The Government of the Republic of Rwanda and UN-Habitat have enjoyed a long and fruitful partnership of over 20 years in support of sustainable cities and human settlements development. Since 1994, UN-Habitat has implemented a range of activities in partnership with the Government starting with emergency response and reconstruction and advancing towards a focus on longer term development targets. Examples of specific activities implemented within this framework are outlined below:

- **Emergency Response and Reconstruction**
  - Resettlement of Returnees: Support the Ministry of Infrastructure to implement its national settlement strategies and resettlement programme through resettlement of Rwandan returnees from Tanzania in Bugesera District (2008-2012)

- **Towards Sustainable Development**
  - Environmental protection: urban and environmental assessments to support Kigali Industrial Environmental Management and provide the Government with a framework for building consensus and environmental protection (2005-2006)
  - One Stop Youth Employment and Productive Centre: Supporting the Government of Rwanda to enhance youth engagement in local governance and economic empowerment through skills training, information and dialogue and facilitation of access to opportunities (2008-2012), with plans for replication in 30 districts benefits for women and youth in governance and economic empowerment
  - Capacity Building in Urban Planning and Land Management: training and capacity building for Central and Decentralized Government Entities in Kigali, Rubavu, Ngororero, Nyamasheke, Musanze and Rusizi Districts on urban planning and land management with emphasis on gender equity and urban data collection and management (2008-2012)
  - Water and Sanitation: To increase access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation facilities for poor urban and peri-urban dwellers in Kicukiro and Nyarugenge districts and build capacities among water service providers for best practices application in water demand management (2008-2013)
  - Ecosystem rehabilitation and restoration: rehabilitation and restoration of the ecosystem of the slope of Mount Rubavu destroyed by non-planned housing developments and support the resettlement of the population from Mount Rubavu to Karukogo (2008-2011).
  - Slum upgrading: Slum upgrading by improving basic urban infrastructure (roads, drainage systems, water and sanitation services in Karongi and Rusizi districts (2008-2013).
  - Energy efficiency in buildings, through a sub-regional project sponsored by UNEP through the Global Environment Facility, including trainings and technical assistance to improve building codes.
Since January 2008, UN agencies in Rwanda have created a common planning, implementation and monitoring tool that aligns their activities with national priorities outlined in the vision 2020 and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS). This is part of the Delivering as One UN reform. The on-going One Programme defines the support of the UN in Rwanda along six key results areas, which all contribute towards the achievement of the Millennium development goals.

Under this framework, UN-Habitat is contributing on four key results namely: Governance, Health, Environment and Social Protection. The objectives of UN-HABITAT interventions under the four aligned key results are:

- Building capacity for key actors in urban planning and housing sector (including one stop youth Center)
- Introducing pro-poor access to clean water and proper sanitation facilities.
- Strengthening urban Environmental protection strategies
- Introducing practical approaches for pro-poor access to decent shelter

UN-Habitat has signed a MoU with the Government of Rwanda (GoR) at the World Urban Forum in Naples, Italy, in September 2012. A series of high level meetings between the GoR and UN-Habitat resulting in the launch of the Achieving Sustainable Urban Development (ASUD) initiative in Rwanda to which UN-Habitat is contributing with $1M from Spain. The ASUD programme represents a paradigm shift in the way urbanisation is tackled, which is being promoted by the UN-Habitat Executive Director, and Rwanda has been picked among 5 countries in the world to pilot it.

International experience shows that the potential economic benefits of urbanisation are not spontaneously derived. In order for urbanisation to support Rwanda’s economic transformation into a middle-income country, it must be guided and supported by a National Urbanisation Strategy and adequate spatial/urban planning tools. There is an urgent need for building a new development model of Rwanda based on the real conditions and dynamics at the ground level, and the possibilities offered by a functional, spatially-balanced and interconnected system of urban settlements. For this purpose, the Government of Rwanda needs first to understand where the people are today, where are they going to be in 20-30 years-time, and consequently decide where to invest/develop first and how to organise itself to answer the basic question: “How is Rwanda going to urbanise?”

Three main results have been obtained with the ASUD implementation in Rwanda

1. **The National Urbanisation Policy (NUP).** The NUP document presents the situational analysis, the vision, the principles and the main pillars as well as the policy statements along with the sectoral and cross-sectoral priority actions at the different institutional levels, including the private sector and local communities. The overall goal is to promote quality urban development, which enhances local and national economic growth and ensures a minimum standard of quality of life for all Rwandans. The policy is organized in four main pillars: Coordination, Densification, Conviviality and Productivity.

   In particular, the NUP promotes densification, compactness, an integrated and interconnected system of cities, climate resiliency, social inclusiveness and justice. It focuses on four categories of policy instruments: national land use development plan and urban planning instruments, spatial development framework and structuration of the system of cities, planned city extensions and infill, and cross-sectoral policy implementation.

2. **The Spatial Development Framework (SDF).** In its currently valid EDPRS, 6 secondary cities (Huye, Muhanga, Musanze, Nyagatare, Rusizi, Rubavu) were identified as priority regional centres of growth and investment, with aim to promote a more balanced regional development and opportunities for increased access to off-farm employment for a larger proportion of the rural population. Building
on this prerogative, the SDF aims to propose a well-structured and inter-connected system of urban settlements able to foster adequate urbanisation and satisfy the future needs of the people of Rwanda as a whole.

The SDF supports Kigali City’s main role as the capital of the country with its national and international importance. Meanwhile, the development of gateways cities like Huye, Musanze, Nyagatare, Rubavu, Rusizi and Kirehe, strategically located at cross-border areas, complement well Kigali’s national spatial role and can provide a more geographically distributed economic growth. Importantly, the SDF identifies two Economic Development Zones located west, east and south of Kigali City, composed by a cluster of urban settlements (e.g. Muhanga-Nyanza-Huye), to both support and be supported by the capital city by providing a range of services and opportunities for employment within the urban population and the surrounding rural areas. It also suggests strengthening some medium sized towns such as Byumba, Karongi, Nyamagabe, Nyabihu, Gakenke, Nyamata, Nyamasheke, Gatsibo, etc., as they function as Nodal Towns strategically located at the cross-junctions of the main roads.

3. **Support to urban development in the Secondary Cities.** In coordination with the Rwanda Housing Authority (RHA), UN-Habitat provided substantial technical assistance to support a better development of the six Secondary Towns identified in the EDPRS, through different types of activities: training workshops/modules targeting the municipal leaders and technicians on the following themes: (i) strategic planning and city-wide spatial strategy; (ii) urban patterns and densification; (ii) building in geographical complex areas / risk reduction; (iv) streets and public space development; (v) planning city extensions. A workshop on municipal finance and urban economy is scheduled soon.

Other products under this component are: an analysis of the implications of reaching the 35% urban population target by 2020 was carried out in terms of land, housing units, etc., highlighting the challenges. A detailed urban plan of Rubavu (advanced draft) catering for its future growth and looking into promoting greater connectivity with its surrounding areas, with the support of the Guangzhou Planning Institute (GPI). A draft brochure with planning principles for intermediate cities. A draft densification strategy.

More projects/programmes are complementing the ASUD in Rwanda, namely:

1. **The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme** (PSUP) funded through the ACP-EU mechanism, for which Rwanda has been admitted straight away in the second phase including the following outputs: (i) a slum situation analysis (NB: a slum inventory already exists for Rwanda); (ii) the review of urban and housing policies (NB: already done within the framework of the NUP development); (iii) a slum upgrading and prevention strategy (NB: somehow already developed as Appendix 7 of the Rwanda National Land Use and Development Master Plan); (iv) a resource mobilisation strategy; and (v) detailed project proposals focusing on the city of Kigali. Therefore the qualification to Phase 3 for Rwanda by end of 2015, which consists of the concrete implementation of slum upgrading activities, should be relatively straightforward.

2. **The Rapid Planning** (RP) Project is an action oriented 5-year research initiative developed under the umbrella of the Future Megacities Research Program of the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) which includes the city of Kigali. The RP Project seeks to develop a rapid trans-sectoral urban planning methodology with a focus on urban basic services infrastructure, specifically targeting supply and disposal infrastructure. The service sectors covered by the project include energy, water, wastewater, solid waste, and urban agriculture. A kick-off mission to identify concrete interventions of the project in Kigali (and maybe in one secondary city) is planned for the week of 15-19 September 2014.
3. **The Participatory and Inclusive Land Readjustment** (PILaR) initiative, as part of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), will also include activities in Kigali in terms of training delivery and concrete pilot project identification/implementation in a given neighbourhood for allowing a planned city extension/densification. An official request for piloting land readjustment activities in Kigali was sent recently by the Mayor to the UN-Habitat Executive Director.