

Public Administration of Capital Construction of the City Hall of Bishkek: Solving the Problems of Informal Settlements in the City of Bishkek

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SUMMARY

Bishkek city with a population of about 1.09 million is the capital of the Kyrgyz Republic and is located on one of the main transit routes of the Central Asian corridor. Since 1989, the city's population has almost doubled due to urbanization, and over the next 15 years, it is projected to grow by about 400,000 people, i.e. 40% of its current strength. Most of the informal settlements in the outskirts of the city appeared as a result of unauthorized seizures of land by internal migrants.

Today, in the outskirts of the city, there are 47 residential areas with a population of more than 218 thousand people, which is 20% of the total resident population of the capital. The first settlements have existed for over 30 years. One of the reasons for the massive internal migration was the fact that the city provides more opportunities for quality education and subsequently expands employment opportunities, as well as good access to health services. The main problems for citizens living in new buildings to this day remain the following issues: the provision of electricity, drinking water, hot water supply, heating, sewerage, road infrastructure, fire safety, access to public transport, access to educational, health and cultural institutions.

Many residential buildings in new constructions are located in areas unsafe for living and in environmentally unsafe areas, not in authorized land plots near landfills or high-voltage power lines. Security of residence also remains a significant problem for citizens, since many residential buildings built in such areas and unauthorized plots of land remain unlawful and families in need of state support are at constant risk of eviction. In most cases, the construction of individual residential buildings is built without project documentation approved by the city architectural department. In many residential buildings, residents have converted, refurbished and built additional buildings for family business purposes, which differ from the functional purpose of housing.

Many citizens lack official identification documents, as a result, people are invisible to the

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government system and experience difficulties in accessing basic services such as education, health care and social assistance.

Taking into account the growing population of the city, the situation with unplanned settlements and socio-economic challenges, the Mayor's Office of Bishkek and its structural divisions have developed a concept for a program to modernize five urban informal settlements and create industrial and logistics centers in two informal residential areas. This program is being implemented within the framework of the UNECE Sustainable Urban Development Projects and received technical support from the UNECE Residential Areas Program and is supported by the Cabinet of Ministers and the Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic. To date, the City is holding online meetings with the UNECE and the Development Initiatives for Cities in Asia (CDIA), discussions and the City is preparing to apply for a technical assistance grant.

The proposed project focuses on five residential areas and should be considered as pilot areas for the Project, as it is expected that such a project will serve as an example for sustainable urban development in the remaining 42 residential areas in Bishkek. The program addresses the integrated and comprehensive development of five informal settlements, with direct benefits to the approximately 75,000 people living in these areas. The program will be designed through an integrated and inclusive urban development approach to reach the urban poor through measures such as upgrading urban services and improving social infrastructure. The program will benefit children by providing access to educational facilities, allowing parents (especially women) to devote their time to other tasks besides childcare. The proposed project will have a direct impact on public health through improved waste management (solid waste and wastewater) and improved water supply in five targeted residential communities. It will also have a local economic development and job creation component to reduce migration and meet the needs of youth and the unemployed. An initial assessment of the impact of coronavirus infection on the city's economy was carried out, based on the methodology developed by UN-Habitat.

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