

What Can Local Governments Do?

A number of steps could be taken by local governments to begin addressing the situation of the urban poor and their children, according to the “Cities and Children” report. One important measure would be to gather evidence on current disparities by disaggregating data (on health, education and other indicators) by ward and shehia, rather than assuming that all urban dwellers experience the same conditions. This will make it possible to more accurately monitor poverty, hunger and malnutrition among marginal urban communities, facilitating the search for solutions. Other steps that could be taken include:

Improving Living Conditions

- Strengthen planning and oversight in unplanned settlements to facilitate services such as water, sanitation and transport, and prevent building on land that is unsafe or at risk for flooding.
- Areas currently on the fringes of existing settlements offer an opportunity to plan better-serviced settlements. Investing in peri-urban areas today could prevent costly and disruptive interventions in the future, when density is projected to increase further.
- Revise land use regulations to offer secure tenure and prevent eviction and displacement.
- Pursue partnerships with civil society groups that represent settlement residents to aid in identifying key problems and solutions.
- Consider how to use existing space for children’s play and recreation.
- Take steps to manage traffic in urban areas, to prevent accidents, injuries and death.
- Ensure that school children can safely board and ride daladalas.

Addressing Poverty and Hunger

- Local authorities could establish safety nets to help the poor to obtain nutritious food and educate mothers to prepare healthy diets and adopt proper caring and feeding practices.
- To make the best possible use of scarce resources and prepare healthy, balanced meals, caregivers need

information about nutrition and successful infant feeding practices. Cities could hold “Healthy Lifestyle” campaigns with help from the media, the private sector, academic institutions and technical agencies. Schools and youth groups could play a role as well.

- To obtain baselines and distinguish trends, nutrition and food insecurity need to be monitored and urban data disaggregate to better capture the nutritional status of the urban poor.

Preparing for Climate Change

- Children and poor communities need help to adapt to climate change. Their capacity, and that of service providers and local authorities, should be developed to strengthen resilience, and develop community-level early warning systems and environment-friendly practices.
- It is essential to better understand how climate change is affecting specific urban areas; residents, including young people, can be mobilised to carry out local “impact assessments” that will inform environmental planning in their communities.

Increasing Access to Water and Environmental Sanitation

- Invest more in water and sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services to ensure that coverage keeps pace with rising demand.
- To increase the formal provision of WASH services in

informal settlements, local authorities can partner with communities; for example, women’s and children’s groups can act as local hubs for WASH activities, encouraging behaviour change in communities and helping to map local needs.

- Due to children’s vulnerability to disease, special attention is needed to design child-friendly toilet facilities, especially in schools, keeping in mind the needs of children with disabilities.
- Recent reforms have opened new opportunities for local governments to exercise control over WASH provision. When planning upgrades for informal settlements, local authorities can seek to incorporate water point provision, latrine construction, pit emptying and solid waste management into planning.
- Local authorities can help communities prevent disasters by improving environmental sanitation and enforcing regulation of waste and trash disposal and illegal construction.

Improving Child Health and Combating HIV and AIDS

- Support research into the barriers limiting access to health care by the urban poor, such as weaknesses in the fee waiver and exemption systems, health insurance coverage, and the absence of affordable, reliable health services in low-income areas.
- Support research into how the urban environment and social behaviours contribute to the high rate of HIV infection in cities, as a first step toward creating protective environments for children and adolescents exposed to sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Priority attention is needed to establish child-friendly services for paediatric and adolescent HIV and AIDS care and reproductive health services.
- Given their mandate to plan and monitor health and HIV and AIDS activities, municipal authorities could organise ward and community-level mapping, in partnership with local youth and other residents, to identify risk points.

Achieving Universal, Quality Education

- Teacher deployment should be organised equally across different areas of the city. Education outcomes will improve if parents and community members engaged in school governance are empowered to hold teachers accountable for attending school regularly and providing quality teaching. Teacher performance can be monitored against clearly set standards, with the involvement of school authorities and members of school governance bodies.

- Strengthened capacity in districts and wards could equip local administrators to plan for the education needs of their constituencies and focus on those who have not gained access to the school system as a result of poverty, social marginalisation, disability or gender.
- School Committees also need support to manage schools independently, on the basis of resources made available efficiently and transparently. Establishing a bridge between city, ward and school governance systems would favour local planning based on the needs of communities, particularly those lacking economic resources.

Protecting Children from Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

- New legislation on children makes local governments responsible for carrying out services and activities designed to fulfil children’s rights; they can do so by framing and implementing relevant bylaws and regulations and promoting programmes and services to care for and protect children.
- More targeted planning would permit identification of children needing special protection measures and favour coordination among all service providers.
- To have a clear idea of the magnitude of children’s rights violations in urban areas, it is necessary to develop community, ward and district-level data on different types of violations and establish monitoring systems to measure progress toward the eradication of violence, abuse and neglect of children, child labour and trafficking.

Fostering Child Participation in Governance

- City-wide and community-level campaigns could raise awareness among parents, teachers, police, the judiciary and local authorities about the importance of facilitating young people’s participation in families, schools and municipal government.
- All possible opportunities for child participation should be explored, strengthened or expanded, including permanent forums in local governance, Junior Councils and Junior School Councils, to mainstream children’s priorities into municipal policies, programmes and budgets.
- Ensure that all children are encouraged to participate, including those that are at risk for exclusion due to age, gender, place of residence or other factors. Young people can help analyse problems affecting their peers and gathering community-level data to design inclusive child-friendly social services and public spaces in the city.



UNICEF/Paul Joynson-Hicks

During 2011-2012, UNICEF worked with several NGOs to conduct a series of consultations aimed at better understanding urbanisation trends in Tanzania and their impact on children, especially those living in informal urban settlements. Consultations took place in Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Mwanza, Mbeya and Stone Town.

A Look at STONE TOWN

Cities and Children
The Challenge of Urbanisation in Tanzania

Consultation findings

Consultations in Stone Town and Ng'mbo with children, parents and other community members, as well as local government officials and social service providers, revealed that:

- **Homes:** Many homes in Stone Town and Ng'mbo have just one room housing six-to-ten people. Sometimes as many as three families inhabit one home, due to the city's severe housing shortage. Both renting and construction are highly expensive for the urban poor.
- **Eviction:** Most housing is "informal," so households are vulnerable to eviction (without compensation) when city authorities need the land to, for example, expand roadways or electricity lines, as has occurred in recent years.
- **Water:** Water is available in most neighbourhoods, but shortages sometimes require fetching water at night or from long distances; some communities have no water supply at all.
- **Sanitation:** The cost of pit latrines (Tsh 500 000 to 1 million) and lack of hygiene awareness mean some households do without. Public latrines are reported to be dirty and unhygienic; open urination and defecation are common in these settlements.
- **Food:** The two or three meals families generally eat each day are heavy with starch (rice, cassava, ugali). Rising food prices have forced low-income families to change their diets, eliminating protein-rich foods important for child growth and development. Families in urban Zanzibar are prohibited from growing vegetables or raising animals inside town limits.
- **School:** Children who ride a bus to school often face discrimination and harassment from daladala drivers and conductors. Drivers may leave children waiting on the road for long periods and sometimes sexually abuse school girls, increasing their risk for HIV. Some children have to walk a long distance, or abandon school, because they cannot pay even the reduced fare.
- **Roads:** If they live and play near roads, children are at risk of being hit or killed by speeding drivers and motorcyclists. Licensing procedures for drivers are viewed as slipshod, allowing unskilled, under-age and careless drivers onto the roads.
- **Child labour:** Parents often send children to the streets to work as porters, domestic servants, or food vendors; to beg from tourists; or to pick through rubbish to help with household expenses. Both boys and girls face risks of sexual abuse and violence when working, for example, in fishing or domestic service.
- **Trafficking:** Girls and boys working near hotels or in tourism are at risk for involvement in child prostitution and trafficking.
- **Orphans:** Orphaned children face great hardships and deprivation of their rights and many, due to abuse, are especially vulnerable to HIV infection and stigmatisation.
- **Violence:** Domestic violence against children – both physical and emotional – is sometimes extreme, but rarely reported to authorities. Sexual violence, especially against girls, is blamed on traditional beliefs.
- **Participation:** Children are generally not included in decision-making at the local government or family levels, but some participate in Student Councils; communities with 'most vulnerable children' committees take their needs into consideration.



The population of Zanzibar's main urban settlements (Stone Town and Ng'mbo) has grown steadily, due to combined natural population growth and migration. Consultation participants said most migrants come from Mainland Tanzania, Pemba and rural areas to seek job opportunities. Based on 2002 census figures, the 2012 population of Zanzibar Municipality was projected to reach over 452,000, of which about half are children under 18. Economic activities include fishing and fish processing, coconut processing, tourism and brick-making. growth rate) suggests that Mwanza City's population is currently just over one million. Average per capita income is about Tsh 34,000 per month; about half the population is unemployed, earning low incomes from informal sector activities.

Among the suggestions to local government authorities made by consultation participants were:

- Establish centres to provide care for child victims of rape and other forms of abuse
- Provide educational and medical support to children living in very poor families
- Review rules prohibiting small urban farms
- Provide cash transfer, entrepreneurship skills, loans, grant and equipment and income-generating skills to unemployed youth and parents of children spending time on the street
- Educate parents on child-rearing, including optimal breastfeeding and weaning practices, at health facilities and in communities
- Life-skills education should start as early as nursery school, to teach children to resist or cope with all forms of abuse
- Social protection support should be provided to very poor families to help with housing and rent
- More one-stop centres should be established in different areas with trained social and health personnel
- Police should establish more Gender and Children's Desks, with trained staff
- Put up highly visible, reflective signposts indicating bumps, zebra crossings or presence of school children
- Allocate a person at each bus stop to assist school children to board daladalas; or the government could exempt poor students from fees, or provide all transport for school children



A mother's story, Stone Town

My son (16) used to bring home chips and beef skewers, but he would never eat it. I started to question him, where was he getting the food from and he would say the shopkeeper. This went on for about six months. Then one morning in September, he was on his way back from school, when he was sodomised by a young male shopkeeper in the neighborhood.

I took the case to the police, but I didn't get anywhere despite the fact that my son identified the shopkeeper as his attacker. Eventually I gave up on following up on the case, because I didn't have money and support or a male figure by my side. My son was born with Down Syndrome. Now he has stopped going to special needs school because his teacher suggested that it was best for his safety until we find someone to escort him to school. His father used to escort him to school until he died in 2003 and my son started going to school alone.

It is imperative that national and local governments become more aware of these trends, or poor urban children will remain invisible in city policy and planning.

Children in Urban Tanzania

The conditions found in Zanzibar's informal settlements are similar to those reported in other cities, confirming the findings of a study published by UNICEF in 2012: 'Cities and Children: The Challenge of Urbanisation in Tanzania. The new study explores urban growth and its impact on children and their rights. It suggests that local governments, the closest level of governance to constituents, are in an ideal position to work closely with the urban poor, including children, to identify the most serious obstacles they face and advance toward solutions.

Among the key findings were:

- Tanzania's cities are growing at a fast pace, but wealth and access to services are not distributed equitably
- Today, nearly half of Tanzania's urban population is made up of children
- Millions of children in cities are growing up amidst poverty and hunger
- Policymakers and providers of critical urban services have not focused sufficiently on meeting the needs of the urban poor
- Although quality services are usually more available in cities, residents of informal settlements lack access to them – due to distance, fees, or other barriers
- Most space is occupied "informally" due to complex land-use regulations; so homes do not receive urban services and residents are less willing to invest in improvements
- Recreation areas for children are lacking in low-income settlements and cities as a whole
- Children are largely absent from urban planning and decision-making processes.
- It has long been thought that urban children have advantages over rural children, but in Tanzania the 'urban advantage' is diminishing; for example:
 - Infant and child mortality in urban and rural areas are now almost the same, cities perform worse for child deaths during the first month of life (neonatal mortality)
 - Nearly twice as many urban as rural families said "cost" or the need to work was the main reason for their child's school drop-out
 - Children living in cities, especially poor and vulnerable children, continue to be at a far higher risk of HIV infection than rural children.

As conditions in rural areas slowly improve and the urban population grows, poverty has become increasingly urban, revealing sharp disparities between the poor and other city dwellers. National statistics focus on differences between conditions in urban and rural areas, but these averages fail to reflect disparities within cities: children growing up in different wards of the same city experience very different conditions, usually tied to household wealth. The majority of poor children do not enjoy the 'advantages' of city life.

Addressing urban growth and childhood poverty is possible if greater opportunities are created for urban families to acquire land, afford better quality housing and access basic services (including health, education, water and sanitation) and if governments reach out to those most affected, facilitating their involvement and participation in defining key problems and shaping solutions. Encouraging children and adolescents to contribute their ideas and energy to improving city life will help Tanzania's urban areas to become child-friendly.

I am in Form 4 and have to take a daladala to school. The fare is Tsh150 for students but the drivers sometimes charge twice that amount. Many students cannot afford it. Every day I wait about 30 minutes for the bus and then it takes another 30 minutes to get to school. One day I was getting off the bus, when the driver purposely reversed. I fell and injured my leg. My mother was very angry and reported the case to the police, but the case didn't go anywhere. Students really suffer with the daladalas – the drivers swear at us all the time. I think the government should provide reliable and safe transportation at a fare of about Tsh 100, so that we can better focus on our studies at school.

Rehema (18), Stone Town