



## BURKINA FASO, OUAGADOUGOU AND CAMEROON, DOUALA

### The Power of a Collective Vision

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Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, has a population of 1.5 million residents, 95% of which live in urban areas. The city shares similar development characteristics to Douala, Cameroon, the largest city in Cameroon with a population of nearly 2.5 million residents. Both cities have experienced rapid urbanisation along with steady economic growth, but their ability to become more influential has been stunted by basic development challenges. Widespread poverty, social exclusion and an absence of basic services resulted in the respective Governments adopting the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The paper recognized the severe repercussions of unplanned urbanization and its effect on development and economic growth. The PRSP set objectives to improve the living conditions of urban dwellers, strengthen good governance practices and reinforce the economic roles of towns by supporting new urban infrastructure.

Instrumental in achieving the PRSP's ambitious goals was the City Development Strategy (CDS), a framework that was formulated by the Cities Alliance to be appropriated at the local level in Douala and Ougadougou. The CDS provided the direction for the long-term development of each city, encompassing their overarching goals of poverty reduction and equitable economic development. The formulation of the strategy was unique for the cities, with a strong emphasis placed on participation, to ensure the vision was representative of the wider community and to inspire local ownership of the CDS. The local government municipalities led the participatory approach, using dialogues with numerous stakeholders to inform the strategy, as well as hosting

workshops for representatives of marginalised and vulnerable members of the community. This collaborative exercise resulted in priority interventions being identified for adoption by local authorities. Once the CDS was released, each city ran an extensive advocacy campaign to maintain effective partnerships at the city level. This step was crucial in maintaining momentum for the strategy and transforming it from a didactic exercise to city level actions.

A major achievement of the CDS has been the influence it has had on institutional behavior, resulting in new management capacities that have since adopted a more inclusive and integrated urban planning approach. Its coherent and credible framework has attracted investment from multiple major donors, with the City of Douala securing a 212 million loan from the AFD to improve the city's drainage system, a significant achievement for a city that experiences regular heavy flooding. Similarly, Ouagadougou has been successful in securing financing opportunities from both the ADB and AFD totalling EUR 78 million for improving city sustainability and basic infrastructure. The GHK project assessment in Douala has been a testament to its social impact, praising the CDS as a mechanism for social inclusion by building relationships and trust between networks of diverse stakeholders. The importance of the advocacy by the respective city councils should also be underlined, as it was instrumental in motivating a critical mass of people to consider the future of their city, a powerful tool in achieving sustainable city development.