

# UNDP Saudi Arabia

## The UN-Support to the National Spatial Strategy and Urban Planning Efforts of Saudi Arabia

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- **High Human Development: 55<sup>th</sup> in HDI for 2010**
- **Population: 25.37m in 2009; 22.67m in 2004; and 7m in 1974**
- **Population growth: 4.9% for 1974-1992 and 2.5% for 1992-2004**
- **Two-thirds of population in three administrative areas: Riyadh, Makkah, and the Eastern Province**
- **Urban population increased from 49% in 1974 to 80% in 2009**
- **74% of total operating businesses are located in these areas (30% in Riyadh; 28% in Makkah; and 16% in Eastern Province)**

Area	Population (2009)	%
Riyadh	6.2	24.6
Makkah	6.3	25
Eastern	3.7	14.6
Asir	1.8	7.3
Baha	4	1.6

- **Development is guided by Vision 2024:** *By 2025, the Saudi economy will be a diversified, prosperous, private-sector driven economy, providing job opportunities, quality education, health care and necessary skills to ensure the well-being of all citizens while safe-guarding Islamic values and the Kingdom's cultural heritage"*
- **Five-year DPs**
- **The Ninth DP (2010-2014) focuses on:**
  - **Infrastructure:** expansion of transport, telecommunication and postal services facilities, housing and municipal services
  - **Balanced regional development**
  - **knowledge-based society**
- **Investments were allocated to establish 4 economic cities in relatively remote areas**
- **The new economic cities will contribute \$150 billion to the country's GDP by 2020**
- **They will accommodate 4.8 million persons**

- **NSS was produced in 2001 with the support of UNDP/UNDESA**
- **The spatial dimension in development: interaction of various activities across spaces**
- **Fast urbanization due to rural-urban migration and polarization of urban population in few large cities**
- **Disparity gap between growing and lagging areas**
- **Diversification of the economic base: Regions do matter**
- **Saudi Arabia is a vast area (2.24 square km), with urban centers far from each other**

- **NSS defined guidelines and policies to achieve a spatially balanced development**
- **Consistent with national development goals of economic efficiency and social equity**
- **Adopting notion of development corridors to promote integration among different parts of the national space**
- **Identifying most desirable and balanced hierarchy of urban settlements with components of national, regional and local growth centers**

- **A 2-year project was signed to update the NSS and support its implementation, monitoring and follow-up**
- **The project encompasses five broad outputs:**
  - The NSS: To update the strategy and formulate feasible implementation mechanisms
  - Regional plans: 1) regulatory and institutional frameworks for efficient local teams; 2) national capacity development; 3) wide adoption of planning methodologies; 4) adoption of growth poles (clusters); 5) development priorities at local level
  - The National Urban Observatory Network
  - Environment conducive to urban planning
  - Capacity development (institutional and individual)
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- **Integrating the HD paradigm: equity, sustainability, production and empowerment**
- **The HD is a holistic development model, embracing every development issue, including economic growth, social investment, people's empowerment, provision of basic needs and social safety nets, political and cultural freedom and all other aspects of people's lives**
- **The HD defines the ends of development and analyses sensible options for achieving them**



- **Parallel to this, the UN System is supporting formulation of the National Rural Strategy: towards equitable provision of services to 10,471 villages and small settlements around the Kingdom**
- **The long-term impact: to halt, or probably reverse, current rural-urban migration**
- **Also the UN System is supporting Ministry of Transport in formulating a NTS, including the adoption of the ITS concept for better, efficient and equitable distribution of transport infrastructures**

*Thanks.*