



## مستقبل المدن السعودية FUTURE SAUDI CITIES



وزارة الشؤون  
البلدية و القروية  
Ministry of Municipal & Rural Affairs

# FUTURE SAUDI CITIES

Towards a New Agenda

## Background

The kingdom of Saudi Arabia is witnessing a rapidly growing urbanization due to demographic, social and economic growth in the country that resulted in an increase in the number of cities to reach 285 in the year 2014.

However, in response to urban challenges arising from the rapid growth and supporting to the urban strategy of the Kingdom to achieve balanced development among the regions of the Kingdom and its cities, a Royal Decree No. 28119 has been issued in 2013/06/02 for the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, in cooperation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), to implement the "Future Saudi Cities Program" in order to achieve sustainable urbanization through:

- Provide a better urban environment in seventeen Saudi cities in accordance with the standards of city prosperity and well-being.
- Reduce the phenomenon of urban sprawl and spread and address urbanization based on thoughtful and appropriate manner.
- Finding institutional sustainable solutions and coordination between the ministries and partners for development in the urban sector.
- Raising the institutional and technical capacity level in the field of planning urbanization processes and their management in a sustainable manner.
- Involvement of all segments of the population taking into account their needs, especially the needs of women and youth, upon development of urban plans and their implementation.

The Deputy of Town Planning at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme are currently implementing the Future Saudi Cities Program. However, the Program scheduled objectives, results and deliverables have been specified to be in line with the 2030 Saudi Arabia's vision and the Municipal Transformation Program of the Ministry in addition to the sustainable development objectives, which include achieving the Goal No. (11) of "transforming cities into a comprehensive, secure, flexible and sustainable cities".

## Program methodology

The main purpose of the program is to achieve a qualitative leap and a shift in urbanization of Saudi cities through paying attention to areas of enhancement and support of economic productivity of cities, strengthen and improve urban legislative and institutional framework as well as planning and management of sustainable urban development, besides empowering citizens to become agents of change and transformation through their involvement in sustainable development initiatives with the local community and achieve the sustainable environment, provision of adequate quantitative and qualitative infrastructure, as well as enhance a better life for the population, which can be achieved by applying a Three-Pronged/tracked Approach that is based on:

- 1) Assess the current status of the cities of Saudi Arabia.
- 2) Analyze the challenges facing the Saudi cities.
- 3) Setting Integrated profiles and pilot projects that contribute to the transformation of Saudi cities towards urbanized, prosperous and sustainable cities.

The Approach adopted by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme is characterized by that, it is an integrated approach, as its urban production in terms of quantity and quality is often associated with the quality and features of urbanization, which requires the development of a high-quality physical plan to be designed specifically to enhance the desired deliverables and outputs. To confirm the continuity and comprehensiveness of this plan over the long term alongside its ability to create a stable environment for investment, an effective legal framework should be developed.



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### The Scope of the program:

The Future Saudi Cities Program is being implemented; in close cooperation with the AMANAHs of 17 major cities which have been selected based on the different population sizes and a range of capacities and economic potentials to create a more balanced urban development among the 17 cities of Saudi Arabia which include: Riyadh, Makkah, Jeddah, Taif, Madinah, Tabuk, Dammam, Qatif, Al Ahsa, Abha, Najran, Jizan, Hail, Arar, Baha, Buraidah and Sakaka.

### The objectives of the Program:

- Preparation of reports of prosperity and well-being indicators for 17 Saudi cities.
- Review the structure and mechanisms of urban planning.
- Prepare proposals to improve the legislative and institutional structure related to urban affairs.
- Capacity building in the areas of land management and spatial and strategic planning.
- Stimulating participatory planning and wise governance of cities.
- Arrange awareness campaigns regarding the development of cities and motivate active development partners.

### The program deliverables and outputs

(Suggesting policies and programs relating to sustainable urban planning at the local, regional and national levels)

- Achieve harmonization between urban strategies and other service sectors such as education, health and transport.
- Collection of data relating to 72 indicators for the six themes of prosperity at the level of the city for 17 cities.
  - Study existing planning practices and ways to improve them.
  - Preparing of integrated profiles for 17 cities relies on a Three-Pronged/Track Approach.
  - Setting urban proposals for innovative new projects that can be implemented in three cities.
  - Submit a report regarding the activation of the role and mechanisms of local urban observatories for monitoring and evaluating the progress made at the level of cities prosperity.
  - Recommendations to develop the regulations and requirements for the strategic urban decentralized plans besides the coordination at the level of the city and implementation of the projects.
  - Analysis of institutional and legislative environment
  - Development of a Technical Guideline proposing a system for planning and management of sustainable urban development.
  - Drafting a proposal setting an approach to evaluate and review urban plans specifying the tasks and responsibilities at all planning levels.
  - Enhancement and development of national capacities for planning and managing sustainable urban development.
  - Evaluate the gaps in institutional capacity and setting a national training plan.
  - Conduct steering workshops and specialized training courses on topics pertaining to raising the efficiency of the staff working in the field of urban planning at the Ministry and AMANAHs and their effective partners.
- Arrange field visits to cities featured with the best planning practices and adopted prosperity indicators and other advanced international experience in the field of urban planning.
- Establishment of national, regional and international companies to share knowledge on best practices to guide the urbanization process in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Arranging the Saudi Urban Forum every two years.
- Form the national urban Committee and Youth's and Women's Forums for sustainable urbanization.
- Preparations for participation in the forthcoming UN summit of Housing and Urban Development in Quito in Ecuador.
- Raising public awareness through change campaigns in the city, the means of social communication and the National Saudi Urban Forum as well as community dialogue forums.
- Produce a documentary film about the realities and aspirations of children, youth, and women in Saudi cities.