

SCOPING STUDY ON URBANISATION IN ZAMBIA



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Partner organisation: the Cabinet Office of Zambia



IN BRIEF

- » Urbanisation in Zambia has the potential to help the country to grow from poverty into prosperity
- » Researchers met with about 50 different stakeholders to understand the country's urbanisation challenges
- » With the support of the Zambian government, two urbanisation projects were commissioned from this visit

Developing countries are rapidly urbanising but this does not come without challenges. When the public sector fails to address the consequences of millions of people clustering in a single metropolis, cities can become slums and suffer from poverty and disease. These challenges need to be addressed for faster future economic growth.

Ed Glaeser and Nava Ashraf met with 17 different agencies and about 50 different officials during their 6-day scoping visit, including senior government officials who were convened by the Permanent Secretary for Policy Analysis and Coordination in the Cabinet Office of Zambia. These discussions revolved around the potential for urbanisation policy and strategy to improve economic growth and address issues restricting Zambia's growth.

With the support of the Zambian government, two urbanisation projects were commissioned from this visit, one on water provision and one on mobile banking. These projects have the potential to influence discourse and policy within and far beyond the Zambian context. The effects of improving water and sanitation infrastructure, methods to improve the capacity of local administrative bodies, and approaches to encouraging the spread of financial skills amongst entrepreneurs, are all critical challenges in urban centres across the developing world. These project ideas have clear potential value in incrementally improving the state of academic understanding and providing specific policy guidance within the Zambian environment.

Ed Glaeser and Nava Ashraf addressed senior government officials convened by the Permanent Secretary for Policy Analysis and Coordination in the Cabinet Office of Zambia on urbanisation policy and strategy issues.