

Lessons from the implementation of the UN guidelines on access to basic services for all

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The international guidelines on access to basic services for all were adopted by UN Member States in 2009, following an intensive consultative process with concerned stakeholders. In the format of compendiums of recommendations addressed to different groups of stakeholders, the Guidelines cover governance issues, the role of local authorities, the necessity for an enabling institutional framework to foster partnerships, the issue of sustainable financing policies while addressing the needs of the poor and the environmental sustainability dimension. The UN recommends the coordinated adaptation of the guidelines to national circumstances together with international guidelines on decentralization, as a useful process for assessing and improving national frameworks related to planning and management of basic services. The adaptation process is currently taking place in 12 initial pilot Least Developed Countries and initial results show that improving articulated multi-level management of services and integrated multi-scale governance and planning are essential challenges for improving access to basic services. UN-Habitat recently obtained a new mandate from Member States to develop a new set of international guidelines on urban and territorial planning that will address the latest and complement existing guidelines.