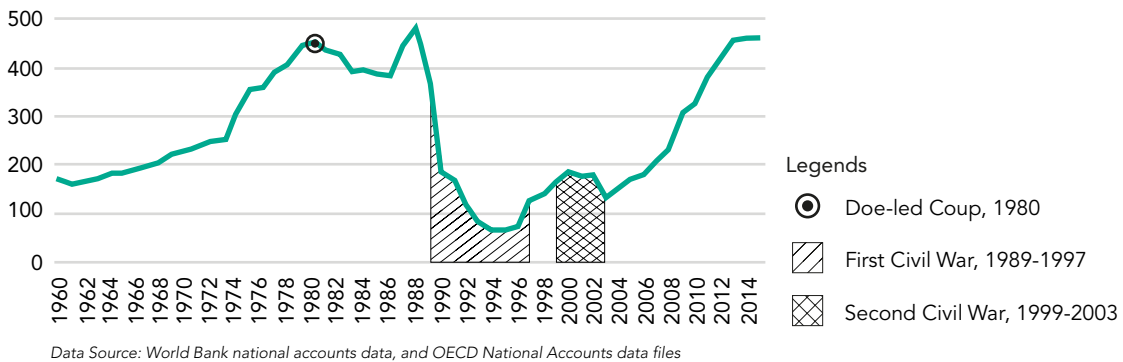
FIGURE 22
Value Added by Sector in Liberia, 1987 & 2005 (Million, US$)

Data Source: Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy

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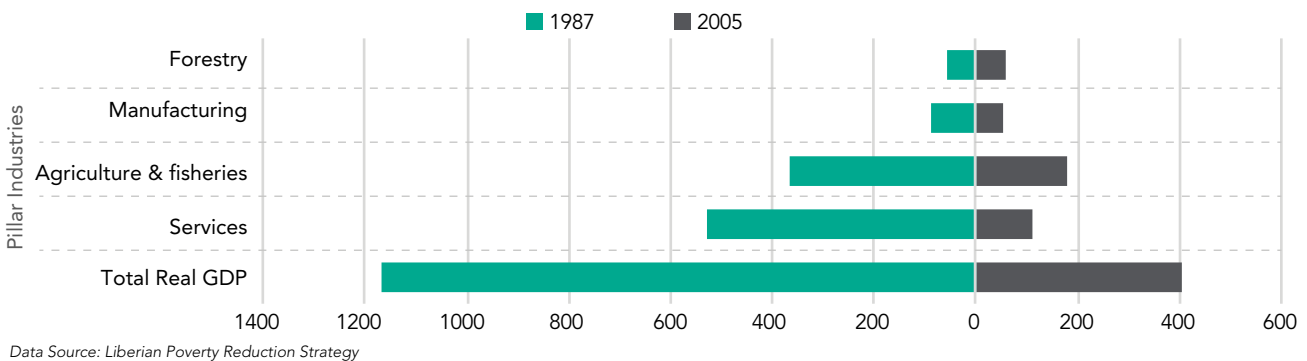
[35] Government of Liberia. (2008). *Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy*.

[36] Ministry of Labour. (2009). *Employment Policy*. Government of Liberia.

As a part of revitalisation, Liberia could aim to reclaim economic opportunities such as inland fisheries and aquaculture, given the abundant water resources throughout the country (Map 6). Liberia has approximately 1,810 km of rivers as well as plentiful swamps and inland water bodies.[37] Reviving aquaculture could bring back inland working opportunities and evenly localised job opportunities. This would strengthen balanced development as promoted by the Liberia National Vision 2030, lower the population pressure for cities, and alleviate urban poverty in city centres.

While addressing poverty, it is important to stress the crucial role of Monrovia, which hosts one third of the nation's population and contributes two thirds of the national GDP.[38] Citizens of smaller cities and rural areas should also be considered to ensure that the benefits of poverty reduction, growth and development are spread equitably throughout the urban areas. This complies with the New Urban Agenda, which aims to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions by ensuring equal rights and opportunities and integration in the urban space.[39]

MAP 6
Water System, Liberia

GIS Data Source: Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme

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[37] National Investment commission. *Liberia's Investor Outreach Campaign: Opportunities for investors in the aquaculture sector.* Monrovia.

[38] Cobbett, William. (2017, February). *Opening remarks: Toward a city development strategy*. Presented at the Greater Monrovia City Forum, Monrovia, Liberia.

[39] United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 14a.

3.4 Infrastructure and Basic Services

The Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy strategically places "rehabilitating infrastructure and delivering basic services" as one of the four pillar actions towards restoration of the urban areas in Liberia.[40] Similarly, the New Urban Agenda Implementation Plan also promotes administrative strategies for minimum standards in efficient and affordable services and infrastructure delivery for urban development. This contributes to achieving equitable, affordable access to sustainable basic physical and social infrastructure for all without discrimination.[41]

Liberia's 14-year civil crisis damaged much of its infrastructure, especially in Greater Monrovia. In addition, facilities that escaped severe damage have deteriorated due to poor maintenance. Weak infrastructure in urban and rural areas has led to limited accessibility to electricity, water, health and sanitation facilities, which contribute to high cost of goods and services and weakened food security. Such shortages have largely affected vulnerable groups including women, children, and persons with disabilities.

TRANSPORTATION

Of all Liberia's infrastructure problems, roads – the most vital element – require urgent attention. In the post-conflict period, Liberia faces the challenge of 1,600 km of unpaved roads and 700 km of paved roads that require urgent repair.[42] During the rainy season from May to October, poor road conditions cut off regular transfer of goods and services among cities and between urban and rural areas. It is essential to restore the road system, which plays an indispensable role in poverty reduction and is critical for economic development. Similarly, other infrastructure networks such as bridges, railways, seaports and airports that are in an equally poor state also need renewal if the national transport network is to be thoroughly revitalised. Improved transport services could better link cities and human settlements in Liberia by reducing the travel time and cost between Monrovia and other county capitals (Map 7). This would facilitate the flow of human and physical capital that is crucial to the urban economy in both domestic and foreign markets.

MAP 7
Distance and Timeframe Driving from Monrovia to other Cities

Distances & Time Frame Driving From Monrovia [H] / [Km]	
13 / 853	San Pedro [Ivory Coast]
10 / 640	Daloa [Ivory Coast]
8 / 464	Man [Ivory Coast]
7 / 450	Gueckedou [Guinea]
6 / 380	Nzerekore [Guinea]
5 / 281	Kenema [Sierra Leone]
3 / 161	Sulima [Sierra Leone]
	Monrovia
2 / 137	Buchanan [Paved]
3 / 193	Gbarnga [Paved]
4 / 260	Ganta [Paved]
12 / 465	Zwedru
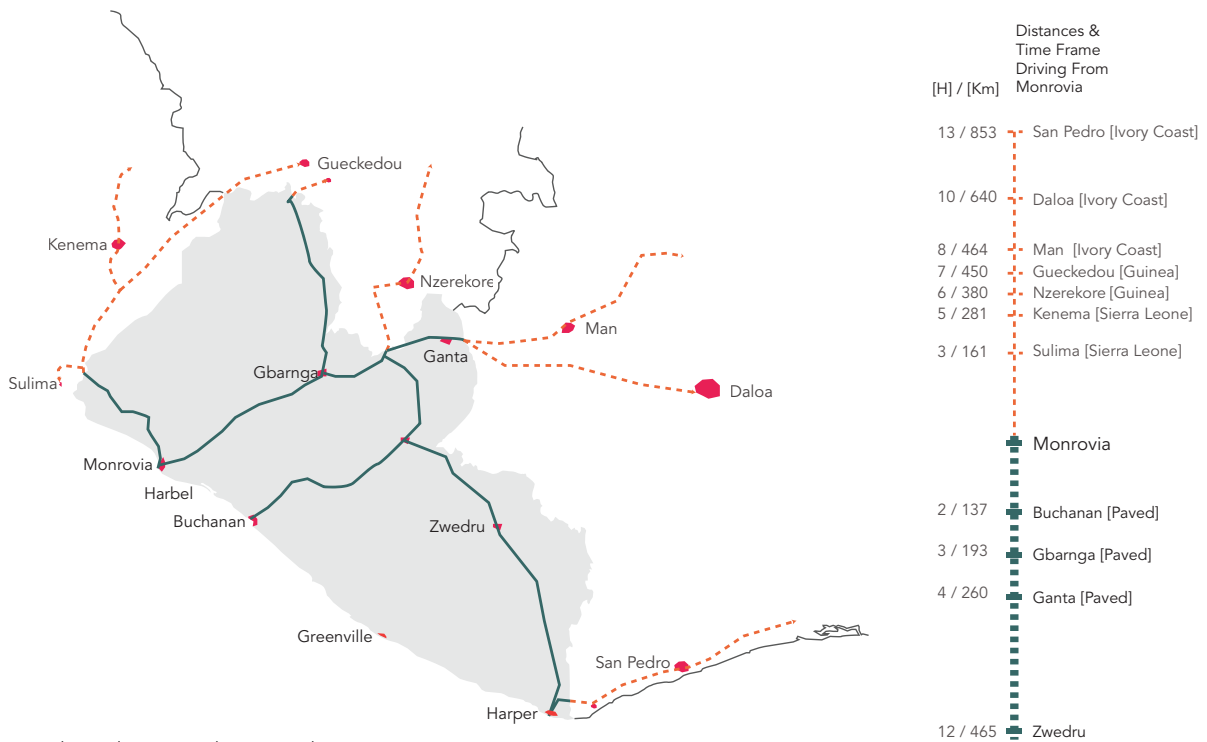
Source: UN-Habitat Planning and Design Lab

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[40] Ministry of Transport. (2012). *National Transport Master Plan of Liberia*.

[41] United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 34.

[42] Government of Liberia. (2008). *Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy*.

MAP 8
Population Growth Rate and Transport System, Liberia
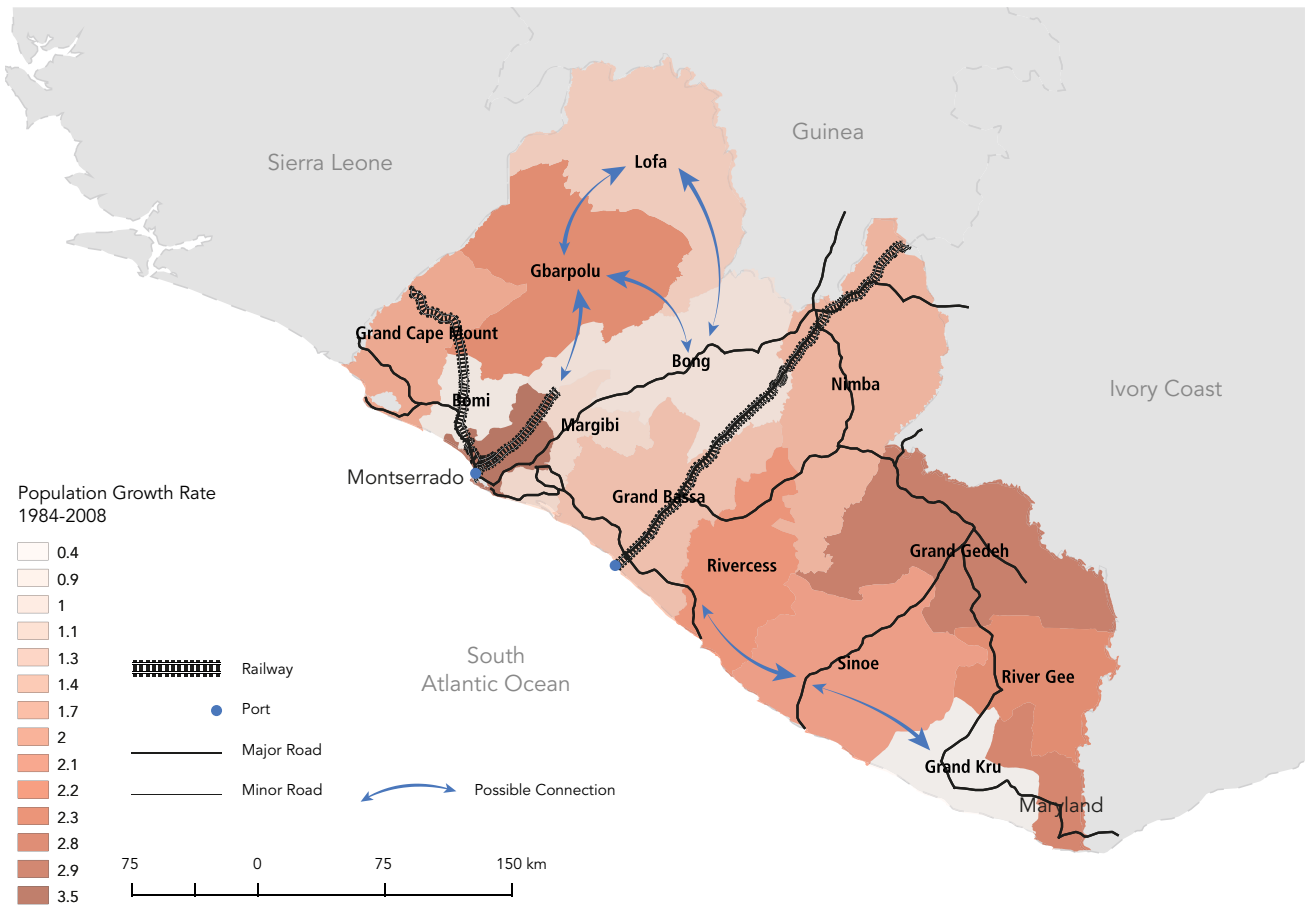
Population Growth Rate
1984-2008

	0.4
	0.9
	1
	1.1
	1.3
	1.4
	1.7
	2
	2.1
	2.2
	2.3
	2.8
	2.9
	3.5

Railway

Port

Major Road

Minor Road

Possible Connection

Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census, GIS data from Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme and Natural Earth (www.naturalearthdata.com)

The five-year strategic development plan of the Liberia Vision 2030, the Agenda for Transformation,[43] confirms the vital role of roads in linking people, places, goods, services and economic opportunities,[44] and cites a 2012 World Bank survey of Liberian firms which finds that 39 per cent identify transport as a major constraint to business development.[45] Map 8 combines the population growth rate of each county and the overall road and railway coverage. Counties with the fastest population growth rates, such as Grand Gedeh and Gbarpolu, have inadequate connections to the main transport networks. Such a disconnect could significantly delay and constrain the development of these regions. To address the issue, the anticipated population growth could be taken into consideration while formulating a

coherent transport strategy as part of the NUP for Liberia.

ENERGY

As an essential basic service with a profound impact on all aspects of life, energy fosters Liberia's economic, political and social development. Household energy sector dominates the nation's energy consumption. It was estimated that in 2004, over 95 per cent of the population depended on firewood and charcoal for cooking and heating, while palm oil, kerosene and candles were used for lighting.[46] Given that modern energy services such as electricity and petroleum products are crucial in ensuring an affordable and sustainable

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43 Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia.

44 United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 13 (f).

45 World Bank. (2009). *Doing Business 2012 Survey*. Retrieved from Enterprise Surveys: http://www.enterprisesurveys.org/data/exploreeconomies/2009/liberia

46 Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy. (2009). *National Energy Policy*.

MAP 9
Existing and Proposed Economic Corridors, and Planned Power Plants
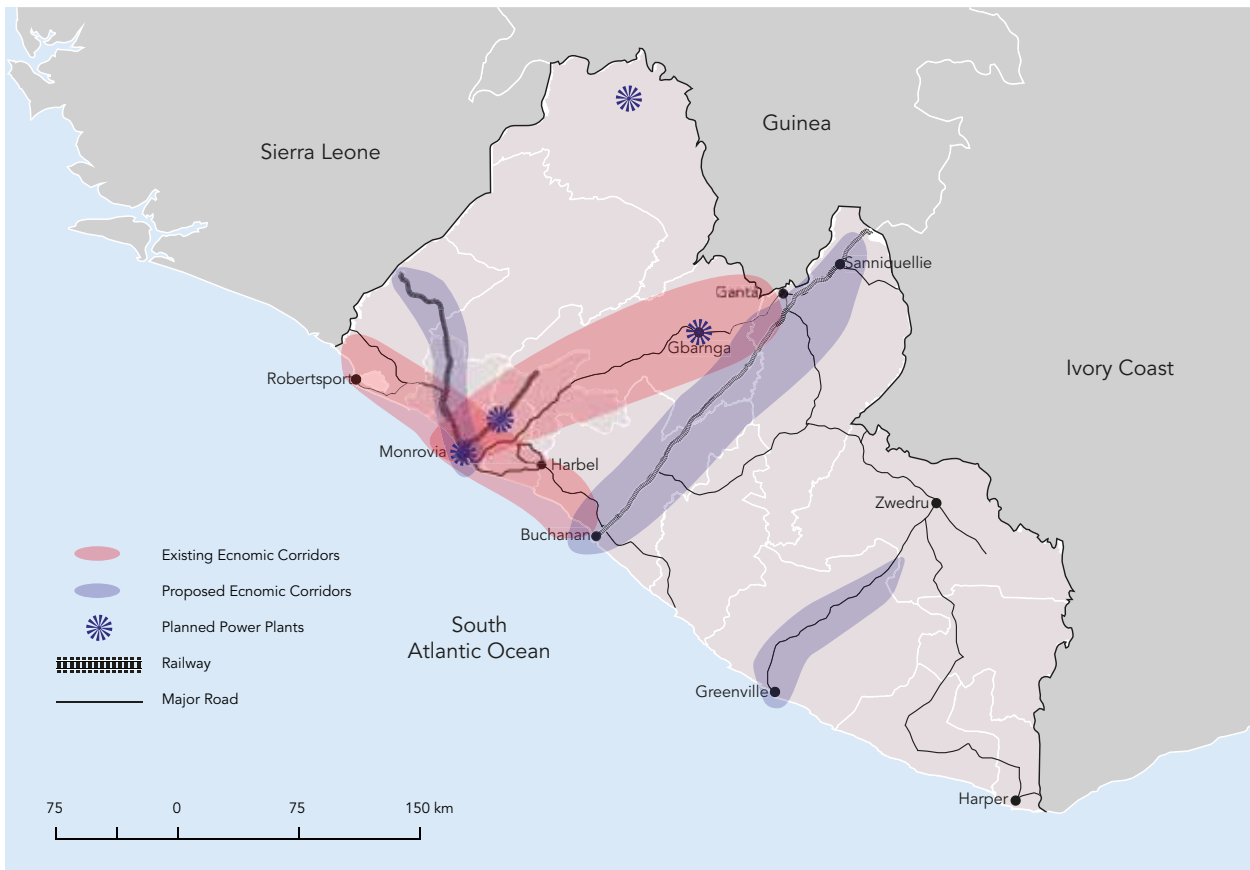
Data Source: Liberia 2010 Development Corridor Desk Study[47], GIS data from Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme and Natural Earth (www.naturalearthdata.com)

energy supply, universal access to such provisions is much needed (as proposed in Liberia's National Energy Policy). Energy sector reform that calls for transparent governance and the right institutional framework is expected to facilitate private sector investment and improve the accessibility and quality of energy supply while lowering the cost.

Energy also plays an irreplaceable role in facilitating industrialisation, which is key to achieving a prosperous urban economy and subsequent improvement of employment opportunities. Map 9 shows current and proposed economic corridors, and the power plants that have been planned accordingly, which further demonstrate the high correlation between economy and energy.

WATER

Water is another imperative needed to safeguard life and sanitation dignity for Liberians. The SDGs and the New Urban Agenda both stress how essential access to water is in cities and human settlements. Despite significant improvement since the end of the civil conflicts, 75 per cent of Liberians are estimated be without access to safe drinking water.[48] The scarcity and poor quality of water negatively impacts sanitation, health, food security and economic opportunities.[49] The NUP for Liberia could recognise the high and diverse multi-sector returns offered by investment in the water sector.

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[47] National Investment commission. *Liberia's Investor Outreach Campaign: Opportunities for investors in the aquaculture sector*. Monrovia.

[48] Government of Liberia. (2008). *Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy*.

[49] Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy. (2009). *Water Supply and Sanitation Policy*.

FOOD INSECURITY

Closely tied to water is food security and health. Due to water scarcity and the poor transport network, agricultural production has been repressed, which adversely impacts food security and health. Consequently, an estimated two out of five children in Liberia are growth-stunted and underweight. Some 40 per cent of the population is susceptible to food insecurity, especially those living in geographically isolated counties.[50]

Another contributor to food insecurity is limited irrigated land. Less than five per cent of Liberia's land is under permanent cultivation, and less than one per cent is irrigated. This is related to inadequate machinery, knowledge and techniques of cultivation, transport, storage and marketing. The uncertainty of land tenure also discourages investment, which leads to the absence of food processing industry to prepare products for domestic and international markets. To remedy the development of the agriculture sector, the government adopted enabling institutional and legal frameworks, Cooperative Development Act 2010 and an accompanying Liberia Cooperative Development Regulations of 2010, to facilitate the development of demand-driven cooperative organisations.[51]

HEALTH

Insufficient healthcare facilities and professionals combined with limited access to healthcare have contributed to the poor health status, especially in rural areas and urban slums. Interventions to improve the health of people living in informal settlements should be given a higher priority, and slum dwellers require essential training and sensitisation on health issues.

According to the World Bank (Figure 23), the gap in life expectancy between Liberia's and the world average is reducing but still significant. Food insecurity, malnutrition and poor healthcare in turn result in low agricultural productivity. This forms a

vicious cycle that continually deteriorates the overall social well-being of Liberians.

OTHER SERVICES

In addition to the abovementioned challenges, there are other basic service issues that need to be addressed. For instance, only 15 per cent of the population has access to waste collection disposal facilities.[52] Most residents do not treat or boil their drinking water, which has a negative implication on health and nutrition. Mechanisms for responding effectively to health crises need to be operationalised to avoid a repetition of the 2014 Ebola outbreak with its chain of social implications. Open defecation is still far from being eliminated because of inadequate availability of toilets and insufficient awareness of hygiene.

FIGURE 23
Life Expectancy at Birth (years) in Liberia

Data Source: World Bank Open Data: http://data.worldbank.org

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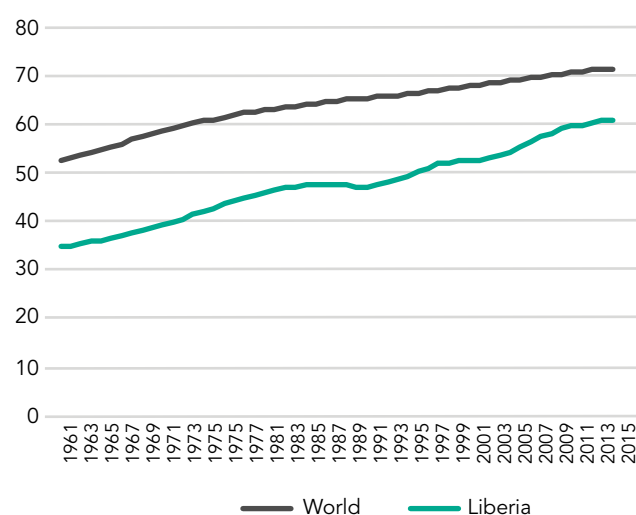
[50] Government of Liberia. (2008). *Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy*.

[51] Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia. Page 76.

[52] Government of Liberia. (2008). *Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy*.

3.5 Housing and Slums

Sustainable housing requires multi-sectorial collaboration and must be coupled with infrastructure and basic services. For any nation to achieve sustainable urban development, people must have the right to decent housing. The New Urban Agenda promotes the development of national, sub-national, and local housing policies that support the realisation of the right to adequate housing. This is expected to foster local integrated housing approaches by addressing the strong links between education, employment, housing, health, and preventing exclusion and segregation.[53] The development of integrated, age and gender responsive housing policies and approaches spans all sectors and levels of government. It incorporates the provision of adequate, affordable, accessible, resource-efficient, safe, resilient, well-connected, and well-located housing with special attention to proximity and strengthening the spatial relationship with the rest of the urban fabric and the surrounding functional areas.[54]

In 2014, UN-Habitat published the *Liberia Housing Profile*,[55] which decodes the factors influencing housing provision in Liberia. This fundamental tool paves the way for designing sustainable, inclusive urban and housing strategies and the formulation of a National Housing Policy. The *Liberia Housing Profile* argues that institutionally, housing has been mandated to many ministries, agencies and commissions with unclear demarcation of responsibilities. The National Housing Authority (NHA), which was set up in 1962 to be the main agency for housing, has received insufficient government support for capital investment to fulfill its mandate. In addition, capacity-building components on pro-poor housing could be arranged for NHA and housing-related institutions. Furthermore, there are only a few legal and regulatory frameworks governing housing and urban development, of which the building code and zoning law have both fallen into disuse because of low public credibility and enforcement.

Using the Liberian government's medium population growth scenario, the profile estimates that by 2030 the urban population will grow by 1.8 million, with half living in Monrovia. It rationalises the need for twice as many housing units in Monrovia and half as many in minor cities in order to alleviate overcrowding. Achieving such goal would require a portfolio of strategies, including more accessible finance for housing (and derived options such as rental), restoration of infrastructure, sustainable and affordable construction method and materials, localised building standards and materials, better regulation of the housing market, among others. Importantly, Monrovia and other cities need to take on more responsibilities in meeting the foreseeable demand for housing in an affordable and sustainable way.

The average number of persons per household is an essential indicator that reflects the basic household composition. For Liberia, this figure remains high despite having declined from 6.1 in 1984 to 5.1 in 2008.[56] Since average household size normally drops in the process of development, the current high average persons per household implies a massive housing need as Liberia continues to urbanise. In the eastern counties (Map 10) such as Maryland, Grand Gedeh and Rivercess, where each household accommodates more people, additional housing provisions are required to actively respond to demand for more space. This inevitable trend will take place either in the form of well-planned and affordable housing units, or spontaneous settlements which could be mitigated with some guidance on location, density, material selection and other sustainable measures.

The prevailing construction of middle-income aspirational housing as single-household villas on quarter-acre serviced plots is not an appropriate way forward for most of Liberia's urban population. It takes unnecessarily large amounts of land, creating an unsustainable demand for new land, services and roads. Even as incomes might improve, the threshold costs of such housing are unaffordable for most Liberians. The most effective developers in the low-income sector are

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[53] United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 108.

[54] United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 31 & 32

[55] UN-Habitat. (2014). *Liberia Housing Profile*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

[56] Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). (2009). *2008 Population and Housing Census: Final Results*. Monrovia.

MAP 10
Average Household Size, Liberia

Average Household Size
(people/household)

- 4
- 4.6
- 4.7
- 4.8
- 5
- 5.2
- 5.5
- 5.6
- 6.4
- 6.5
- 6.8
- 7

Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census, GIS data from Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme

households working with small contractors. Public-private partnerships without careful consideration and arrangement usually only attract partners for higher-cost housing and are unsuited to supplying housing for the majority. Assistance given to households is more likely to help the low-cost provision system.[57]

Besides the demand for new accommodations, existing housing units are also in need of repair and sometimes reconstruction. According to the 2008 Population and Housing Census, 26 per cent of housing units require rehabilitation, while 18 per cent need to be reconstructed (Map 7:). The housing situation in the informal sector can be more rigorous but often less understood due to social segregation and inadequate data. Concerning general housing policy recommendations, the NUP for Liberia could aim

to enable the supply of new housing for 512,000 households by 2030, and their cost should be revised as of 2014 estimates of US$ 7,500 at the median, or less than US$ 60 per month at the 2013 price level.[58]

Despite the problems and controversy that slums generate in Liberia, what must be understood first is the reason for the proliferation of slums across the country. Radical campaigns to simply remove and replace slums in peripheral sites and service plots without understanding their roots only serves to dislocate a large number of economically active urban residents away from their local networks and resources. Forced evictions must be stopped, and reference could be made to international law in order to secure people with proper compensation and transitional shelters when eviction is the last resort. Resilient upgrading of informal settlements

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[57] UN-Habitat. (2014). *Liberia Housing Profile*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

[58] UN-Habitat. (2014). *Liberia Housing Profile*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

and providing localised affordable housing are often seen as more implementable methodologies. In the context of Liberia, the term 'affordable housing' could reflect the affordability for the lower socio-economic tier of the population, which is often neglected.[59]

What needs to be instilled in both the government and the people of Liberia is the idea that that housing is an opportunity not than a burden. Building housing can generate significant employment opportunities. Since construction jobs are more likely to be taken by the poor and youth, both jobs and adequate training will be provided to these vulnerable groups, eventually enhancing the nation's prosperity in the short and long term. Repositioning housing at the centre of national urban development as an integral part of economic development will foster future economic, environmental, cultural and socially inclusive cities. It will also demonstrate the Liberian government's capacity to seize opportunities and provide effective, productive responses.[60] Finally, inadequate data on the rate of household formation in national statistics is a setback in projecting housing demand, and could be considered in a future LISGIS population and housing census for planning and policy formulation purposes.

Committee members of the Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme have been trying to fill the data gaps in housing and slums. For instance, HFHI leads the production of pro-poor and resilient housing and slum upgrading strategies, including assessments of housing and value chains as well as hazard and vulnerability. Slum Dwellers International leads the profiling of all slum areas of Greater Monrovia,[61] while UN-Habitat leads the development process of the NUP in which housing, informal settlements and slums are listed as critical urban challenges that require curative and preventive actions.

FIGURE 24
Repair Needs of Main Housing Units by Urban/ Rural, Liberia
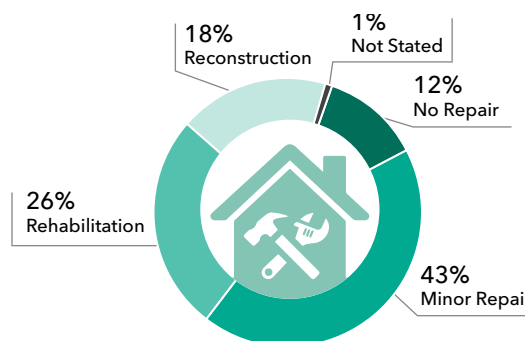
Data Source: 2008 Population and Housing Census/Infographic by Cities Alliance

3.6 Land Tenure

Worldwide, land is being prioritised as the most fundamental element of national development. How land gets identified, assembled and put to effective utilisation is crucial in enabling efficient and healthy urbanisation. Data on land and evidenced-based decision-making about the land system is the first imperative.[62] The core function of land in development is especially true in Liberia, because disputes related to land are widely recognised as one of the key drivers of conflicts. The land issue is seen both as a cause and a consequence of Liberia's civil war, with the potential to fuel renewed frictions. In this view, prioritising land issues is of national political and socio-economic significance.

To address the serious land issue that the country faces, the Governance Commission of Liberia has held consultative sessions to identify difficulties and possible solutions.[63] Results of the consultation reveal that many Liberians consider land to be

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[59] UN-Habitat. (2014). *Liberia Housing Profile*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

[60] UN-Habitat. (2017). *Liberia Housing Profile*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

[61] Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme. (2017). *4th Programme Steering Committee Meeting Report*. Monrovia.

[62] Cobbett, William. (2017, February). *Opening remarks: Toward a city development strategy*. Presented at the Greater Monrovia City Forum, Monrovia, Liberia.

one of their few possessions. However, due to poor authenticity of tribal certificates and land deeds, securing ownership of land is a lengthy and unreliable process for many citizens. Liberia is ranked 176th out of 183 countries in terms of ease and cost of registering property, according to the indicators from the *Doing Business 2012* by World Bank. Less than 20 per cent of the country's land is privately titled and registered.[64] While many suffer from overcrowded living condition and insecurity of land tenure, unutilised land parcels and land magnates are prevalent especially in the urban areas. Poverty and insecure tenure together contribute to illegal land occupation, which needs to be carefully addressed while taking into account the squatters' contributions to the complex urban economy to avoid forced eviction. Boundary disputes are widespread between counties, communities and units.[65] People are unmotivated to invest in the land market due to poor security of tenure.

Resolving the land issue in Liberia requires establishing an accountable land management system to address land documentation and registration, speculative occupation, land rights and more. For instance, the paper-based deed registration system needs to be simplified and digitised to avoid fraudulent documents and disarray, and improve the efficiency of land management.[66] Eventually, the land system could provide conclusive decisions on land disputes and be protected by legislation to increase its accountability, thus attracting higher rates of property registration and tax. Between 2013 to 2015, the Government of Sweden supported UN-Habitat through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) to undertake the Tribal Certificate Inventory (TCI) process in four counties: Bong, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount and Montserrado. The fieldwork established a total of 4,751 vetted tribal certificates covering 26 districts (94 clans). The NUP for Liberia could facilitate high-level consensus-building that economic growth and tenure security are complementary rather than conflicting in national development. It could also recognise the emergence of a Land Authority as a step towards addressing the institutional challenges.

3.7 Environment and Coastal Erosion

Low standard residential units in Monrovia's coastal area that are susceptible to sea erosion, Feb 2017 © UN-Habitat/Runze Wang

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[63] Governance Commission of Liberia. (2008). *Reigonal Constultative Report on Land and Property Right*.

[64] Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia. Page 6.

[65] UN-Habitat. (2017). *Liberia Housing Profile*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

[66] UN-Habitat. (2017). *Liberia Housing Profile*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

The extraction-based industries (e.g. timber, mineral, rubber, oil) and agriculture fundamentally shape Liberia's economic landscape and link it closely with environment and natural resources. This dependence on natural ecosystem for livelihood is especially important for people living in poverty. Unsustainable development would mean not merely environmental degradation, but depletion of resources and possible disaster that could destruct the ecosystem on which many depend to make a living.[67] Numerous environmental challenges such deforestation, biodiversity and water degradation, flooding, coastal erosion, unprocessed waste disposal all have the potential to derail the nation's development and economy.

Coastal erosion has been identified by many communities as one of the most pressing matters endangering cities along the 580 km coastline.[68] In West Point, one of Monrovia's most densely populated informal settlements that is home to

75,000 people, erosion is causing the shoreline to recede, inevitably leading to the destruction of the local economy and relocation. Other coastal cities and townships including Robertsport, Buchanan, Greenville and Harper (Map 11) face the same challenge. As a direct impact of climate change and sequential sea-level rise, the rate of costal erosion can be lowered by curbing unsustainable human activities that exacerbate climate change. In addition, strict control of sand mining can be effective along with other erosion control methods. A resettlement plan is also necessary for communities in urgent need of relocation.

MAP 11
Major Cities, Liberia

GIS Data Source: Cities Alliance Liberia Country Programme and Natural Earth (www.naturalearthdata.com)

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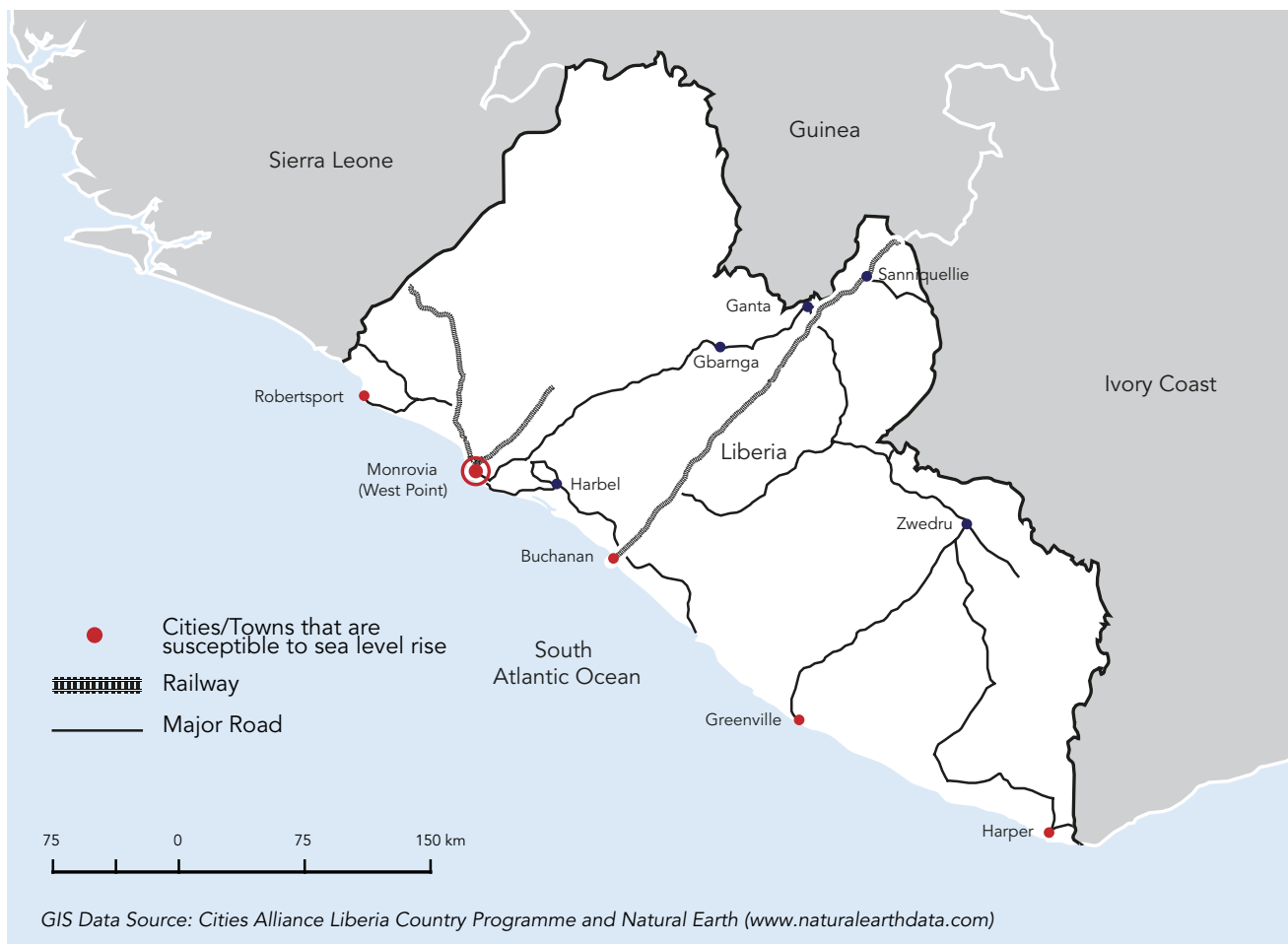
[67] Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia.

[68] UN-Habitat. (2017). *Consultative Meeting Report on the Development of a National Urban Policy for Liberia*.

3.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has covered Liberia's major urbanisation challenges and opportunities. The prolonged civil conflicts have hindered a third of the young population from accessing education. Poor access to education directly contributes to gaps in human resource and skill development, leading to unemployment and job insecurity. Subsequent deterioration of the urban economy triggers spiralling urban poverty, which is expressed in the forms of low income and consumption, poor health and nutrition. Additionally, informal settlements and inadequate housing, ambiguous land tenure, poor infrastructure and basic services, and environmental degradation along the coastal must also be addressed. This chapter argues that all these urban challenges are interconnected, and thus a strategic initiative that involves all urban actors to jointly tackle the country's different urbanisation challenges is needed.

4 DEVELOPING A NATIONAL URBAN POLICY FOR LIBERIA

The process of developing a NUP involves research, analysis, consultation and consolidation to translate political will into programmes and implementable actions towards a more prosperous urban future for Liberia. This requires the formulation of the policy to be a deliberate government-led process during which urban actors from both public and private sector can establish a shared vision for the desired urbanisation. To ensure the quality of the policy, UN-Habitat suggests five phases for the NUP process:

1. Feasibility;
2. Diagnostic;
3. Formulation;
4. Implementation; and
5. Monitoring and evaluation.

The first stage of the NUP development process in Liberia has thoroughly covered the feasibility phase. The second stage of UN-Habitat activities in Liberia intends to incorporate both the diagnostic and formulation phases (Figure 25). This chapter provides customised and implementable recommendations to the second stage based on the findings described in the previous chapters.

4.1 Proposed Focus Areas and Overarching Interventions

Based on the analysis of the preceding chapters, **ten focus areas** have been distilled as the crucial gaps that the NUP for Liberia could bridge and prioritise. However, further screening and analysis of the focus areas will be conducted in the next development phase through a deepened diagnostic to narrow down specifics for effective ministerial coordination and strategic implementation. In principle, the crafting of the ten focus areas aligns with the Liberia National Vision 2030 and major global agendas such as the New Urban Agenda, which is agreed by all member states as the new framework that prescribes how cities could be planned and managed to best promote sustainable urbanisation.

1. **Strengthening small and intermediate cities** by implementing integrated, polycentric, and balanced territorial development policies and plans, along with capacity building for municipal governments.

FIGURE 25
NUP Process by UN-Habitat
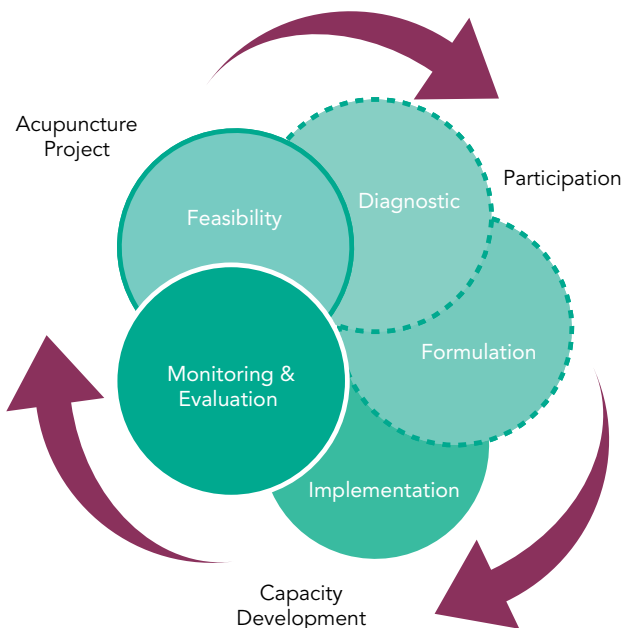
Promoting administrative and financial devolution, and encouraging connectivity and cooperation between cities and towns.[69] Such measures will increase the role of small and intermediate cities and towns in enhancing food security and nutrition systems, securing access to sustainable, affordable, adequate, resilient, and safe housing, infrastructure, and services, while reducing urban and territorial disparities. Impartial national development process will enhance "balanced growth countrywide" by the Liberia National Vision 2030.[70]

2. **Focusing on the Greater Monrovia District** given its unequivocal significance and contribution to the political, economic and cultural realms of the country. Emphasis could be on employment and job creation, poverty reduction and urban economy, infrastructure, housing and slums, land tenure, and coastal erosion that were identified as massive urban development challenges to the metropolis. The peripheral expansion of Monrovia could be managed in the interests of encouraging higher density and more integrated urban development.[71]

3. **Encouraging spatial development strategies** that consider the need to guide Liberia's urban extension, prioritising urban renewal by planning for the provision of accessible and well-connected public spaces, infrastructure and services, sustainable population densities, and compact design and integration of new neighbourhoods in the urban fabric while preventing urban sprawl and marginalisation.[72]

4. **Restoring infrastructure and basic services** could be recognised as a pillar of action during Liberia's urban rehabilitation to ensure the effective functioning of cities, and allows for cost and resource efficiencies. Providing equal access for all to sustainable and resilient infrastructure and adequate services could be the pursuit, with special focus on making great strides in transport, energy, water, waste management, sanitation and health, food security, historic and culture presentation. The interventions to improve the health of people living in informal settlements could be emphasised

as an active, effective approach to trigger bottom-up willingness and initiatives for improving health and living conditions.

5. **Prioritising education and employment** as an ultimate solution to lift people out of urban poverty by empowering them with knowledge, skills and decent work. This can be approached by improving education attainment, informal employment and addressing underemployment, regulating rural-urban migration, stopping gender inequality, and child labour. Additionally, improving training in urban planning is fundamental to ensuring sustainable urbanisation across the country.

6. **Emphasising land and housing** as the fundamentals of urban composition to secure land tenure and reposition housing at the centre of urban development as an opportunity rather than a burden. This will involve institutionalising the mechanisms for land identification, administration and management, as well as mobilising multi-sectorial collaboration to revolve the complicated challenge of housing and informal settlements, and promote the operationalisation of a National Housing Policy. It is bound to be more cost-effective and less socially disruptive to plan ahead for urbanisation than having to redevelop or relocate informal settlements after they have been established.[73]

7. **Recognising the significance and relevance of the environment** to Liberia's urban economy and overall prosperity. More emphasis could be given to natural resource constraints, ecological vulnerabilities of cities and towns, climate change mitigation and adaptation, potentially destructive national and man-made environmental deteriorations in Liberia such as coastal erosion, sea-level rise, flooding, water degradation and deforestation.

8. **Reinforcing demographic planning, regulation and monitoring** to moderate the fertility rate, urban population growth rate, dependency ratio, composition and distribution. This could contribute to realising and harnessing the demographic dividend and accelerated national urban

[69]   UN-Habitat. (2014). *The Evolution of National Urban Policies: A Global Overview*. Nairobi. Page 81.

[70]   Government of Liberia. (2012). *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Toward Liberia RISING 2030*. Monrovia.

[71]   UN-Habitat. (2014). *The Evolution of National Urban Policies: A Global Overview*. Nairobi. Page 80.

[72]   United Nations. (2016). *New Urban Agenda*. Quito. Article 52.

[73]   UN-Habitat. (2014). *The Evolution of National Urban Policies: A Global Overview*. Nairobi. Page 81.

economic growth. The existing allocation of population need to be respected. Meanwhile, analysis of each county's constraints and potential could provide feasible recommendations on how to tactically guide and manage the distribution of population and resources. Data collection needs to be strengthened, with reinforced communication mechanism between the census departments and the actual users of data to improve the procedure of information requesting and sharing.

9. **Promoting jurisdictional coordination and policy coherence** by setting out clear roles and responsibilities for all spheres of government and for public participation as applied to effective and transparent urbanisation and urban management. Supporting institutionalised mechanisms for sharing and exchanging data, information, knowledge and expertise to formulate, implement, enhance, integrate, manage, monitor, and evaluate public policies for sustainable urban development. Private and public partnership could be strengthened as a practical urban financing mechanism to fill the gap of resource provision.

10. **Institutionalising political, financial, technical and participatory mechanisms** for developing, discussing, disseminating and implementing the NUP for Liberia. It is suggested to provide a permanent framework for urban dialogue such as regular National Urban Forums to involve all urban development actors in public consultation, capacity development, and sharing of good practices, which are conducive to systems improvements and institutional learning.

While framing a focused and selective NUP for Liberia under the guidance of the ten recommendations above, **three overarching interventions** could centre on:

I. The Policy must be **forward-looking**, taking into account of medium and long-term demographic projections with geographic disaggregation and their potential impact on future urban growth.

II. The Policy must focus on **poverty reduction** by promoting urban livelihoods and employment in cities and towns, aiming to eradicate the persistence of multiple forms of poverty, and the growing inequalities and environmental degradation.

III. The Policy must always consider **cross-cutting issues** including climate change, gender equality, human rights and youth that are relevant to all aspects of sustainable development.

4.2 Proposed Development Process and Roadmap

To transform urbanisation activities and outcomes into prosperity for all, the process shall be guided by short, medium and long-term measures. In the context of the NUP for Liberia, there are three major stages:

i. **Stage 1 – (2015-2017): Feasibility (short term)**
Expected Accomplishments:

1. Making the case for the policy

2. Identifying key facts and figures

3. Sourcing support for undertaking the policy

4. Understanding the context

ii. **Stage 2 – (2018-2021): Diagnostic and Formulation (medium term)**
Expected Accomplishments:

1. Mapping and analysis of key actors and stakeholders

2. Screening the issues the policy will address

3. Defining policy goals

4. Evaluating different policy options (for achieving the goals)

5. Formulating policy proposal (for ways forward) and strengthening consensus

6. Assessing human, financial and institutional capacity

7. Considering the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework

iii. **Stage 3 – (2021-2050): Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation (long term)**
Expected Accomplishments:

1. Undertaking implementation analysis of the legislative and administrative landscapes

2. Developing implementation plan (including timeline, delegating roles and responsibilities)

3. Facilitating the decentralisation and devolution of financial and governance power to ensure capacity of the local governments in implementing the policy

4. Streamlining M&E in the policy

5. Ensuring M&E exists throughout the policy process

6. Clarifying the difference between evaluating outcome and process

7. Considering how policy evaluation can lead to institutional learning

The roadmap below (Figure 26) captures the key activities in the development process of NUP for Liberia, from the feasibility phase (Stage 1) to diagnostic and formulation phases (Stage 2).

Thorough and recent sources of information on demography and urban development are crucial to the projection of future urban trends that could determine strategies to meet people's needs. For Liberia, the hypotheses are proposed in the context of insufficient urban data and outdated statistics. Though qualitative data was collected through other means such as consultations, workshops and validation, it is recommended that the government put in place a mechanism to promote the collective identification of performance indicators and develop tools to guide common planning and participatory monitoring of the transformation of urban systems at national, county and district levels. In addition, the decennial census carried by LISGIS could be designed with wide consultation with urban actors to ensure the consideration of key urban indicators.

Post implementation, it is recommended that the NUP be reviewed every five years to maintain its relevance and institutional support. Relevant public institutions, private sectors, development partners and the civil society need to be informed and involved in the process. The institution tasked to undertake the review could propose a plan prior to the beginning of the process, with the considerations for both internal and external factors:

- Internal factors: changes to institutional organisational structures, information technology based systems, improvement of coordination mechanisms at national and local levels, and strategy and plans of the ministry in charge of urbanisation.

FIGURE 26
Roadmap for the Development of a NUP for Liberia

2015 Jun	First National Urban Forum (NUF) for launching	Feasibility Phase
2016 Jan	Ebola concluded in Liberia	
Jun	National Habitat Committee (NHC) set up / Workshop: Awareness and Consultation	
Aug	Technical Support Team (TST) established	
2017 Feb	Workshop: Training and Policy Dialogue	
Apr | Jun	Three Validations: Discussion Paper	
Oct	Liberia General Election 2017	
2018	Drafting the Diagnostic Paper	Diagnostic Phase
2019	Organizing Regional Stakeholders Workshops Drafting a Country-wide Diagnostic Paper Organising a Diagnostic Clinic Session Organising a NUF to validate the Diagnostic Paper	
	Organising a Youth Forum	
2020	Drafting the NUP for Liberia	Formulation Phase
	Drafting the Action Plan for IImplementation	
	Drafting the Legal Framework	
2021	Drafting the Financial Framework	
	Organising a NUF for NUP validation Final NUP to the Cabinet for review and approval	
	Launch of the NUP for Liberia	

- External factors: changes to institutional arrangements, regulatory authorities in charge of urban planning and housing, and changes to government medium- and long-term policy.

4.3 Proposed Outline of the Diagnostic Framework and National Urban Policy

A **Diagnostic Framework** is a main product of the Diagnostic Phase of the NUP development process. Key contents of such Framework could include:

> **BOX 3 Proposed Outline of the Diagnostic Framework for the Development for Liberia**
>
> 1. Executive Summary
> 2. Rationale, Vision/Purpose, Values and Principles
> 3. Context Assessment and Background
>   a. Urbanisation Overview: Drivers, Trends and Projections
>   b. Spatial and Population Dynamics Analysis
>   c. Urban Legislation and Regulations
>   d. Urban Planning: Implementation Tools and Enforceability
>   e. Housing Policies and Regulations
>   f. Infrastructure and Basic Services
>   g. Energy and Industrialisation Prospects
>   h. Urban Economy and Municipal Finances
>   i. Proposal for System of Cities
>   j. Cross-cutting Issues of Strategic Importance
> 4. Recommendations for Action, Strategies and Roadmap
>   a. Prospective Analysis and Recommended Options
>   b. Strategies for Effective Development, Implementation and Monitoring of the Policy
>   c. Roadmap for Developing and Implementing the Policy
> 5. Conclusions and Next Steps
> 6. Annexes

Key contents of the **NUP** for Liberia could be, among others:

> **BOX 4 Proposed Outline of the National Urban Policy for Liberia**
>
> 1. Executive Summary
> 2. Introduction
>   a. Background
>   b. Demographic Trends and Institutional Landscape
>   c. The Need for NUP
>   d. Vision, Objectives and Principles
> 3. Policy Pillars and Measures (e.g. Land Regulations)
> 4. Planning Models and Standards Framework
> 5. Regulatory Planning Framework
> 6. Financing and Investment Framework
> 7. Expected Achievements
> 8. Action and Implementation Plan
> 9. Risk Analysis and Mitigations
> 10. Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms
> 11. Annexes

4.4 Institutional Setups and Steps

The following institutional setups and steps are proposed to safeguard the political and technical support in developing the NUP for Liberia:

1. **Setting up a National Steering Committee** as a part of the National Habitat Committee (set up in June 2016), which plays a key role in realising the much-desired collaboration, coordination, coherence and networking for maximum resources utilisation and impact. The Steering Committee could be chaired by the Minister of Internal Affairs and include the Permanent Secretaries of other relevant ministries as well as representatives of urban stakeholders from various areas to safeguard its participatory nature. The role

of this Committee is to act as the political supervision and decision-making organ throughout the development process of the policy. The Committee could limit the number of members to ensure effective communication and decision making, and meet at least three times in the beginning – for a mid-term review and before the final validation conference of the policy.

2. **Establishing a Technical Support Team** functionally linked with the National Habitat Committee (established in August 2016). The Team could be coordinated by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and supported by UN-Habitat, and compose technical focal points as nominated by members of the National Steering Committee. The technical focal points could comprise qualified professionals and experts (both nationals and internationals) working either part-time or full-time on the formulation of the policy through conducting data collection, reviewing relevant documents and sectorial policies, conducting interviews and missions, drafting the Policy collaboratively and reporting the results to the National Steering Committee in a progressive manner.

3. **Submitting the final NUP to the Cabinet** by the Chair of the National Steering Committee for final review and approval, after integrating inputs received from the validation of the national consultation.

4.5 Capacity and Consensus Building

The development process of the NUP could enlist the participation of all Liberians, to provide essential training and ensure that the policy is accepted by all. Having people participate in formulation of their own policies creates a strong sense of ownership for them to promote and implement the policies. With sufficient engagements from local communities during consultations, the policy stands for a better chance of reflecting the actual needs of the people, thereby achieving extra attention and support. Key events for capacity training and consensus building are:

1. **Organising at least three national consultations (e.g. National Urban Forums)** including all relevant urban stakeholders. The first consultation was undertaken in the beginning of the policy by launching the formulation process (June 2015). The second is expected to take place at the end of the Diagnostic Phase to validate the Diagnostic Paper. The third consultation should be at the end to validate the final draft of the policy. Regular National Urban Forums to maintain the dialogue on urbanisation is recommended.

2. **Organising thematic and sectorial workshops/seminars** for training, debate, and dialogue during the preparation and formulation process of the policy, to enhance capacity of urban actors and consult horizontally and vertically to draft

Consultative Workshop: Participants of the Policy Dialogue on Policies Coherence and Integrated Planning on 10 February 2017 © UN-Habitat

NUP Discussion Paper Validation Session: Participants of the 2nd General Assembly of Mayors on 21 April 2017 © UN-Habitat

policy that reflects the reality and people's expectations. Media (e.g. TV, radio and social media) attention could be attracted throughout the process to raise public awareness, participation and support.

By promoting a more participatory policy formulation process, the first feasibility stage of the NUP created abundant activities for public involvement in the forms of national urban forum, awareness raising campaigns, training sessions, policy dialogue and consultative workshops.

Additionally, three special sessions (listed below) with diverse participants ranging from mayors to young planners and urban poor community representatives were arranged for validation.

Selective meeting results are captured in Appendix 2.

1. Friday, 21 April 2017:
Discussion Paper Validation by **City Mayors** at the 2nd General Assembly of the Association of Mayors & Local Government Authorities of Liberia

2. Tuesday, 30 May 2017:
Discussion Paper Validation by **Urban Poor Community and Urban Working Poor Associations**

3. Thursday, 1 June 2017:
Discussion Paper Validation by **Network of Young Professionals**

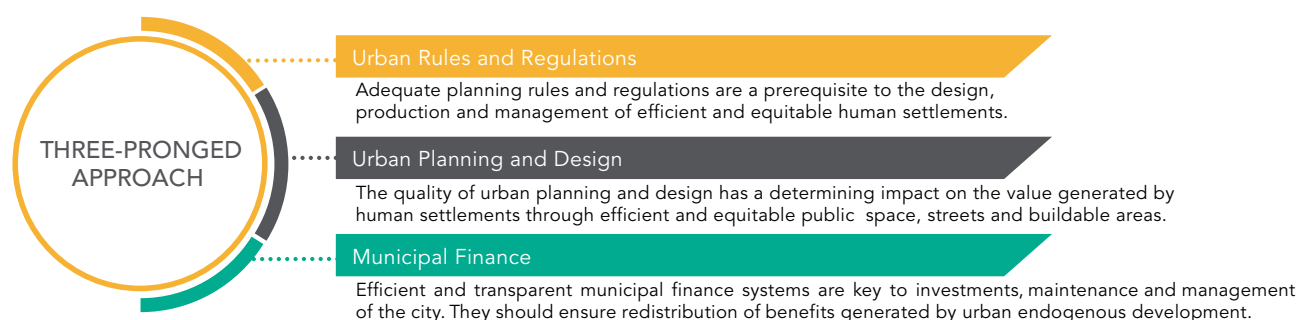## 4.6 Risk Analysis and Implementation

The main risks in the development process have been identified, including difficult implementation, unstable financial support, complicated policy, inadequate political support, and inadequate human resources. It is particularly important to take political and social risks from the Liberian general election in October 2017 into account. These uncertainties could pose considerable risks to the development of the policy for Liberia (Figure 27). To mitigate the risks and safeguard the effective implementation of the policy, it is recommended that the implementation plan

FIGURE 27
Identified Main Risks to the Development of a NUP for Liberia

Source: Cities Alliance

FIGURE 28
Three-Pronged Approach

Urban Rules and Regulations
Adequate planning rules and regulations are a prerequisite to the design, production and management of efficient and equitable human settlements.

Urban Planning and Design
The quality of urban planning and design has a determining impact on the value generated by human settlements through efficient and equitable public space, streets and buildable areas.

Municipal Finance
Efficient and transparent municipal finance systems are key to investments, maintenance and management of the city. They should ensure redistribution of benefits generated by urban endogenous development.

consider three empirical and pragmatic aspects that are in accordance with the Three-Pronged Approach,[74] including: 1) legal framework; 2) urban planning and design; and 3) financial framework and governance.

Urban planning and design refers to the physical plan and design of urban areas which could secure adequate space for streets and efficient street network, sufficient density that is the premise of effective resource-sharing, mixed land-use for urban economy and social mix, and necessary zoning specialisation.

The second essential pillar for executing the policy is a sound financial plan with proper budgeting, revenue generation and expenditure management. Municipal finance authorities (e.g. the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning) could take the lead in translating urban development policies and plans into applicable financial strategies with revenues required for implementation, while considering the political and financial capacity of Liberia.

Main sources of funding to be explored include:

i. Traditional financing approach through taxes, fees, levies and short-term private savings. On the other hand, there are funds from development partners and minor investments of private sector.

ii. Use of insurance and pension funds, trust and private equity funds, public-community's collaboration, public-private partnerships, diaspora, medium- and long-term private savings, sovereign bonds and sovereign wealth funds.

The third pillar is an enabling legal framework, which provides rules and regulations that have the power to shape the form and character of cities by directly influencing the implementation and evolution of urban development plans. Therefore, special attention must be given to legal feasibility and implementability of all components of the policy.

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74 UN-Habitat. (2017). *Economic Foundations for Sustainable Urbanisation: A Study on Three-Pronged Approach*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

CONCLUSION

Liberia emerged from its prolonged civil war with its current GDP reaching levels near the peak before the conflicts. However, rapid economic recovery has not been accompanied by a similar improvement in the conditions and quality of life in cities.

This paper is aligned with the national development framework Liberia Vision 2030 and its complementary five-year strategic development plan Agenda for Transformation, aiming to operationalise and implement the national propositions through an urban approach. It also suggested that the NUP process in Liberia be aligned with major global agendas including the SDGs (particularly SDG-11) , the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework and the African Agenda 2063 Framework.

Its findings include that urbanisation across the country continues to accelerate, but not necessarily in a planned manner. It identified numerous urban challenges and opportunities in Liberia, and advanced a better understanding of the Liberian context including the appreciation of the population status and trends. Liberia's high fertility rate (4.7 by 2014) and the subsequent large young population (42 per cent of Liberians were under 15 years of age by 2008) burdens the national urban economy with a considerable dependent population and greater demand for supporting facilities and resources. Rural-to-urban migration has aggregated the population pressure in urban areas and continuously added pressure to the capacity of Liberian cities to perform effectively. In addition, the distribution of population is spatially skewed, with 75.4 per cent of total population living in six of 15 counties. The capital city Monrovia accommodates 56.7 per cent of the national urban population.

Apart from demographic dynamics, this paper explored the institutional arrangements and existing sectorial policies to understand the administrative and legislative environments that the NUP would be developed under. The Government of Liberia adopts the separation of powers with three branches including legislature, executive and judiciary. The executive consists of 19 functional ministries, and over a dozen specialised agencies and commissions. Analysis of their institutional urban functions and respective policy focus indicated overlapping and interwoven urban roles and responsibilities. With overall insufficiency of resource and capacity post-conflict, consolidating financial and technical assets to address common urban threats was suggested. The significant roles of international development partners and importance of inclusive urban governance were also recognised.

The paper further dissected pivotal urban issues that hinder sustainable and efficient urbanisation in Liberia. The major urban challenges identified include a post-war education deficit, underemployment and job insecurity, prevailing urban poverty, insufficient and lack-of-repair infrastructure (e.g. road system), inadequate basic services especially in the slums, gaps in decent housing provision, informal settlements and the implications in health, insecure land tenure and subsequent investment loss, environmental issues such as coastal erosion which may endanger numerous coastal cities. Essentially, urban challenges are interconnected and inseparable, thus requiring a collaborative approach that rallies all urban stakeholders to address them.

It proposed **ten policy focus areas** for further consideration in the next NUP development phase (Box 1). Additionally, **three overarching interventions** are proposed to ensure that the policy would be I) forward-looking, II) focusing on poverty reduction, and III) considering cross-cutting issues. It laid out a development process and roadmap together with key institutional setups, steps and events, to summarise achievements and guide future actions in the short, medium and long term. Potential risks in the current Liberian context were also considered. Implementation through the Three-Pronged Approach (legal framework, urban planning and design, and financial framework and governance) were recommended to frame the future NUP for Liberia.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Questionnaire: participating the formulation of the National Urban Policy for Liberia

1. What is an appropriate **definition** of "urban" in the Liberian context?

2. What **benefits** could Liberia derive from a more carefully planned and coordinated urbanisation process?

3. What shared **vision, objectives and guiding principles** could be identified for the Policy for Liberia with a 20-30 year horizon?

4. What **concrete options** could be proposed for harnessing the urban future of Monrovia, for the intermediate cities and towns, and for the smaller urban settlements of Liberia?

5. Which **key sectors** could the Policy cover and what **institutional arrangements** could improve policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation?

6. How could the **scope of a national spatial framework** be for Liberia, showing the functional complementarity and interdependence of cities, towns and rural areas?

7. How could we make sure that the Policy is **understood and assimilated** by the different stakeholders?

8. How could **resources** be mobilised and effective partnerships be established to implement the Policy?

9. What **research** could be undertaken to inform, improve and guide the Policy implementation (e.g. getting a better understanding of the country's urban dynamics, and related migration processes; the socio-economic functions, productivity and footprint of cities and towns; land speculation and related urban sprawl; the legal and regulatory context; key environmental issues; etc.)?

Appendix 2

Response by Majors of Liberia to the Questionnaire - Q&A Session on the National Urban Policy Discussion Paper presentation made by MIA/UN-Habitat during the 2nd General Assembly of the Association of Mayors & Local Government Authorities of Liberia (AMLOGAL) held at Bentol City, Montserrado County on Friday, April 21, 2017

1. What is an appropriate **definition** of "urban" in the Liberian context?

   a. Urban is dynamic and the 8.5 miles' radius given to city status will fall short soon due to the increase in population and rapid urbanisation - **Pleebo City Mayor**

   b. Urban is based on functional criterions that involved the economic (industries, employment, productivity, etc.), basic services (clean household water supply, waste management, electricity, basic communication services), and clean environment - **Monrovia, Paynesville & Buchanan Cities Mayors**

   c. Urban means population centres - **Voinjama City Mayor**

2. What **benefits** could Liberia derive from a more carefully planned and coordinated urbanisation process?

   a. Regulating rural to urban migration - **Plebo City Mayor**

   b. Meeting international urban settlement standards - **Harper City Mayor**

   c. Attracting investment/investors - **Cestor City Mayor**

   d. Increasing development and job security - **Ganta City Mayor**

3. What shared **vision, objectives and guiding principles** could be identified for the Policy with a 20-30 year horizon?

   a. NUP could drive the development of cities to align with the modern cities standard - **Buchanan City Mayor**

   b. Providing the road map for standard basic services provision - **Tubmanburg City Mayor**

c. Improving health care delivery system - **Voinjama City Mayor**

d. Driving national economic development beginning in urban centres - **Foya City Mayor**

4. What **concrete options** could be proposed for harnessing the urban future of Monrovia, for the intermediate cities and towns, and for the smaller urban settlements of Liberia?

   a. Job creation & Job Security - **Tubmanburg City Mayor**

   b. Decentralisation of public/functional/economic activities & investment opportunities across/within urban centers - **Ganta City Mayor**

   c. Administrative Autonomy could be respected - **Buchanan City Mayor**

   d. Proliferation of adjacent autonomous Local Government Authorities (LGAs) around Monrovia could minimised and or controlled - **Monrovia City Mayor**

5. Which **key sectors** could the NUP cover and what **institutional arrangements** could improve policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation?

   a. Waste - **Gbarnga City Mayor**

   b. Urban/Spatial Planning - **Fishtown City Mayor**

   c. Health - **Zwedru City Mayor**

   d. Transport - **Cestor City Mayor**

   e. Energy - **Monrovia City Mayor**

   f. Water & Sanitation - **Greenville City Mayor**

6. How could the **scope of a national spatial framework** be for Liberia, showing the functional complementarity and interdependence of cities, towns and rural areas?

   a. Road improvement and development to ease access across Liberia to improve internal trade between rural and urban settlements - **Gbarnga City Mayor**

   b. Prioritise/preserve historic/heritage, traditional/cultural & natural spaces to attract & promote eco-tourism - **Foyah City Mayor**

   c. Mayors & Local Government Authorities could have base & Cadastral maps on human settlements layout

7. How could we make sure that the NUP is **understood and assimilated** by the different stakeholders?

   a. Public awareness and education for community & social mobilisation - **Monrovia City Mayor**

   b. Inclusive participation of Local Government Authorities - **Sanniquellie City Mayor**

   c. Regional/Sectoral consultations-everything could not be Monrovia - **Kakata City Mayor**

   d. Knowledge management, e.g. storage, sharing and documentation of best practices and lessons - **Fish Town City Mayor**

   e. Local/internal exchanges and promotion of city-to-city cooperation - **Robertsport City Mayor**

8. How could **resources** be mobilised and effective partnerships be established to implement the NUP?

   a. Taxation and loans - **Cestor City**

   b. Enforcing city ordinance regulations - **Kakata City Mayor**

   c. Capacity building - **Paynesvile City Cooperation**

   d. Enhancement of cities autonomy- **Greenville City Mayor**

9. What **research** could be undertaken to inform, improve and guide the NUP implementation (e.g. getting a better understanding of the country's urban dynamics, and related migration processes; the socio-economic functions, productivity and footprint of cities and towns; land speculation and related urban sprawl; the legal and regulatory context; key environmental issues; etc.)?

   a. Citizens survey at the municipal level - **Plebo City Mayor**

   b. Data collection at city and urban settlement level to track/capture all activities - **Kakata City Mayor**

   c. Database set-up at cities level - **Buchanan City Cooperation**

   d. Comprehensive spatial and functional database at the central government level to coordinate all cities information and data collection - **Paynesville City Cooperation**

Appendix 3

Agencies, Commissions and Function in Urban Development

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
Central Bank of Liberia (CBL)	• Macroeconomic frameworks/policies/programs for the urban economy and financial services for the urban poor and micro lending • Mortgage and housing finance and real estate property • Custodian of micro finance policy and publisher of quarterly statistical bulletin on the economy
Civil Service Agency	• Civil service • Human resources, service delivery, effectiveness and efficiency of the Service • Recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, and career development of civil servants
Electricity Corporation	• City power grid • Household connections • Street lighting • Block mapping, etc.
Forestry Development Authority	• Urban afforestation tree planting, • Urban green cover • Garden & parks • Fire hydrants, etc.
General Services Agency	
Governance Commission	• GoL reform, modernisation & repositioning of public sector institutions for effectiveness and efficiency • Decentralisation policies/programs (transfer of responsibilities from central to local)
Institute for Public Administration	• Training, consultancy & research
Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)	• Conduct national population & housing census every 10 years and last census was 2008 • Authoritative source on national statistical data & information
Land Authority	• Land reform and dispute mechanisms • Developed urban policy • Conducted urban land inventory in 3 urban centres in collaboration with UN-Habitat • Hosted 1st National Urban Conference of 2010 • Co-hosted National Urban Forum of 2015
National Fires Services	• Urban and industrial disaster response
National Housing Authority	• Urban housing/shelter policies/programs for the low-income & social housing groups • Custodian of National Housing Policy with no regulatory authority. • Provides data on land price, housing in compliance, occupancy types, etc.

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
National Investment Commission	• Investment promotion for manufacturing/service industries in urban centres for value addition • Diversification • employment etc.
National Police	• Urban crime & safety response
National Social Security & Welfare Corporation	• Financial support to public sector investment in urban housing for the low-income groups • Custodian of government shares with Shelter-Afrique a pan African body for housing and urban development in Africa
Telecommunications Authority/ Corporation	
WASH Consortium	• Umbrella group for informal water, sanitation and hygiene issues such wells, hand-pumps and open defecation in urban centres • Forum for collaboration, coordination networking, monitoring and reporting • Sets agenda for National WASH board headed by the President • Coordinates the JSRs/SPRs
Water & Sewer Corporation	• Urban households water supply & sewer connection services • Fire water hydrants

Appendix 4

Ministries, Functions in Urban Development and Sectorial Policies

MINISTRIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS	SECTORIAL POLICIES	OBJECTIVES OF POLICIES
Agriculture	• Urban agriculture & food security in urban centres • Coordinates and implements pilot/demonstration project in urban agriculture	Urban Agriculture Policy	
Commerce & Industry	• Urban poor productive livelihoods • Promotes micro small medium enterprises (MSMEs) development in the informal urban economy • Ensures cooperation and harmony between municipal authorities and street vendors • Custodian of the MSME policy	National Micro Small Medium Enterprise Policy	To stimulate the informal urban economy, set standards small-scale enterprises, promote local economic development, influence pro-poor banking policies (financial inclusion), mediate conflict between street sellers & municipal authorities, etc.
Defence	• Urban health emergencies/ urban violence control • Military barracks facilities/coastal pollution defence • Civil works construction/urban waste removal		

MINISTRIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS	SECTORIAL POLICIES	OBJECTIVES OF POLICIES
Education	• Education facilities reconstruction • Overall education attainment improvement • Education system management	National Policy on Girls' Education	To consolidate national and international laws to promote girls' education and to advance priorities that will accelerate progress in improving girls' education
Finance & Development Planning	• Financial resource allocation/ leveraging for urban sector public sector investment and development • Formulates and implements national budget • Collects property taxes on behalf of MCC • Donor Aid coordination and management • Alignment of physical/spatial planning with socio-economic planning • Focal point for sectoral and regional planning perspectives		
Foreign Affair	• Foreign investment mobilisation • International collaboration coordination • Basic services restoration and coordination with ministries	National Environmental Policy	To ensure a sound management of resources and the environment, and will attempt to avoid any exploitation of these resources in a manner that might cause irreparable damage to the environment.
Gender and Development	• Gender & vulnerable groups mainstreaming in urban policies/ programs • Implements training and safety nets programs	National Gender Policy	To serve as a framework and guideline in mainstreaming gender and empowering women and vulnerable groups in the national development processes. Other objectives are to enhance women's and girls' empowerment for sustainable and equitable development; create and strengthen gender responsive structures, processes and mechanisms for development in which both women and men participate equally, have access to, and benefit from all the country's resources.
Health and Social Welfare	• Urban health issues & environmental sanitation standards and compliance • Undertakes urban water quality testing for wells and hand pumps • Promotes open defecation free (ODF) in urban centres	National Health Policy	To improve child health, maternal health; to increased equitable access to quality health care services; to improve prevention, control and management of major diseases; to improve nutrition status; to increase access to quality social welfare services

MINISTRIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS	SECTORIAL POLICIES	OBJECTIVES OF POLICIES
Information, Culture & Tourism	• Eco-tourism and urban heritage and coordinates government IEC on urban development • Sets standards for private beach operations and conducts movie censorship		
Internal Affairs	• Spatial (city & town) planning but has not perform this function since the war. • Undertakes limited coordination of urban governance and management due logistical and financial constraints • Coordination of urban disaster and management	National Decentralisation Policy	*To promote transfer of authority, duties and responsibilities from the central to the local for inclusive and participatory governance and effective and sustainable basic urban infrastructure and service provision
		National Solid Waste Management Policy	To prescribe conditions for organised domestic/household/non-hazardous waste collection and disposal, set criteria for managing waste disposal sites (landfills, transfer stations, etc.), recommend choice of equipment, etc.
		National Disaster Management Policy	To enhance national and local capacity to minimise vulnerability and disaster risks, prevent, mitigate and prepare for adverse impacts of hazards within the context of sustainable development.
Justice	• Urban land and property adjudication • Advises on urban planning and management legislations • Police protection during mass evictions • Vetting of urban eviction claims for slum upgrading		
Labour	• Urban workforce planning & research • Coordinate human capital development programme	National Employment Policy	Has limited (technical & logistical capacity
Lands, Mines and Energy	• Regulation for urban land and provision of land for urban public sector investment • Renewable energy research and development • Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) issues	Water Supply and Sanitation Policy	To provide guidance and direction in institutional, economic and legal reforms that will lead to improved water governance at national, local and community levels, and improved access to safe water supply and adequate sanitation, in an affordable, sustainable and equitable manner, to all the peoples of Liberia.

MINISTRIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS	SECTORIAL POLICIES	OBJECTIVES OF POLICIES
		National Energy Policy	To lay the foundation for the creation of an enabling environment to attract private sector capital to the energy sector, to restructure and reform energy institutions, to decentralise energy service administration, to fully utilise domestic energy resources and, most importantly, to ensure that all parts of Liberia have access to affordable and modern energy services.
Planning and Economic Affairs	• Overall development planning coordination	National Capacity Development Strategy	To integrate effective approaches to assessing current capacities, identifying required capacities and investing in collaborative initiatives to capitalise upon and further develop capacities in a sustainable manner across the core work of all sectors in Liberia.
		NP on Population for Social and Economic Development	To contribute towards improvement in the quality of life of the people of Liberia. This will be achieved by ensuring a balanced relationship between population factors (growth rate, age and sex composition, migration and urbanisation) and the national capacity to achieve desirable levels of social and economic development.
Public Works	• Physical planning for the urban built environment but overlaps with spatial planning due to the weakness of MIA (i.e., performs limited spatial planning). • Undertakes provision & maintenance of urban infrastructure such as roads, bridges, drainages, etc. • Performs development control duties such as construction in compliance (prevention of makeshift construction) & zoning issues • remit for informal (non-piped) water supply and chairs the WASH sector • Custodian of WASH Policy and Plan and hosts the WASH secretariat		
State	• Highest decision making • Overall public sector coordination		

MINISTRIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS	SECTORIAL POLICIES	OBJECTIVES OF POLICIES
Posts & Telecommunications	• Urban street addressing and house/structure numbering • Coordinates ICT policy	National Communication Policy	
Transport	• Urban transport planning & development issues • Coordinates Transport policy • Regulates transport fares	National Transport Master Plan	To rehabilitate, reconstruct and construct primary/secondary, feeder and neighbourhood roads; improve the transport sector through effective systems and infrastructure for quality service provision; improve urban and rural transport; and build human resource capacity.
Youth and Sports	• Mainstreaming of youths' issues in urban policies/program • Coordinates youth development programs • Custodian of National Youth Policy and lead for TVET • Focal point for NYVC	Revised National Youth Policy	To promote youth participation in the national decision-making process. To provide an appropriate framework that will promote fundamental human rights and protect the health, social, economic and political well-being of all young men and women in order to enhance their participation in the overall development process and improve their quality of life.
		National Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Policy	To promote enrollment levels, social inclusion, availability of artisanal skills, appropriate technologies, livelihoods/poverty reduction, housing conditions, etc.

Appendix 5

Local Government/Public Sector and Functions in Urban Development

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
Monrovia City Corporation (MCC)	• Municipal authority for the City of Monrovia • Performs as agency of government for solid waste management (SWM) and is allocated funds in the national budget for that service alone along with salaries subsidy • Authorise to generate own funds from municipal sources to perform city functions in development control, inspections and IEC • Delivers basic municipal infrastructure and services in Greater Monrovia. These include sanitation facilities (public toilets) and SWM • Has municipal revenue sharing arrangements with some adjoining Local Government Areas (LGAs)
Paynesville City Corporation (PCC)	• Municipal authority for Paynesville City • Receives central government subsidy for minimum SWM and generates own municipal revenues • Autonomous of MIA in national budget • PPP in place for limited primary SWM collection services • Has no revenue sharing agreement with MCC • MCC provides secondary SWM collection services in PCC

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
City Mayors Council	• Functions as an umbrella body for city mayors' cooperation, collaboration and networking • Liberia cities are chartered autonomous entities with own revenue generating powers • Mandate for sanitation, land management (property registry and squatter rights issuance), inspections, planning, etc. • MIA budget for salaries and logistics
Township Commissioners Council	• Functions as an umbrella body for township commissioners' cooperation, collaboration and networking. • Townships are municipal corporate entities with powers to raise own revenues • Five of the eight local authorities of the Monrovia urban agglomeration have revenue sharing agreement with MCC • Custodian of local public properties
County Superintendents Council	• Functions as an umbrella body for county (provincial) superintendents for cooperation, collaboration and networking. • Supervise the service centers of the decentralisation platform • Exercise executive authority in the counties/provinces • Custodian of county public property
Tribal Governors Council	• Functions as umbrella body for tribal governors • Part of inclusive municipal governance institutional arrangements • Role limited to awareness creation and social mobilisation role in basic urban/municipal infrastructure and service delivery
Traditional Leaders council	• Function as the umbrella body for traditional leaders such as paramount, clan and town chiefs predominantly of the rural setting • Serve as custodian of the customary and traditional practices and the land supervision. • Awareness creation and social mobilisation role in rural infrastructure and services provision • Promote rural/urban linkages in movement of persons and goods (agro produce)

Appendix 6

Private Sector and Functions in Urban Development

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
Liberia Chamber of Commerce	• Umbrella body for both big foreign and local businesses and industries • Facilitate the role of cities as centres of trade & commerce • Role in urban land-use and real estate property • Participated in National Urban Forum
Liberia Business Association	• Umbrella body for wholly owned Liberia small-medium businesses and industries • Participate in both the formal and informal urban economies • Role in urban land-use and real estate property • Participated in National Urban Forum and serve on the steering committee of the MCP of Cities Alliance
Liberia Bankers Association	• Umbrella body for bankers to plan and consider financial opportunities for long term financing for mortgage and urban finance and real estate property • Micro-finance lending

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
Liberia Marketing Association	• Organisation for general marketers of the informal urban economy • Operation and management of municipal market buildings and spaces • Private SWM functions • Member of MCP steering committee
National Petty Traders Association	• Organisation for street vendors, hawkers and peddlers • Voice and platform for street vendors, hawkers and peddlers • Affiliate of Street-Net International and member of MCP steering committee
Federation of Road Transport	• Union for transport operators • Operation and management of parking stations in cities • Safe movement of persons and goods

Appendix 7

Academic & Research Institutions and Functions in Urban Development

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
University of Liberia	• School of Regional Science • Civil engineering education • Research & studies
Cuttington University	• Environmental science & public health • Research & studies
Tubman University of Science & Technology	• Engineering education • Research & studies
Stella Maris	• Engineering education • Research & studies
United Methodist University	• N/A
Liberia Research Society	• N/A

Appendix 8

Professional Bodies and Functions in Urban Development

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
Liberia Chamber of Architects (LCA)	• Accreditation • Professional standard & ethics • Negotiation & mediation (social dialogue)
Liberia Engineering Society (LES)	• Accreditation • Profession standard & ethics • Negotiation & mediation (social dialogue)

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
National Surveyors Association	• Accreditation • Professional standard & ethics • Negotiation & mediation (social dialogue)
Association of Local Contractors	• Umbrella body for building and construction contractors • Professional standard & ethics • Social dialogue & collective barging
Liberia National Bar Association	• Planning legislations • Research on local government laws
Liberia Chamber of Architects (LCA)	• Accreditation • Professional standard & ethics • Negotiation & mediation (social dialogue)

Appendix 9

Civil Society & Community Groups and Functions in Urban Development

AGENCIES	CORE URBAN FUNCTIONS
Federation of Liberian Urban Poor Savers (FOLUPS)	• Community profiling • Informal savings groups • Training & Research • Affiliate of Slum/Shack Dwellers International • MCP Steering Member
Association of Urban Poor Communities	• Umbrella of MCC project community management teams CMTs) • Community entry points for MCC projects • Awareness & social marketing • Conflict resolution and mediation
Women NGO Network	• Technical arm of umbrella women groups • Gender mainstreaming • Training & advocacy
Federation of Liberian Youths	• Umbrella body of youths • Advocacy & training • Youth mainstreaming • Implementation of National Youth Policy
WASH Consortium Secretariat	• Coordination • Holds monthly meetings • M&E • Advocacy • Documentation

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After two destructive civil conflicts between 1989 and 2003, Liberia's proactive efforts to revive its economy and development are reflected by the improvements and reconstruction taking place in its cities. However, the disproportionate rate of urbanisation and urban primacy has generated significant challenges which could impede national development. If Liberia is to achieve inclusive economic growth and sustainable urban development, it urgently needs an enabling framework to provide coordination among different sectors and ministries, address urban challenges, and maximise the opportunities offered by urbanisation, while mitigating potential adverse externalities. A National Urban Policy is such a framework and mechanism for coordination.

Developing the Liberia National Urban Policy is expected to coordinate the work of different sectors, establish incentives for more sustainable practices, and spur a balanced system of cities and towns through strengthening urban-rural linkages and equitable resources allocation. This will not only help reduce urban and territorial disparities within and among regions, but also promote institutional collaboration and policy coherence towards achievement of the Liberia National Vision 2030.

To initiate development of a National Urban Policy for Liberia, this Discussion Paper, a key output of the feasibility phase, explains the context in which the policy will operate. The paper is the result of a wide range of research and consultations on the demographic, socio-economic, and physical environment aspects of the country. It also provides preliminary policy recommendations for further analysis in the subsequent NUP development processes. The Paper aims to build consensus with all urban actors on what has been discussed and agreed and to stimulate active support for further diagnostic, policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

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