



Launch of Ghana Urbanization Review: *Rising Through Cities in Ghana*
Theme: *'Deepening the Urban Agenda for Transformative Change'*

Venue: La Palm Royal Beach Hotel - - Date: 14th May, 2015

Opening Remarks by World Bank Country Director for Ghana

1. Mr. Chairman, Your/His Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, Honorable Minister, representatives from the Ministries, MMDAs, development partners, representatives from the private sector and civil society, members of the press, ladies and gentlemen...
2. On behalf of the World Bank Country Director, Mr. Yusupha Crookes, I am very happy to be present at today's National Validation Workshop for the Ghana Urbanization Review, and I thank the Ministry and all other persons and institutions who have played various roles for the organization of this workshop.
3. The World Bank has supported the Government of Ghana in the urban sector for over 25 years through different types of programs, technical assistance and investment projects for improvements in urban planning, management and service delivery across the country. During this period, Ghana's urbanization rate has increased and in 2010, Ghana reached the important threshold where more than 50% of the population now lives in urban areas. This marks a special opportunity for Ghana to harness the economic benefits of urbanization and its associated economic activities.
4. Lessons from across the world indicate that countries cannot achieve substantial economic transformation without urbanization. So, while the path to harnessing benefits is not simple and requires countries to urgently tackle the challenges associated with urban expansion and sprawl, Ghana can and should seek to apply and implement policies, actions and investments that may grow its cities and towns to be fully able to take advantage of this potential.
5. We cannot talk about cities without talking about citizens and their roles in creating happy and livable environments. Even though Governments have a major role to play, urban spaces start and end with people. They can either make it healthy or filthy, secure or hostile, happy

or stressful. Accra and other towns and cities have everything to make them most enjoyable, but there is clearly quite a bit of work to be done in this regard. This is all about our attitudes and our behaviors. We need to do our best to leave cleaner, healthier and happier cities for generations to come.

6. Mr. Chairman, The Ghana Urbanization Review provides information, analysis and policy recommendations towards achieving this objective. It is based on an analytical approach that the World Bank has applied in several countries around the world, including India, China, Vietnam, Georgia, Colombia, and Tunisia. The reviews distill lessons from two centuries of urban growth into a common set of diagnostics and policy tools. Based on data driven analysis, the reviews aim to help policymakers understand the country's urbanization challenges, think strategically about the opportunities that urbanization creates, and identify politically, technically, and fiscally feasible policies for inclusive and sustainable growth within the framework of Ghana's National Urban Policy.
7. It is important to reiterate that the Ghana Urbanization Review is a result of collaborative efforts between the Government of Ghana, including MDAs and MMDAs, Ghana Statistical Service, representatives from academia, civil society and the private sector, the World Bank and with support from the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs. We wish to emphasize the solid partnership with all stakeholders throughout the process of developing this report, and we look forward to establishing and strengthening our relations for effective, sustainable and inclusive urban development for the benefit of the people of Ghana.
8. Mr. Chairman, I wish to state that The Bank remains committed to supporting the Government of Ghana in addressing the challenges in the urban sector whilst tapping the opportunities for economic development. We stand ready to follow up on the outcomes and decisions of this workshop and to support the Government on the key priorities so as to take the urban agenda forward.
9. On behalf of the Country Director, I wish you fruitful and effective deliberations and look forward to the implementation of the actions agreed at this workshop.

Thank you for your attention.