



Urbanization and Informal Settlements in Ugandan Cities: Navigating Social Welfare Challenges

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Abstract

Urbanization in Uganda has accelerated over recent decades, leading to rapid population growth and increased demand for housing. In response, informal settlements have emerged as a common urban feature, often characterized by substandard living conditions, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to social services. The study employs a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews in selected urban areas of Uganda. Data collection includes structured questionnaires on social welfare access and semi-structured discussions about community challenges and aspirations. Analysis reveals that while informal settlements constitute 60% of the urban population, they receive only 25% of government-provided social services. This disparity is particularly pronounced in healthcare (30% coverage) and education (40% coverage). The findings underscore significant disparities between formal and informal settlement residents regarding access to essential social welfare services. These insights are crucial for policymakers aiming to improve urban governance and service delivery equity. Recommendations include the development of targeted policy interventions, such as establishing community-led health centers in informal settlements and implementing inclusive education programmes that recognise local contexts.

Keywords: *Geographic, Sub-Saharan, Settlements, Governance, Urbanization, Poverty, Social Policy*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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