

## **NATIONAL OBSERVANCE OF WORLD HABITAT DAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020**

### **Introduction**

World Habitat Day (WHD) is an international day observed on the first Monday of October every year. This day was designated by United Nations General Assembly through Resolution 40/202A of 17 December 1985. The day accords United Nations Member States an opportunity to share and reflect on their experiences, successful initiatives, and challenges encountered in their efforts to provide shelter and related basic services in a sustainable manner. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility in shaping the future of cities, towns, communities and the entire human habitat. In addition, it provides a forum for governments and stakeholders to take stock of achievements and actions aimed at improving housing and human settlements.

### **World Habitat Day Theme**

Each year, WHD takes on a new theme and this year's theme will be ***Housing for All: A Better Urban Future***. This is in recognition of the fact that housing is a fundamental human right which is central in our battle against the spread of diseases including COVID-19 virus especially in our slums and informal settlements. It is for this reason that the Government of the Republic of Kenya has prioritized the cleaning of our human settlements through the National Hygiene Programme with special focus on Slums and informal settlements. The Covid -19 pandemic offers new opportunities for all stakeholders to participate in the process of ensuring that our human settlements are clean and have basic services as we continue working towards sustainable transformation of our cities and communities and hence safeguard a better urban future.

### **National and Global observance of World Habitat Day**

The Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing, Urban Development and Public Works being the national focal point on housing and human settlements, is mandated to coordinate observance of World Habitat Day. This year's observance will be on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October. The National observance will be across the 47 counties. Counties will be expected to carry out activities such as cleaning the estates, tree planting, launching projects and programmes that are geared towards improving our urban areas and raising awareness especially among the youth on the need to keep our environments clean. This could be done in collaboration with ***Kazi Mtaani teams*** where possible. The global observance will be hosted virtually by the city of **Surabaya in Indonesia**.

We encourage all counties, the private sector, the civil society and all other Habitat partners to participate in activities that are geared towards improving our urban areas on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and indeed the whole month of October which is dubbed as "***Urban October***".

Charles Hinga Mwaura

Principal Secretary, State Department for Housing & Urban Development