Habitat Debate

Cities at Risk

By Jay Moor

Hazard x Vulnerability = Risk

Hazard = that which may cause damage or loss
Vulnerability = being susceptible to damage or loss
Risk = probable degree of damage or loss over time

The late Adolph Ciborowski, chief architect of the United Nations plan to rebuild Skopje after the devastating 1963 earthquake, used to say that earthquakes select the weakest structures, wars select the strongest. In other words, earthquakes are "dumb" disasters; wars are "smart" disasters – they have a predator's intelligence behind them and are thus harder to defend against and more difficult to recover from.

Strategically and symbolically, cities have always been objects of war and, for millennia, were designed to defend physically against an intelligent enemy. Gradually the technology of destruction surpassed the technology of construction until today it is no longer feasible to build cities and inter-connecting infrastructure with war in mind. The risk of war and how it will be fought is either too difficult to estimate or the potential hazard is too great to justify proper defensive works. So, we pay most attention now to the more predictable and manageable disasters like earthquakes, fires, hurricanes, landslides and floods, and, increasingly, to "slow-motion" threats from pollution, crime and poverty.

Cities, as the most complex of human creations, are at great risk both from a wide range of hazards and from their own multiple vulnerabilities. Points of urban vulnerability are everywhere: infrastructure systems, factories and office buildings,

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EDITORIAL

On 21 December 2001, the UN General Assembly took a historic decision. It elevated the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to the status of a full-fledged Programme, now known as United Nations Human Settlements Programme or UN-Habitat. The moving force behind this decision was the strong endorsement given by the Secretary-General to the strengthening of Habitat and the Commission on Human Settlements, its governing body. This is a rare and precious recognition, and one that we shall continue to work hard to enhance in the future.

As we enter the New Year, we shall meet more new challenges. They will not be purely of an institutional nature. We will have to demonstrate the capacity of the new United Nations Human Settlements Programme to give further impetus to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, and to the Millennium Declaration's goal of making a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020. UN-Habitat will be called upon not only to do its statutory work, but also to help in the recovery and reconstruction of cities, towns and villages all over the world in old and new post-conflict situations or post-disaster areas.

The new year also brings with it new risks to cities. In June 2001, my organization released the third Global Report on Human Settlements, which concluded that the physical, social and economic impact of globalization was most acutely felt in cities, and that urban dwellers were particularly vulnerable to global forces. The Report noted that growing polarization and exclusion in cities were imposing a new set of vulnerabilities and insecurities on the urban poor, who are hardest hit as land, housing and public services become more costly and less accessible. This point is also illustrated in several articles in this issue of Habitat Debate.

Recent figures show that a third of the world's urban population lives in slums which often lack access to basic social services, such as access to clean water and sanitation. Slums create intense pressure on local resources, ecosystems and environments, creating a need for well-organized and efficient social services, including transportation, waste management and pollution control. Intervention at the city level can help reduce poverty, partly because the economies of scale that are possible make the provision of services cost-effective. Thus improving the lives of slum dwellers should be on the agenda of all governments. However, governments cannot do this work alone — local authorities, NGOs, the private sector and all sectors of civil society must also respond to this challenge.

On its part, UN-Habitat will use its enhanced institutional profile to better serve its core mission of prioritizing the "brown agenda". Improving the state of human settlements, housing and urban infrastructure is critical if we are to help the over one billion people living on less than a dollar a day to have access to a decent home and an acceptable living environment.

Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka
Executive Director
UN-Habitat

LETTERS

The theme for World Habitat Day this year — "Cities Without Slums" — raises several questions. I would like to bring before you some points for your consideration:

- Slums are the result of economic consequences of development decisions. Slum dwellers are both socially and economically exploited by the very people who profess to solve their problems. Your audience, including myself, belongs to this class of exploiters. Thus the phenomenon of slums does not go away.

- The low wages and informal employment of slum dwellers provide support for the opulent standards of living for a small section of people in cities. Thus there is vested interest in retaining slums in large urban centres.

- Actions are necessary to stop economic exploitation and pay real wages for employment of informal labour. Unorganized labour is an easy target for exploitation. Slum dwellers live in sub-human conditions because, at these wages, they cannot afford any other kind of shelter. Unless this issue is addressed, it will be difficult to eradicate slums from cities.

- Housing must be equitable i.e. certain sections of the population should not be allowed to own a disproportionate share of land and building materials, thereby pushing up the cost of both the building and land, thus making it impossible for the poorer sections of the population to buy into the formal urban housing market. In such an inequable market, slums are inevitable.

- Cities must be decentralized and emphasis must be placed on smaller cities so that the spatial and economic relationship between rural and urban is re-established. This will also reduce the rate of migration to mega-urban centres and metropolises. Countries should be encouraged to formulate national human settlements strategies to achieve this objective.

Prof. A.K. Maitra
Director, School of Planning and Architecture
New Delhi, India

In her address to the 18th session of the Commission on Human Settlements (February 2001), Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka stressed the importance of inclusive human settlements by stating that, *"Cities will not become livable places until we learn to practice the forms of traditional solidarity found in villages".* This is a timely suggestion.

In my opinion, there should be a global programme to raise awareness among villagers about the inhuman and poor living conditions found in urban slums, where many of these villagers are compelled to live after leaving the rural areas. This will only be possible if governments take the initiative to develop and protect traditions found in villages. To do so, they will have to coordinate and cooperate with NGOs working for rural development. Aid agencies should also support such NGOs. In my view, there should be a comprehensive programme under which governments of both developed and developing countries take measures to stop migration to urban areas. Through affordable housing and social infrastructure development, and self-help income-generating projects, youth could be encouraged to make a living in villages.

Dev Raaj Sharma
President, All India Tenants Council
New Delhi, India

Following is a contribution to a UN-Habitat-initiated internet discussion, which took place in November 2001. The discussion covered a range of urban issues that provided valuable input to the organization's work in the area of policy development and reporting.

- Cities are our destiny. Visions of a non- or de-urbanizing world, while interesting and important intellectual creations of the 20th century, are no longer credible.

- The city is a profoundly good concept. The fact that aspects of its application do not always work well does not mean that there is something fundamentally wrong with the concept. It is more likely that some other facet of civilization, or human nature, is interfering with the concept. Heading towards a destiny based on a profoundly good concept places us in a good position.

- It is not too late to change things that are not working in cities. For this, we need an agile and proactive attitude rather than a fatalistic and reactive one. Cities have their momentum, but can nevertheless be steered pro-actively in more desirable directions.

- We have never known as much about cities as we do today. We have at our disposal 7000 years of accumulated knowledge of what works and what does not. In addition, we now have unprecedented access to methodologies and technologies for knowledge management.

- Planning, design, management and governance of cities should become the ultimate art of the 21st century.

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"Ground Zero", New York. UNPhoto/E. Debebe

telecommunication and transport, community structures, government agencies, schools, food supplies, energy and resource supply lines and many others. A blow to one or more of these can cause not just ripples, but waves throughout the economy, the social fabric, and the entire political system.

At the scale of the city, mechanisms for reduction of risk include the police and fire fighting forces, planning and zoning departments, building inspection, courts, prisons and health services, as well as a variety of behaviour-shaping institutions like the family, organized religion, public schools and the media. Behaviour-shaping institutions are found in one form or another in cultures all over the world. They usually serve to establish standards of behaviour that minimize the potential for disruption by otherwise disaffected or opportunistic members of society.

Until very recently, impacts from an urban disaster would have been limited mainly to the city itself, which historically acts more or less as the centre of its own economic region. With the current form of globalization (what Peter Marcuse on page **7** calls "really existing globalization"), cities around the world are moving together into a new and hazardous environment. More cities have now become strategic linchpins in the global economy, interdependent nodes in a dynamic network. Disrupt economic life in any one major city and the shock waves circle the earth almost instantly.

The current global economy is dependent upon growth in consumption, and consumer confidence is a key to economic stability, worldwide. Successful globalization is, therefore, reliant upon a collective feeling of security among consumers – primarily in the cities of developed countries – who are constantly exposed to messages designed to make them feel good about their personal prospects. As a result, much information that might generate serious doubt about the world's future has not been tabled for general public consideration. To sustain optimism among consumers, many of the traditional behaviour-shaping institutions have been enlisted. This may explain why the media use bullish stockbrokers to comment on the business news.

Because of its psychological vulnerability, the current form of globalization is subject to a new hazard. Joining war and international crime as a "smart disaster" is global terrorism. As its name implies, global terrorism induces radical insecurity everywhere at once. Using the same infrastructure that serves the new global economy, violence can be returned to masses of unsuspecting individuals, often at random, who then do not need intermediaries to tell them what's happening. They see and feel the impact in their own lives. This forces heads of families, schools, religious institutions and the media, in particular, to be more honest or risk losing their credibility. Thus, consumers suddenly become aware of a reality beyond the information they had been receiving. Doubts arise and confidence falters. The global economy is, in effect, vulnerable to the revealed truth.

The challenge now faced by globalists in a more knowledgeable world is to determine what changes will be needed to reduce both the vulnerability of the global economy and the threat it poses to many people – some of whom have decided that globalization is a hazard they must counter directly, using a lethal form of psychological warfare. There is already an instinctual feeling that we cannot put up great defensive "works" to protect against global terrorism. But, what is to be done structurally, beyond cosmetic modification to the security apparatus?

Here, history may provide a useful analogy. In the 19th century as industrial economies expanded to encompass whole nations, it took decades of struggle to put in place the institutional mechanisms that would reduce the risks posed by industrialization. The long struggle was between those, like the Chartists in England, who gave priority to immediate alleviation of human suffering, and others who saw that industrialization would bring, in the fullness of time, a higher standard of living to all.

Both sides were correct, but in the end it was the persistent injurious effects of the new economy on the poor and vulnerable that brought about new national institutional landscapes in both Europe and America. Some changes involved the "hazard" itself, reducing the negative effect of industrial processes and business practices. Others were intended to moderate human

vulnerability. Measures to lessen the impacts of the industrial revolution eventually included child labour laws, mandatory health inspections, anti-trust legislation, fire codes, banking laws, city plans, price controls on food staples, subsidies for basic services to the poor and many others.

That struggle generated a progressive urban ethos that infused many of the behaviour-shaping institutions of the time. Hygiene and good citizenship became part of the public schools curricula, social responsibilities were promoted by religious leaders and the media became serious about reporting on corruption and the abuse of authority. Extensive promotion of communitarian values encouraged industry to become a good neighbour as well as a good provider. In dealing with the perennial suffering caused by the economies of the day, a reactive defence was, in effect, turned into a much more pro-active offence through re-articulated social values.

Whatever the counterpart to such a campaign may be in today's international world, it is, as Willem van Vliet implies (page 5), a matter of both environmental sustainability and social justice that business <u>and</u> government become global good neighbours. Where urban quality of life is at stake, efficient competition cannot be the only yardstick. Societies, as such, also demand equity, and no economic system can last long that doesn't provide both (see Darshini Mahadevia on page 25).

It cannot take decades to decide which is a better strategy — immediately reducing the risk posed by the new global economy or waiting for its eventual benefits to trickle down. For cities, as venues for disaster, enlightened action leading to Marcuse's alternative forms of globalization is imperative. In cities of developing countries the informal sector, as a social and economic safety net (described by Fernando Murillo on page 23) may be an important component in renewed thinking about equitable economics as is support for the home- and neighbourhood-based enterprise (as advocated by Solomon Benjamin on page 24) or enlightened re-regulation as proposed by David Westendorff (page 27). In the end, we must consider changing our own attitudes and behaviour if we expect to save ourselves from our own institutions.

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Building Resilience in Vulnerable Cities

By Willem van Vliet

Times Square, New York. © Rasna Warah

Is globalization good for cities? The answer to this question is not a simple yes or no. It all depends. It depends on the specifics of what we mean by globalization and it also depends on who our reference groups are when we talk about cities.

Globalization

Globalization is a catch-all term that can denote one or any combination of various processes. What these processes have in common is that they increase the speed, scale, scope and complexity of connections between far-flung places, but otherwise they differ in important ways. The currently dominant mode of globalization is oriented to maximizing private profit and accumulating financial wealth.

A broader perspective recognizes that globalization takes place along many

dimensions in many spheres – economic, political, environmental, legal, and cultural, among others. Hence, the goals of globalization are diverse and sometimes conflicting. It is, therefore, analytically imprecise and practically unhelpful to talk about globalization without being specific about what it is that is being globalized and how its costs and benefits are distributed.

Cities

We tend to speak of cities as though they were cohesive entities, acting in unison. Policies of many national governments, the World Bank and other international development organizations encourage competition among cities and are oriented to "leveling the playing field" by removing regulatory impediments that hinder the interplay of market forces.

However, in reality, cities are made up of a variety of interests groups. They include representatives of global capital that use cities as an organizational commodity to maximize profit, but they also include disadvantaged local population groups who need the city as a place to live. Competition, induced by globalization, may benefit businesses linked to transnational corporations, but harm local neighborhoods. The outcome in any given situation reflects a balance of contending interests. Markets are never free. Competition is governed by game rules shaped by those whose interests dominate.

New Rules and Forms of Governance

These two strands of thought make clear the general implication that globalization magnifies and intensifies the strategic significance of cities as sites where a variety of stakeholders contest diverse and often competing claims to scarce urban resources. In this regard, the current challenge to the development and management of cities is to establish and support broad-based partnerships that can harness the potential of market dynamics under a different set of rules.

To begin with, the new *modus operandi* must place economic growth in the context of goals of social justice and environmental sustainability. The new rules must also accommodate local authorities in decentralized and democratic

government schemes. Further, they must welcome as full participants those who have heretofore stood on the sidelines. This means the empowerment of people living in poverty, women, minorities and others who often are at the margins of decision making processes. Against this background, the emergence of new forms of governance and the formation of civil society organizations in the interstices of existing arrangements reflect a "globalization-from-below" whose articulation happens in transnational networks across urban nodes. A case in point is the work of Shack/Slum Dwellers International.

Implications for Urban Planning

Urban planners are inescapably caught up in this emerging dynamic. The new planning is less codified and technical, more innovative and entrepreneurial. It is also more participatory and concerned with projects rather than whole urban systems. Planning expertise is increasingly

> # Markets are never free. Competition is governed by game rules shaped by those whose interests dominate.

sought not only by the state, but also by the corporate sector and civil society. Planners seek to forge agreements through negotiation and mediation among contesting parties. Planning is no longer lodged solely in urban government as a font of privileged knowledge about "the public interest." What is controversial is not urban planning per se, but its goal: whether it should be directed chiefly at efficiency, reinforcing the current distribution of

wealth and power, or whether it should play a distributive role to help create minimum standards of urban livability.

As planning becomes more difficult to define as a state-based process of intervention, it finds expression in a greater diversity of forms, including the advocacy for and mobilization of community-based groups that seek to assert their rights to the city. This development places marginality at centre stage. It stresses a notion of urban poverty that goes beyond monetary standards and consumption for basic needs. It offers insights from within households to show how poverty is a form of vulnerability and lack of power that is multidimensional and, further, how efforts at redress by households are not typically anti-systemic but oriented towards gaining benefits from more favorable inclusion in ongoing urban development processes. These insights also provide a better understanding of the gendered nature of poverty and the important roles of women in attempts to eradicate it.

From Vulnerability to Resilience

The preceding comments stress the importance of examining the vulnerability of cities in a globalizing world in terms of implications for *specific* population groups, but it is equally important not to reify these groups as *a priori* "vulnerable categories." Otherwise, our efforts will be misdirected at symptoms, rather than aimed at root causes.

Vulnerability does not exist in a vacuum. Thus it is essential to focus attention on the factors that put people at risk. However, beyond reducing vulnerability, enlightened action must build on the *resilience* that so-called "vulnerable" people have often impressively demonstrated and enable them to realize their potential.

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Dangers Posed by 'Really Existing Globalization'

By Peter Marcuse

Globalization, that almost worldwide process of economic, social, and political change that began in earnest in the early 1970s, has, I believe, four linked components:

- rapid technological change;
- the increase and concentration of the power of business enterprises, both in the market and in the directing of state policies, using new technologies;
- the resulting expansion of international trade and investment; and
- the marketization of virtually all goods and services.

These components comprise "really existing globalization"[1], a term I coined to refer to the type of globalization we see today.

However, this is not the only form of globalization possible. Of the four components of globalization, technological progress by itself can be beneficial or harmful, depending on how it is used; if used purely to profit business enterprises, it can be harmful. Increased trade among nations should be beneficial; if it is on unequal terms, it can infringe on the rights of people to determine national policies. The ever-increasing scope of marketization, particularly when applied to the necessities of life, is almost always harmful to the poor, that is, the majority of the world's people.

What then are the dangers posed by really existing globalization to life in cities?

- The most immediate effect of globalization on cities is the **increasing poverty and the growing gap between the rich and the poor.** This has resulted in the phenomenal growth

A pavement colony in Mumbai: Globalization has widened the gap between rich and poor in many cities.
© Rasna Warah

of favelas, barriadas, ghettos and slums in almost every city in the world, and a simultaneous growth in gated communities and high-rise citadels of the rich that are completely separate from the lives and living spaces of the poor. This is not just the consequence of technology, but of how that technology is used, and by whom. If the main use of technology is profit, then it pays to divide labour into the skilled and the unskilled, and to pay the unskilled the very least you can get away with. That is the result of decisions made to maximize business profits and of unequal educational systems and opportunities. The rich are not smarter than the poor; they simply have more power, and they use it to get richer, and that means keeping other people poorer.

● The globalization mantra of the necessity of **competition through "comparative advantage"** has a particularly acute effect on cities. By pretending that cities must compete with each other, legitimacy is given to specialization of functions, but in such a way that cities in the developing world specialize in those things that don't pay well, while cities in the developed world use their competitive advantage in finance and investment to make all the profits. Competitive advantage in Central America means growing bananas competitively; in Sao Paulo, it means having cheap labour available to assemble parts for foreign automobile companies; in New York and London it means stock brokerage firms and banks with salaries and bonuses in the millions.

● Housing in cities is directly affected by globalization. Enormous pressure is exerted on all countries wishing to participate in international trade to conform their laws on property rights to those of the free market economies. This has led to the **marketization of housing**. This implies that private ownership is the only road to security of tenure. But private ownership in a market economy also means risks of foreclosure, of eviction for non-payment of rent/mortgage, of speculative increases in housing costs, of displacement and abandonment. Collective, social forms of ownership and occupancy might provide much greater security; but globalization works against such forms of ownership.

● Globalization puts on the pressure on local and national governments to **privatize public services**: water supply, garbage pickup, electric power provision are increasingly being placed in private hands, that is, the hands of those delivering them for a profit. These services are then only delivered to those who can pay for them. Globalization opens the doors to international as well as national firms to privatize services, but the result is the same: provision of the necessities of life depends on the amount of money a household has to pay for them. That leaves many poor households out in the cold.

● **Stress on the environment** is increased by globalization. Not only does globalization interfere with local

provisions for the protection of the environment but it sets priorities in terms of profit, not of environmental quality. The debate over the Kyoto accords illustrates these dynamics.

● The events of September 11 in New York City and Washington, D.C. have added another danger to cities. (However distorted or maligned, these events were nonetheless a response to globalization.) **The impact of terrorism is more acute in cities**, not only because terrorism can inflict more damage and injury in cities, but also because the perceived threat is greater in cities, particularly in cities which have strong symbols of identity and power. The security measures adopted in the U.S.A shortly after the terrorist attacks greatly compounded terrorism's effects.

> ## Without strong pressure to change present forms of globalization, the future of cities is likely to be very negative.

Metal detectors, restricted entry into public buildings, surveillance in streets, railroad stations and meeting places, the cordoning off of public spaces, the control of demonstrations, protests and public activities, the increased power of security forces, and the relinquishment of democratic control – all these measures threaten the essence of cities, the very essence that makes cities so attractive to so many of the world's people.

Without strong pressure to change present forms of globalization, the future of cities is likely to be very negative. Whether that will happen or not depends on the resolution of tensions not yet decided: whether equality among nations will increase or decrease; whether the World Trade Organization will be reined in to promote higher living standards rather than focusing purely on free trade; whether city governments will be persuaded to first protect their residents, rather than just compete on the international scene; and whether international forums will be established and empowered to resolve disputes and to establish uniform standards. However, there are still open questions.

In conclusion, "really existing globalization" poses great dangers to cities; alternative forms of globalization might hold the promise for a more sustainable and equitable future.

Peter Marcuse is Professor of Urban Planning at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture in New York, U.S.A.

Reference:

1. **In the 1970s and the 1980s, the leftist criticism of state socialist societies, such as the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, was that these were not truly socialist countries as they did not conform to the ideals of socialism. Therefore, they used the term "really existing socialism" to define these countries' ideology to distinguish them from the socialist model favoured by leftists. (Some even referred to Soviet-style socialism as state capitalism.) To echo that distinction, the author has used the phrase "really existing globalization" to distinguish the current forms of globalization from other more just and equitable forms.**

The Environmental and Spatial Transformation of 'World Cities'

By Luciana Melchert Saguas Presas

Since the 1980s, multinational corporations and agents of the financial industry have internationalized and dispersed their production process along a global assembly line. Some cities have thereby emerged as "world cities" – nodal points within this new global economy. Cities such as London, New York, São Paulo and Mumbai (Bombay) have become command centres or strategic sites where dispersed production processes are reintegrated, materialized and controlled.

Nowadays, these "world cities" do not function in isolation but increasingly form part of a transnational urban system, which, in turn, operates under complex mechanisms of interaction. These cities influence international economic activity and social dynamics; these dynamics, conversely, shape not only their socio-economic order but also their spatial form. In this sense, a context has emerged in which fundamental processes of change are channelled to urban spaces throughout the world city network, making these cities more vulnerable to environmental problems and infrastructure limitations.

Verticalization

A morphological analysis of world cities reveals three main trends in spatial transformation that are developing in parallel, leading to similar environmental effects. The first is a process of *verticalization,* resulting from the transformation of these cities into international business centres and national economic engines. The presence of foreign firms and high-income workers has contributed to sharp increases in urban commercial and residential property prices, particularly during the past decade. This has led to the proliferation of high-rise buildings and high-density land usage. In environmental terms, a high concentration of tall structures puts at stake issues such as natural ventilation and lighting. Therefore, more indoor artificial lighting, refrigeration/heating and ventilation are frequently required to operate buildings in world cities, with higher energy consumption implications. High buildings also imply increased wind speed at pedestrian level, leading to reduced outdoor activity and increased use of indoor space. In fact, the less friendly the outdoor environment, the more people rely on indoor comfort, resulting in more energy consumption.

Expansion and suburbanization

Secondly, as urban land prices have risen significantly, these world cities have also been undergoing a rapid process of **expansion** and suburbanization – as peripheral areas are more affordable – entailing more energy use and pollution from transport for commuting. In addition, economic and real estate pressures prompt alterations in the local building and urban planning codes so as to facilitate construction permits. In this process, environmental considerations usually fall short, leading to a type of "spontaneous growth" trend. Many metropolises nowadays suffer from heat island effect as the expansion of urban areas implies a decrease in green areas, more paving and lower average urban albedo levels. Temperatures may reach up to 10°C higher than those of adjacent non-urban areas, thereby severely increasing the need for air conditioning in buildings and aggregating energy consumption of these cities. Further, more complex and environmentally intensive systems of water supply and treatment are required to pump water over longer distances in expanding cities. In addition, difficult drainage solutions are required to cope with urban flooding problems, making their environmental and energy load tremendous.

Discontextualization

The third trend is towards *discontextualization*. The presence of foreign firms – active investors, buyers and users of real estate – has contributed to the internationalization and homogenization of the property sector, which to some extent leads to reproduction of similar cities within the global network of cities. Most world cities demonstrate a process of "decharacterization" as more and more buildings respond to international standards of design, construction techniques and building services, which no longer correspond with the local climatic and cultural context.

New York skyscrapers. © Cecilia Andersson

Many such buildings increasingly rely on artificial operating systems, which have significant environmental implications.

Ecological opportunities

From this morphological review, it can be argued that world cities also represent a tremendous opportunity to channel positive urban ecological trends. As these cities are part of a transnational urban network, from which innovations emanate, they may be in a position to push for global ecological reform of the built environment. There are now several innovative examples of ecologically-friendly buildings and design. In fact, cities such as Amsterdam, London and Kuala Lumpur, among others, are redefining architecture and urbanism by incorporating environmental concerns within the overall planning and design of urban spaces and structures. Whether these solutions will be implemented within the network of world cities and how they will differ from location to location will depend on how local and international actors interact in each city.

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Withering Heights

By Rasna Warah

© Johan Brunkvist

The collapse of the World Trade Centre's twin towers on 11 September 2001 will no doubt be the subject of discussion and debate in architectural and structural engineering schools around the world. What caused the chain reaction of one floor falling on top of the other? Was the structure not safe enough to survive an impact? Are skyscrapers inherently hazardous? How tall is too tall?

Architecturally, the twin towers of the World Trade Centre were a marvel in design and strength. The towers had a distinctive structural system that utilized the exterior wall framing for lateral bracing. This "metal tube" design consisted of hundreds of steel columns spaced around the outer face of each tower to support much of the weight. The system was considered revolutionary at the time of construction, for it distributed loads more efficiently than the traditional column-and-beam-supported systems. Each of the towers' 110 floors comprised a reinforced concrete pad on a metal deck supported by steel crossbeams, weighing over 2 million kilograms. In other words, if a minor earthquake had hit New York, the towers would have suffered minimal damage.

Architects now agree that it was not the impact of passenger planes that brought the towers tumbling down. Rather, it was the melting of the steel girders supporting the structures that eventually led to the collapse of the towers. According to John Young, a practising architect in New York, "*If the fires were suppressed, it is likely the structure could have survived the impact, except for localized damage. However, conventional architectural fire-suppression systems are not designed to suppress the types of fires caused by plane crashes and cascading jet fuel…In retrospect, the towers withstood the initial impact amazingly well. The exterior walls were damaged, but because there were no interior columns, they were not knocked out by the plane. However, the steel framework around the interior core of the building – composed of elevators, stairs and building systems – and which supported the floor structure along the exterior wall structure, was surely damaged to some extent. Still, both buildings stood – until raging fires undermined the load-bearing capacity of the interior structure.*"

The September 11 attacks also brought home the fact that the modern-day terrorist is probably trained in, or has a good understanding of, how buildings are built. In New York, information on the structural and architectural aspects of buildings is fairly easy to find. Says Young: "*It is possible that these buildings were deliberately targeted because of their distinctive construction. The buildings were very well known in architectural and engineering circles and were heavily publicized during design and construction in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Construction drawings are readily available to the public.*"

In the final analysis, it is not just the architects, the structural engineers, the city authorities or the corporate sector that have to bear the burden of proof. As Young put it, the ultimate blame lies not only with the terrorists who flew into the towers, but with the U.S. federal, military and intelligence agencies that failed to foil the attack on the World Trade Centre in the first place.

Nonetheless, professionals in the building industry will have to revisit the question of whether the giant skyscraper is inherently hazardous, and therefore, unnecessary. Most will argue that if built to standards, the structure itself is relatively safe. (Most tall buildings in New York are built to withstand gusting winds and even hurricanes.) Moreover, in compact, limited urban spaces such as Manhattan Island, skyscrapers offer economies of scale. The skyscraper can accommodate more people per square metre than the densest slum in Asia. In cities where real estate is not only scarce but also exorbitant, companies seeking a central location can fit an entire workforce into one acre of land, without worrying too much about travel time between offices. However, a fire emergency can spell doom in a skyscraper — firefighters are generally ill-equipped to deal with fires that occur at the top of very high buildings – a fact that became painfully clear on September 11.

But, as a recent *Newsweek* article commented, skyscrapers have always been more about ego than about economics. The ultimate phallic symbol, the skyscraper is to the executive what the obelisk was to the Romans. That is why managers always reserve the top floors for themselves. However, after the attack on New York, the "view from the window" may be the least of their concerns.

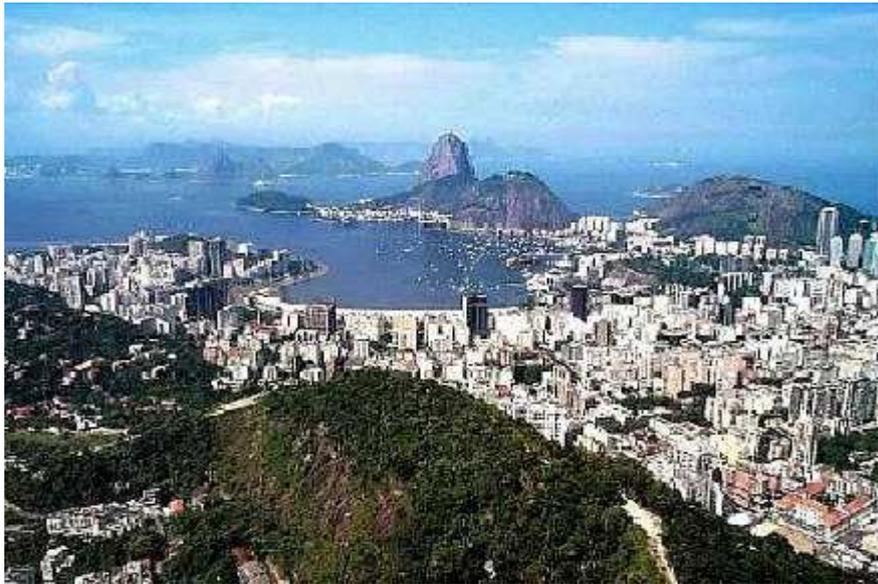***Rasna Warah is Editor of Habitat Debate.***

Strengthening Institutional and Political Partnerships

By Roberto Ottolenghi

In recent years, the work of UN-Habitat in the Latin America and Caribbean Region has had to reflect the important changes occurring both within the organization and within the overall system of development co-operation. However, prior to discussing the implications of those changes, there is a need to highlight the crucial challenges presented by the region for an agency like UN-Habitat, which focuses on improving the management of cities.

An aerial view of Rio de Janeiro.

It is a well-known fact that the urbanization process in Latin America and the Caribbean is virtually complete: in 1995, 73 per cent of the region's population lived in urban areas; in 2025, this figure will rise to 85 per cent. This is not necessarily due to rural-to-urban migration; rather, it is largely because of progressive expansion of metropolitan areas and conurbation. Inevitably, the last 20 years have witnessed a massive transfer of poverty from rural to urban areas. Huge increases in the percentages of urban households living in poverty were registered throughout the 1980s. These figures rolled back only slightly in the 1990s. Indicators of distribution of wealth and socio-economic disparities have, unfortunately, continued to increase social segregation.

In spite of large scale efforts by national authorities, international agencies and multilateral banks to improve capital investment, the percentage of urban households living in informal settlements or in some forms of illegal tenure has remained fixed at staggeringly high levels. (It is estimated that the percentage of households living in extra-legal arrangements reach 59 per cent in Bogota, 50 per cent in Caracas, Sao Paulo and Quito and 40 per cent in Mexico City and Lima.) High levels of vulnerability (sanitary, environmental and social) and increasing urban violence are typical urban phenomena in the region. The above sketchy picture of visible trends points at a generalized failure in systematically addressing the challenge of reform in governance structures, in scaling-up in a sustainable way the important and costly upgrading interventions of past years, and in enhancing local capacity to replicate on a larger scale the valuable experiences gained in so many local examples.

The opening of the UN-Habitat Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (Habitat-LAC) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1996 signalled the institutional will of the organization to gain greater proximity and legitimacy with regional partners in implementing a global mandate of raised political importance and visibility. The transfer of regional operations from Nairobi to Rio coincided with a reform process within the agency that was designed to strengthen its normative mandate in promoting the Habitat Agenda. It also coincided with a massive withdrawal of development co-operation resources (both multilateral and bilateral) from a region which, in spite of persisting poverty levels, shows per capita economic indicators markedly above those of Least Developed Countries targeted for international assistance. This severely cut into technical co-operation funds available for sectoral projects. UN-Habitat developed institutional and technical tools to better leverage its message and mandate vis-à-vis implementation of the Habitat Agenda through reform in governance structures and through policy analysis, knowledge transfer and management and capacity building at the national and local level.

Political and institutional partnerships and networking became especially crucial in the run-up to Istanbul + 5 (June 2001) and the launching of the Global Campaigns on Secure Tenure and Urban Governance. For this purpose, Habitat-LAC maintains close dialogue with its main national counterparts through MINURVI, the council of sectoral Ministers which is UN-Habitat's main policy constituency in the region. Through MINURVI, the organization has been able to promote genuine regional co-operation among countries and different sub-regions through increased national awareness of global commitments and a cohesive regional platform for action that all countries endorse. It is encouraging to note that all partners and major constituencies – such as high level government representatives, regional and sub-regional municipal associations, parliamentarians, networks of NGOs and the organized urban poor – are

reaching crucial consensus on a programme of activities.

The two Global Campaigns in the region are focusing on legal and regulatory reforms through open and participatory national and local fora. Country activities in Brazil, Colombia, Jamaica, Mexico and Nicaragua have already started. In many ways, the Campaigns run in parallel to the work of the Cities Alliance, a UNCHS (Habitat)-World Bank partnership, which aims at scaling-up urban upgrading through national and/or city efforts. The Cities Alliance currently has ongoing activities in Central America (sub-regional), Brazil (national) and El Salvador (metropolitan area of San Salvador).

One of the issues that is high on Habitat-LAC's agenda is the need to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards through better urban development and construction standards, as explained in a separate article. Habitat-LAC has responded to calamities in Central America, Colombia and Peru, which have suffered from natural hazards in recent years.

Other global programmes and tools are increasingly being adapted to promote better knowledge management and local capacity building (e.g. Best Practices and Indicators). The Urban Management Programme, a multi-donor programme executed by UN-Habitat from its regional office in Quito (Ecuador), targets primarily local authorities through capacity building, exchange of experiences and participatory consultations.

Traditional technical co-operation projects have been substituted by partnership arrangements with governments (national and local) willing to make resources available to enlist UN-Habitat technical services, as part of a framework for institutional reform and strengthening. Sometimes limited UNDP seed capital is available for programme formulation. Lack of sizeable external resources demands high specialization of inputs, strengthening of local capacity and integration with national and local processes to ensure national continuity and sustainability.

Habitat-LAC will continue to operate from the city of Rio de Janeiro thanks to a renewed agreement with the Municipality, which generously supports its presence.

Roberto Ottolenghi is Chief of UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Supporting the Municipality of Guayaquil

By Rosalba Medina

With approximately 2.5 million inhabitants spread over 320 square kilometres of urban space, Guayaquil is the biggest city in Ecuador, as well as its main economic centre. Since 1995, UN-Habitat has been providing technical assistance to the Municipality of Guayaquil (MIMG) to formulate the Urban Development Regulatory Plan and Municipal Physical Development Regulatory Plan, as well as their implementing mechanisms. This UNDP-executed project also aims at strengthening the MIMG's urban cadastre and property taxation systems and improving urban planning, road and transport planning, training of key personnel and codification of local legal instruments.

During its first phase (1995-1996), the project assisted the Municipal Department of Planning (DPLAN) in the collection and analysis of sectoral data, as MIMG had no database whatsoever to support the formulation of local policies. Preliminary recommendations to set up urban policies were made and sectoral schemes for the primary road system, urban property taxation, urban growth and densification of urbanized areas were drafted for discussion between MIMG and its partners, both in the public and the private sectors.

A very important achievement during this first phase was the registration of more than 400,000 urban plots, filling in standard and computer-processed forms, along with their valuation for property tax collection and identification of tenure patterns. Also, the complete automatization of operations within the cadastre section was ensured to avoid corruption and to keep a sustained level of income to allow for funding physical and social investments.

The second phase (1997-2001) of the project was characterized by an institutional opening of MIMG to other local partners, both in the public and private sectors, which led to concerted processes to define and agree on local policies. Achievements included: a manual of recommendations for seismic-protected building techniques developed together with the Catholic University; housing improvement solutions implemented yearly by MIMG in close cooperation with affected communities, along with tenure regularization processes; several legal instruments on land use, building standards and taxation parameters which were thoroughly discussed with the private sector and other partners in civil society until they were officially approved by the City Council; and the development of an urban cadastre database which led to the formulation of a GIS-oriented municipal information system. The Municipal Department of Planning also prepared a series of urban indicators to periodically monitor the city's growth and life conditions.

As a result of these achievements, MIMG is negotiating a new project with UN-Habitat and UNDP to assist it in the implementation of the 2003-2004 municipal work plan, with strong possibilities for further extension.

Ms. Rosalba Medina is Chief Technical Adviser to the UN-Habitat-UNDP project providing technical assistance to the Municipality of Guayaquil in Ecuador.

Improving Urban Governance

By Alberto Paranhos

Since 1995, UN-Habitat has consistently supported local governments in Latin America and the Caribbean region. Besides being the most urbanized region in the developing world, the region is also under strong pressure to decentralize, which places UN-Habitat in a strategic position in countries where these issues are critical.

In Ecuador, the Municipality of Guayaquil has been a long-term partner of UN-Habitat. After a period of political and economic crises, Ecuador started to discuss how best decentralization processes could be implemented to accelerate physical and social investments, as well as improve the effectiveness of public policies. UN-Habitat is involved in assisting all territorial dimensions of sub-national governments (Provinces, Counties, Civil Parishes) to define their best potential and capacity attributes, trying to efficiently combine the principle of subsidiarity and a cost-effective quality of delivery.

In 2000, UNDP teamed up with UN-Habitat, governmental agencies such as the State Bank for Development, and bilateral agencies such as GTZ, to thoroughly discuss with all dimensions of sub-national government the requirements for their institutional strengthening, including both the legal and regulatory framework, and the qualification of human resources. As a result, a programme-approach initiative is being formulated to assist the national government to carefully and progressively address these issues. This programme is under discussion with other UN sister-agencies, such as UNICEF and PAHO/WHO, as well as key non-governmental actors, as well as all sub-national governments.

In Paraguay, UNDP discussed with several national and municipal authorities how best to offer technical assistance and management expertise to carry on local development programmes. The country was experiencing a severe governance crisis and it was noticed that the population still had a lot of confidence in their local authorities. In addition, bi-national enterprises that generate hydro-electrical energy in the Paraná river are expected to distribute "energy royalties" to all Municipalities and Provincial Governments from 2001 onwards. With these inputs, UNDP requested UN-Habitat to explore how best local governments could be supported to speed up the process of promoting local development. An SPPD-funded project was quickly formulated and approved. A mission was fielded to identify potential partners and assess needs within the local governments.

Three key issues were discussed: (a) local governments do not have enough information to fully understand their local situation and identify potentialities and opportunities; (b) local governments are not yet perceived by the private sector as a key partner to promote development; (c) local governments do not know how to network and share responsibilities and results. UN-Habitat, along with other bilateral and UN cooperation agencies, explored the possibilities of teaming up and offering consolidated technical assistance to local governments, and an agreement was reached to start with the harmonization of ongoing agendas.

In the process, all partners consulted identified the municipal cadastre as a key instrument to foster local development, since property tax is levied based on this data. It was agreed that UNDP and UN-Habitat would lead a UN-wide initiative in Paraguay to promote local governance, using the recommendations of the recent Common Country Assessment exercise as well as the guidelines of the Global Campaign on Urban Governance. In parallel, a key partner — the Paraguayan association of building industries, CAPACO — was inspired to team up with the UN system in this process. The association fully understood the need for immediate technical assistance to both mayors and governors to address the issue of urban poverty. They also decided to formulate and finance a specific initiative on municipal cadastre to speed up the process of generating accurate information and improving the collection of financial resources. These examples point to potentially successful partnerships between UN-Habitat, UN sister-agencies led by UNDP and other key institutional actors in the region's increasingly complex urban scenario.

Mr. Alberto Paranhos is Human Settlements Adviser to UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.

An upgraded neighbourhood in Rio.

CAPACO's 'Risk- and Cost-sharing' Initiative

By Carlos Ocampos and Dimas Piris DaMotta

For several reasons, the economic situation in Paraguay is going downhill and the number of opportunities for industrial and service activities is decreasing. This is especially crucial for the building industry, which has always been a pillar of economic growth and job generation. CAPACO, as the association of building industry companies, is greatly concerned by this situation and has started to explore alternative mechanisms to generate investments. The key issue is where to find new and sustainable resources to fund these investments, thus reversing the current situation and fostering economic growth.

In Paraguay, people perceive local authorities to be less corrupt, more efficient and more socially-aware than central governments. This is partly due to the fact that after 1990, the re-democratization process in the country included the direct election of mayors for five-year terms, as well as Province governors, who were previously appointed by the President. However, effectiveness of local government policies is at stake, because local governments lack their own resources to carry out extensive investments programmes. Intergovernmental transfers are also severely affected by declining national revenues, as well as a series of complicated administrative rules.

Deeper analysis reveals that local authorities do not take full advantage of the property tax mechanism, which is managed by municipalities and earns resources for them (85 per cent of total collected in municipalities and 15 per cent of the total in provinces). The CAPACO Board quickly understood that local real estate databases should be improved to allow for increasing property tax collection, thus yielding more financial resources to fund local investments.

At the same time, the UN system had carried out a huge exercise to formulate a Common Country Assessment of Paraguay. An important output of this exercise was the recognition that governance (at both national and local level) should be dramatically improved. Decentralization was accepted as a strategy to promote local governance and UN-Habitat was invited to formulate a national programme to support the strengthening of local governments, which is now underway.

After consulting UN-Habitat and UNDP, CAPACO decided to explore technical and financial support to the Municipalities under the modality of "risk- and cost-sharing" initiatives. This involved an initial technical and financial contribution from a CAPACO-member company to a municipality to be selected through normal public bidding, extending the real estate database (cadastre), by carrying out field surveys, improving property tax management procedures and training municipal personnel. The company would be reimbursed by being paid a percentage of the increased value of property tax collected. It is envisaged that initial two-year agreements will be drawn up.

CAPACO created a Commission on Municipal Affairs to explore with UN-Habitat and UNDP an extensive programme focusing on technical assistance to improve local real estate database management. CAPACO's rationale for this was that improving property tax collection would allow municipalities to have more resources of their own, which can then be used to subcontract public works and other investments involving the building industry. Real estate improvement and financial yields are the focus of the assistance.

So far, CAPACO has been financing the activities of the Commission on Municipal Affairs, which is composed of three professionals. These activities include:

● Developing specific forms to evaluate and monitor public works at local level, according to the national rules provided by the Law;

● Developing detailed guidelines on the bidding processes to subcontract and monitor decentralized public works;

● Developing Terms of Reference for subcontracting real estate improvement activities;

● Formulating project profiles to prepare manuals and booklets on municipal management, urban environment management, territorial planning and urban cadastre management, to be extensively distributed to all municipal and provincial governments in 2002;

● Holding a series of workshops with municipal authorities to discuss urban management strategies and opportunities for joint and micro-regional activities;

● Conducting random surveys on the real estate database and tax property procedures in selected municipalities within Asunción Metropolitan Area to assess the potential value of the cadastres, when improved, and the expected incremental value in the near future;

● Holding discussions with the Government of Central Province, to which the Metropolitan Area is attached, so that this governmental dimension can also team up with CAPACO and the municipalities involved.

All the above activities are reflected in a Memorandum of Understanding signed between CAPACO and UNDP to define and strengthen this institutional cooperation. It is expected that at least three municipal initiatives can be negotiated by the end of 2001 (to be carried out in 2002-2003), putting into practice this rather innovative "risk- and cost-sharing" strategy in Paraguay.

Carlos Ocampos is Chairman of the Commission on Municipal Affairs at CAPACO, and Dimas Piris DaMotta is his Senior Adviser for urban cadastre.

A Strategic Alliance

By James Torres Lara

The Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Associations (FLACMA) — the Regional Chapter of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) — and the Latin American Centre for the Training and Development of the Local Governments (CELCADEL) have developed an important strategic alliance on key issues for the strengthening of the region's municipalities.

The strategic alliance was consolidated in 1998 when IULA-FLACMA-CELCADEL signed an agreement of cooperation with UN-Habitat's Urban Management Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean. The objective of the alliance is to develop programmes aimed at strengthening local democracy, designing environmental policies, fighting poverty and promoting economic development, thereby contributing to the sustainability of the region. Various projects have been formulated and implemented under the alliance, including urban surveys in Cochabamba (Bolivia) and Montevideo (Uruguay), training programmes and promotion of gender equity in policies, programmes and activities.

Jaime Torres Lara is Executive Secretary of IULA-FLACMA and Director of CELCADEL.

Reducing Vulnerability to Disasters and Internal Conflict

By Fernando Patino Millan

Recently, many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have been highly affected by disasters as well as by internal armed conflict. Disasters and internal conflict are often the result of social inequalities, inadequate environmental practices associated with complex geological and climatic characteristics and defective democracy. This historical accumulation of vulnerabilities and conflicts characterizing the Latin American and Caribbean region has had a particularly acute effect on the poor, who tend to suffer most during wars and disasters.

In this context, the work of UN-Habitat's Regional Office in Latin America and the Caribbean (Habitat-LAC) has increasingly incorporated activities related to the reduction of vulnerability and the integration of displaced populations. Habitat-LAC's prevention, mitigation and reconstruction strategies include: building and reinforcing local and community capacities, explicit articulation of all actions together with social and economic development dimensions; and, strengthening of democratic governance as a guiding element of the whole process.

Towards Structural Reduction of Vulnerability in Human Settlements

Habitat-LAC has been actively involved in important national and sub-regional interventions in the area of structural reduction of vulnerability. These interventions include post-disaster assessment missions in countries affected by hurricanes, floods and earthquakes (for example, in Central America (1999), in Colombia (1999), Venezuela (2000) and Peru (2001). Habitat-LAC has also intervened in post-disaster resettlement programmes such as Montserrat (1996); the support to community based prevention processes like in the case of Pichincha Volcano's slopes in Quito, Ecuador; and technical assistance provided to intergovernmental bodies, like the Central American Integration System (SICA), formulating

vulnerability reduction programmes in the housing sector.

The lessons learned during these processes have allowed the development of a methodological approach based on the following two components:

(i) Formulation and implementation of intervention strategies leading to Structural Reduction of Vulnerabilities in human settlements based on: a) a systemic approach that takes into account the linkages between environmental, economic, social and political dimensions of development; and b) the identification of diverse "risk" scenarios present in a particular country or region vis-à-vis settlement patterns and existing housing.

(ii) Assumption of a Risk Management approach which emphasizes capacity building for local government and community prevention and mitigation of natural or human-made disasters. This approach allows a process of intervention in disaster situations based on a "continuum" starting from the concrete emergency to the sustainable reconstruction of the affected zones. Adopting a risk management approach as an integral part of housing and urban development policies and programmes enables countries, municipalities and communities to minimize the risks and effects of future disasters.

Towards an equitable integration of displaced populations

Acting in conflict and post-conflict

situations has been a part of the work of Habitat-LAC since 1994. The two most relevant projects are: "Resettlement of displaced people due to the armed conflict in Guatemala" carried out successfully between 1994 and 1999; and recently, the regional project "Integrating Migratory Dynamics and Displacements in Local Management within Central America and Colombia" which ended in August 2001 and which counted on the participation of the Community Development Programme (CDP) and the Urban Management Programme (UMP) associated with the Arias Foundation and IDRC, Canada.

These experiences have permitted advancement in the elaboration of a methodology of intervention based on a local, territorial and rights focus — linking the process of integration of displaced persons not only to the process of constructing democratic governance at the local level (promoting participatory and multi-cultural approaches), but also to the promotion of equitable access to fundamental human rights, especially secure tenure as one of the basic tools displaced people need in the practise of their full rights to citizenship.

From Planning to Effective Action

There is no doubt that disaster management is an important element of the political agenda in the region. This can be seen in the Regional Action Plan adopted by MINURVI, the regional intergovernmental body, and in many different declarations and documents approved by municipal associations and civil society networks. However, it is time to advance further and pinpoint those strategic plans and operative programmes that reduce the risk of death or destruction due to disaster or war. Again, the key to avoiding these risks lies in developing processes that will allow the adoption and implementation of effective prevention and mitigation programmes that actively involve the affected population, particularly the poorest groups.

Fernando Patino Millan is an international consultant currently working with UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Designing Housing and Urban Development Indicators

By Andres Necochea

UN-Habitat is supporting the governments of Mexico and Panama to design and implement an indicators system allowing for the monitoring of the effects of housing and urban development management in terms of the policy objectives set at the national level.

The work in Mexico concentrates mainly on the design of housing indicators to be implemented by the Social Development Secretary, SEDESOL, and the Housing Policy and Support Department. UNDP, with the technical support of Habitat-LAC, is supporting the project. The selected indicators are intended to provide federal government authorities with a tool to monitor housing sector activities at the national, state and municipal levels.

In Panama, UN-Habitat has collaborated with the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of National Development (the latter being in charge of National Official Statistics) in fulfilling the task. The objective, in this case, was to provide the government and other national authorities with adequate tools to monitor the implementation of the Metropolitan Plan for the Areas of Panama and Colon in the areas of housing, urban development and urban environment.

These indicators form part of Mexico and Panama's input to UNDP's Human Development Reports. Countries such as Brazil and Colombia have also requested UN-Habitat's technical support in this area.

Andres Necochea is Human Settlements Adviser to UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.

'Constructing the Web'

By Catalina Hinchey Trujillo

Since the Central American "Cities´ Summit" in October 1999 in Quetzaltenango, Honduras, the five Latin American Regional branches of the Huairou Commission* (HIC Women & Shelter Network, Groots-LAC, WEDO, Women For Peace Network and REPEM) have been strengthening their links in order to ensure the right to housing and the right to the city for all women living in urban poverty. A common plan of action is being developed and clear indicators of success (or failure) have been approved and implemented.

One of the latest joint activities was the special event: " Social & Gender Equity in the Construction of Citizenship", within the framework of the week of regional activities "Cities For Peace" held in Bogota, Colombia, from 14-17 May 2001. Immediately afterwards, four grassroots women from Guatemala and El Salvador undertook an exchange visit with the organizations of displaced people in two war-torn areas of Colombia (Urabá and Magdalena Medio).

The sharing of their experience of war and the post-war peace process, together with their continuous struggle to ensure an equal place for women in this process (after all, they shared the armed struggle side by side with their male counterparts), has been a strong incentive for the women of Colombia. Capacity building in participation in local governance (based on prior experience) is now being implemented. Special legislation favouring women heading households in situations of armed conflict is being developed jointly with the members of the grassroots women's organizations, the National Government of Colombia, UN-Habitat, UNDP and UNIFEM. Training in participatory budgeting, small-scale enterprises and conflict resolution are being jointly developed. And funds for constructing this intricate web have already been secured from NOVIB, while more support is being leveraged with other international development agencies and local and national governments.

Priorities:
- Women's right to secure tenure, separate from their relationship with another person (husband, father, brother….) policy development, legal support for positive implementation, capacity-building in negotiation skills

- Development and implementation of indicators

- Gender monitoring of peace process and women's right to housing & right to the city

- Further exchanges between women's groups from Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Mexico (Chiapas), and Colombia

- Elaboration of joint proposal (finished) and active search for support (on-going)

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* The Huairou Commission is an international umbrella organizations that, in a unique way, brings together women members of grassroots organizations, NGOs, activists, politicians, government officials and UN officials from around the world. Their common commitment is to highlight and support the priorities of grassroots women and their organizations.

UMP-LAC: Working Hand-in-Hand with Cities and their Citizens

By Yves Cabannes

Quito, Ecuador.

The Urban Management Programme (UMP) is a joint UN-Habitat-UNDP programme that supports participatory management of cities and "pro-poor participatory governance". Within this mission, the main challenge of UMP in the Latin America and Caribbean region lies in answering the question: How does one achieve the development objectives of "eradicating urban poverty", "improving urban environmental management", "promoting participatory urban governance" and " achieving gender equity"? UMP's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UMP-LAC) is finding the answers within a large and growing number of partners in the region.

A programme anchored in diverse harbours

UMP-LAC works in the region through thematic regional anchor institutions, which are the true implementers of the programme. Anchor institutions — such as COPEVI in Mexico, FEDEVIVIENDA in Colombia, IULA/FLACMA/CELCADEL and CIUDAD in Ecuador, IPES in Peru, and Agora XXI and CEARAH in Brazil — are

centres of expertise which have become repositories of UMP's substantive knowledge. They are also the primary means through which this knowledge is transferred to other institutions and cities. Local partners, usually NGOs, grassroots organizations, universities and local governments are involved directly in the day-to- day activities.

UMP-LAC's office in Quito, Ecuador, kindly provided by our host, the Municipality of Quito, is a permanent hub where regional and local partners, trainees, and the UMP-LAC staff coordinate these activities. This Office, depending on partners' efforts, should eventually become a more permanent reference centre on urban management issues.

City consultations: Partnerships for local change

"City consultations" are the cornerstones of UMP's strategy. Each of these consultations is adapted to the local specificities and to the priorities of the local partners. They facilitate and strengthen dialogue between the urban administration, the communities and other stakeholders, in order to decide how best to solve

priority problems.

Instead of starting with a general problem and moving to a specific one, a specific entry point is selected on a consensual basis in each city. For instance, in the city of Maracaibo in Venezuela and Quito in Ecuador, access to credit for the poor and especially for women was the entry point for addressing poverty. In Port of Spain (Trinidad) and Cap Haitian (Haiti), waste collection and management was selected as the priority entry point. Municipal youth councils, composed of girls and boys under 18, and participatory budgeting have been among the priorities defined by the consultation process in cities such as Barra Mansa and Icapui in Brazil, and Villa El Salvador, in Peru.

As a result of supporting more than 40 consultations in cities of different sizes and characteristics, UMP has built, with its partners, a select menu of a dozen options that reflect what cities want and how they can face their challenges.

From Participatory Planning to Priority Action Programmes

The setting up of an action plan that is a platform reflecting a consensus between the various actors is not an end in itself, but a starting point. The next step consists of designing operational tools that need to be endorsed by the local government. These priority action plans take different forms and can include, according to the situation:
- Specific projects and programmes;
- Municipal policies;
- New financial institutions and changes in the allocation of municipal resources; and
- New institutional frameworks that institutionalize or formalize participatory channels.

In El Salvador, where rampant violence and degradation of the historic centre was the main problem, the first step was the signing of an inter-partner agreement that defined the roles of all players. The "citizens consultation" for the revitalization of the Historic Centre consisted of a set of surveys and meetings with the different groups of users, such as street vendors, taxi drivers, street children and artists.

As a result, a "Special Plan for the Revitalization of the Historic Centre", called "Saving urban heritage without excluding

the residents" organized actions in 10 areas. The priority action programme selected 3 of these 10 areas (rehabilitation of parks, improvement of public security and new urban plan for the centre). Concrete results from the Priority Action Programme include the formulation of 9 projects worth US$1.3 million, the establishment of a plan for resource mobilization and the design a Trust Fund for the Historic Centre.

Knowledge as a tool for building more human cities

One of the main recommendations of the Regional Consultative Forum, comprising donors and partners, was that UMP-LAC should improve monitoring and documentation of the processes that they are involved in. In addition, more attention should be given to other innovative practices that facilitate the exchange of experience and knowledge building.

Beyond the mere documentation of experiences, the "knowledge production" effort focuses on three basic aspects: the lessons learned from experience, the tools and methods used and the identification of the resource persons who can help in transferring and adopting the experience in other cities.

A database with 5000 entries, 2000 references on urban management in the region and 9000 contacts (people and institutions) has also been set up. This comprehensive Urban Information System (www.pgualc.org) is tailored to the needs of partners in the region.

Urban poverty agenda

Based on collective experience and knowledge, UMP-LAC and its partners are advocates of an urban agenda that considers participation and poverty as key issues. Different activities to address this agenda have been developed. However, despite wide mobilization of actors and preliminary results, the sustainability of the local processes and their capacity for improving the life of the poor in a permanent way remains a challenge. Another challenge is the very sustainability of the Quito office and the strengthening of a Reference Centre on Urban Management which is able to respond to and support cities on a much larger scale.

Yves Cabannes is Coordinator of the Urban Management Programme's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, based in Quito, Ecuador.

Towards 'Engendered' Urban Management
By Patricia Palacios

The dynamics of the city produce and maintain social inequalities, among them, gender inequality. Nevertheless, through the initiative of disadvantaged social groups, opportunities to bring about greater equality can also be realized. UMP-LAC and its partner institutions have been promoting the incorporation of a gender perspective and equal opportunities in urban management through their activities, particularly within the City Consultations (CCs), Action Plans and Priority Action Programmes.

The Gender Equity Adviser to UMP-LAC, under the direction of IULA-CELCADEL, has made specific recommendations on gender equality in City Consultations, including the need for a baseline gender diagnosis which takes into account the differentiated social relationships between men and women and their respective life conditions, needs and ideas about local development. In November 1999 and January 2000, a survey was carried out in order to record disaggregated data and quality of life statistics within the City Consultation process and to assess the perception that the promoters of the Consultations had of differences in participation, demands and suggested solutions. The monitoring exercise initiated through this survey sparked a gender analysis on the part of some of those involved. This analysis revealed a situation common to all City Consultations – the different experiences of men and women in urban life, participation in local development and in the City Consultation itself, On the other hand, it also became clear that in several cases, initiatives to capture key elements of a gender focus already existed. This reinforced the need on the part of the CCs to respect, strengthen and join in with this work in progress and to reconceptualise the practice, theoretical focus and gender methodology.

At the beginning of 2001, an evaluation of 35 City Consultations was carried out to observe the ways in which each consultation incorporated a gender focus. The evaluation determined that in 31 per cent of the 35 cases reviewed, the inclusion of a gender focus in the City Consultation was moderate and in 23 per cent of the cases, it was high. Through this evaluation it was concluded that:

● The support given by the City Consultations to participatory, plural and democratic processes favours the participation of organized groups of women and, through them, the incorporation of demands and interests of gender within those processes.

● The themes that are more amenable to the inclusion of a gender focus in the City Consultations are poverty eradication and governance, given the fact that the disadvantaged female population seeks equality fundamentally in the economic and political aspects of the administration of a city.

● Local governments and cities are increasingly becoming opportunities for the construction of equitable and inclusive societies.

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New Statute Aims to Make Brazilian Cities More Inclusive

By Edésio Fernandes

On 10 July 2001 a groundbreaking legal development took place in Brazil with the enactment of Federal Law no. 10.257, entitled "City Statute", which aims to regulate the original chapter on urban policy introduced by the 1988 Constitution. The new law provides consistent legal support to those municipalities committed to confronting the grave urban, social and environmental problems which have directly affected the daily living conditions of the 82 per cent of Brazilians who live in cities. Resulting from an intense negotiation process which lasted more than ten years, within and beyond the National Congress, the City Statute confirmed and widened the fundamental legal-political role of municipalities in the formulation of directives for urban planning, as well as in conducting the process of urban development and management. It deserves to be known at the international level because it is an inspiring example of how national governments can materialise the principles and proposals of the UN-Habitat's Global Campaigns on Good Governance and on Secure Tenure for the Urban Poor.

It is impossible to understimate the impact the new law can have on Brazil's legal and urban order, once its possibilities are fully understood and its provisions effectively put into practice. The City Statute has four main dimensions, namely: a conceptual one, providing elements for the interpretation of the constitutional principle of the social functions of urban property and of the city; the regulation of new instruments for the construction of a different urban order by the municipalities; the indication of processes for the democratic management of cities; and the identification of legal instruments for the comprehensive regularization of informal settlements in private and public urban areas.

In conceptual terms, the City Statute broke with the long-standing tradition of civil law and set the basis of a new legal-political paradigm for urban land use and development control, especially by adopting the following approach to urban property rights: the right to urban property is ensured provided that a social function is accomplished, which is determined by municipal urban legislation. It is the task of municipal governments to control the process of urban development through the formulation of territorial and land use policies in which the individual interests of landowners necessarily co-exist with other social, cultural and environmental interests of other groups and the

city as a whole. For this purpose, municipal government was given the power to, through laws and several urban planning and management instruments to determine the measure of this (possible) balance between individual and collective interests over the utilisation of this non-renewable resource essential to sustainable development in cities, that is, urban land.

In order to materialise and widen the scope for municipal action, the City Statute regulated the legal instruments created by the 1988 Constitution, as well as creating new ones. All such instruments can, and should, be used in a combined manner aiming not only to regulate the process of land use development, but especially to interpret it according to a "concept of the city" to be expressed through the local Master Plan. Municipalities were given more conditions to interfere with, and possibly revert to some extent, the pattern and dynamics of formal and informal urban land markets, especially those of a speculative nature, which have long brought

Rio's favelas.

about social exclusion and spatial segregation in Brazil. In fact, the combination of traditional planning mechanisms – zoning; subdivision; building rules, etc. – with the new instruments – compulsory subdivision/edification/utilisation order, extra fiscal use of local property tax progressively over time; expropriation-sanction with payment in titles of public debt; surface rights; preference rights for the municipality; onerous transfer of building rights; etc. – will open a new range of possibilities for the construction of a new urban order which is, at once, economically more efficient, politically more just and sensitive to social and environmental questions.

Another fundamental dimension of the City Statute concerns the need for municipalities to integrate urban planning, legislation and management so as to democratize the local decision-making process and thus legitimize a new, socially
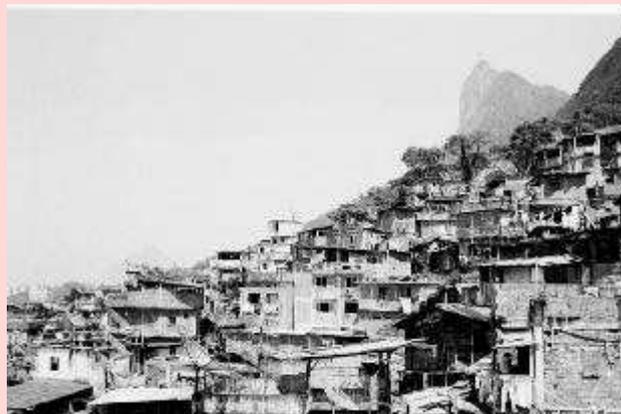
orientated urban-legal order. Several mechanisms were recognized to ensure the effective participation of citizens and associations in urban planning and management: public audiences, consultations, creation of councils, reports of environmental and neighbourhood impact, popular initiative for the proposal of urban laws, and, above all, the practices of the participatory budgeting process. Moreover, the new law also emphasised the importance of establishing new relations between the state, the private and the community sectors, especially through partnerships and urban linkage operations to be promoted within a clearly defined legal-political and fiscal framework.

Last, but not least, the City Statute also recognized legal instruments to enable municipalities to promote land tenure regularization programmes and thus democratize the conditions of access to urban land and housing. As well as regulating the constitutional institutes of usucapiao (adverse possession) rights and concession of the real right to use (a form of leasehold), to be used in the regularisation of informal settlements in, respectively, private and public land, the new law went one step further and admitted the collective utilisation of such instruments. The section of the City Statute that created a third instrument, the concession of special use for housing purposes, was vetoed by the President on legal, environmental and political grounds. However, given the active mobilization of the National Forum for Urban Reform, the Provisional Measure no. 2.220 was signed by the President on 4 September 2001, recognizing the subjective right (and not only the prerogative of the Public Authorities) of those occupying public land until that date, under certain circumstances, to be granted the concession of special use for housing purposes. The Provisional Measure also established the conditions for the municipal authorities to promote the removal of the occupiers of unsuitable public land to more adequate areas. This is a measure of extreme social and political importance, but its application will require a concentrated legal, political and administrative effort on the part of the municipalities to respond to the existing situation in a suitable legal manner which is compatible with other social and environmental interests.

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Rio's Holistic Housing Policy

By Lu Petersen

The basic idea behind the housing policy adopted by the City of Rio de Janeiro in 1993 is to guarantee all citizens the right to the city and to make urban management more efficient. This policy goes beyond the production of housing and articulates a set of measures, all pointing to the integration of community priorities and solutions. These actions have resulted in the improvement of urban infrastructure and transport systems. They have produced new social commodities and public services that ensured a more just and equitable distribution of services within the city.

Examples include:

● The "Favela Bairro" (Slum to Neighbourhood) Programme is specifically aimed at urbanistic and social integration of slum areas, transforming them into consolidated neighbourhoods within the city network. This Programme, carried out by the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro and funded by the Inter-American Development Bank, benefits 250,000 inhabitants in 58 slum areas, and constitutes one of the more progressive and significant activities carried out by the city to promote social integration and improve the quality of urban life.

● "Novas Alternativas" (New Alternatives) is a programme concentrating on unoccupied urban areas and on the remodelling of deteriorated buildings situated in areas with adequate urban infrastructure. In these cases, the housing solutions are mainly multi-family buildings.

● "Morar Sem Risco" (Living without Risk) aims to eliminate illegal occupations in high risk areas (slopes, rivers and lagoons, borders, highways and railway paths) and to give families an opportunity for new and more adequate housing.

● In the irregular settlements the "Morar Legal" (Live Legally) Programme interventions are oriented towards the provision of basic urban infrastructure and legal secure tenure.

● The "Regularização Fundiária" (Tenure Regularization) Programme is aimed at promoting legal measures for the regulation of urban and land tenure.

The new challenges

Until now, the social integration of slum inhabitants, through the integrated city social policy, has only occurred on a limited scale, focusing mainly on the needs of pre-school age children. Several municipal centres have been set in motion in order to offer holistic attention to the inhabitants (girls, boys, women and men). These offer the promotion of cooperatives, computer classes and a support programme for autonomous/informal workers.

Today the challenge is to expand and scale-up these programmes, thus guaranteeing sustainability. One of the efforts in this direction is the new methodology applied in the Pilot project "Celula Urbana da Favela do Jacarezinho" (Urban Cell of the Jacarezinho Slum). These Urban Cells are conceived as structures with integrated functions relating to housing, commerce, culture and recreation. It is expected that these units (cells) will become catalysts for urban, environmental, social, economic and political development at local level.

On the other hand, and recognizing some of the efforts developed by the municipal authorities, with the only exception of the "Morar Legal" (Live Legally) Programme, very little progress has been made in the field of tenure regularization and legalization. Therefore, this aspect has become a priority for the administration. In this regard, the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Latin America and Caribbean, establishing a programme which includes local and national seminars, legal research and other relevant activities, all oriented towards advancing the discussion and formulation of urban policies aimed at solving situations of illegal and irregular tenure.

From this perspective, the City of Rio de Janeiro is now an integral part of UN-Habitat's Global Campaign for Secure Tenure. The main objective of this partnership is to strengthen and complement those activities that point towards a significant improvement in the quality of life of the urban poor and to the consolidation of a more integrated and sustainable city.

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An improved neighbourhood in Rio.

Montevideo Declaration Recognizes 'Social Production of Housing'

One of the fundamental objectives of the Habitat Agenda is adequate shelter for all. Towards this end, States should facilitate the active involvement of different actors involved in housing production. In New York (June 2001) the review of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda was full of positive governmental response, but certain critical issues remain unresolved.

In the context of globalization, the national governments have reduced the resources they allocate to housing; at the same time, they interpret their role as "facilitators" by handing over the production of housing to the private sector, where only those who can pay will ever have access to the final product.

In October 2001, HIC-LAC (Habitat International Coalition-Latin America & Caribbean) and SELVIP (the Latin American Secretariat of Popular Housing) held a seminar entitled, "The Social Production of Housing and Habitat and Neo-Liberalism: the peoples´ capital versus the capital of misery", in the city of Montevideo, Uruguay. The seminar was organized by FUCVAM (The Uruguayan Federation of Self-help Housing Cooperatives), with the support of SELVIP. Almost 600 delegates from ten Latin American countries presented and analyzed 40 experiences of grassroots organizations in the area of social production of housing.

The seminar resulted in the Declaration of Montevideo which states: *"In the last few decades, peoples´ organizations and committed technical experts from around the continent, have built millions of square metres of city. We have extended the networks of community services and collective, basic services. We have ensured that our homes are safer and healthier – within our possibilities – we transform the dry earth into a loving environment. We have built "Life" in our urban territory, carrying with us, our tastes, cultures and memories. We have gathered together generations of alloused hands and hands which are willing and ready to defend our place in the world."*

Data shows that between 60-70 per cent of housing construction in Latin America is produced without any official (governmental) support. This production is slow, and is only possible through the joint effort of families and organized communities. As of today, no sustainable support is available for this form of "social housing production". However, in December 2000, The Peoples´ World Assembly, held in Mexico City (see more information at www.laneta.apc.org/hic-al), recognized the important role of social production of housing in Latin America.

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MINURVI:
Promoting Inter-governmental Cooperation and Coordination

By Salvador Gomila

The Forum of Ministers and Highest Authorities of Housing and Urban Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI) came about in March 1992 when the then Minister of Housing and Urban Development of Chile and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) called for the creation of an entity that would promote policy co-ordination and inter-governmental co-operation on housing and urban development issues in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

MINURVI's main objectives include representing the common Latin American and Caribbean interests in the field of human settlements sustainable development, promoting and strengthening co-operation, interchange and dissemination of experiences among countries, as well as contributing to the follow-up in fulfilling the commitments and implementing the strategies related to the Habitat Agenda, Agenda 21 and especially to the Regional Plan of Action for Human Settlements.

Since the start of its work, this Ministerial Forum has counted on the support of the UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (Habitat-LAC) and ECLAC in the search for a consensus on sectoral housing and urban development policies that need to be addressed in the region. These include the negative consequences of increased poverty, unequal resource distribution and economic marginality, insufficient provision of infrastructure and basic services and environmental decay.

This MINURVI-UN-Habitat-ECLAC cooperation has led to several joint activities, including preparation and organization of regional conferences and promotion of the global campaigns for secure tenure and urban governance. A useful collaboration has also been established with the Ibero-American Programme on Science and Technology for Development (CYTED), which will result in important mutual support in the implementation on the ground of all efforts in the housing field in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

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Iberoamerican and Caribbean Forum on Best Practices

By Stephen Walsh

With the continued support of the government of Spain and parallel funding raised locally, UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean continues to implement the Iberoamerican and Caribbean Forum on Best Practices — a regional network of public and private sector partners formed in 1997 to identify, analyze, document and disseminate regional Best Practices.

The Forum's overall objectives for the year 2001 - 2002 are to expand its network, identify new best practices, support small NGOs and Municipalities to document their experiences for inclusion in the Best Practices Database, elaborate short Best Practice case studies and publish capacity building tools in print and on the Internet in English, Spanish and Portuguese. One example of the capacity building tools to be produced this year is the elaboration and distribution of two publications, both in print and on the Internet. Each publication is to include 25 two-page narratives on Best Practices that the Forum has identified in the region. The first publication is a compilation of Municipal Best Practices that will focus on practices that involve the participation of a municipal government. The second is to be organized by themes and will include good and best practices undertaken by any implementing organization from across the region. Two electronic debates will be held following dissemination of the publications to foster the direct exchange of information between the participating practices and other interested parties.

In November 2001, the Forum hosted the 2001 Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme (BLP) Steering Committee Meeting in Florianopolis, Brazil. This meeting was a parallel activity of "Habitat Brazil 2001", a regional conference that Habitat-LAC coordinates every two years in collaboration with the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Government of Brazil, the Municipality of Florianopolis and the local organizers, Sul 21. This conference promotes debate on areas of the Habitat Agenda among regional and international experts, governmental agencies, NGOs and grass roots organizations. Each year the conference also permits the direct exchange of Best Practices knowledge in BLP Special Sessions. This year, apart from hosting the BLP Steering Committee, two special Best Practices sessions were held. The first was a Poster Session to present projects from across the region that were evaluated and then entered into the Dubai 2002 Award process. The second was a day-long session to present the lessons learned from the ten winners of the 2000 Dubai International Award for Best Practices.

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SMEs: The Informal Safety Nets

By Fernando Murillo

Small and micro-businesses provide much-needed employment in developing countries. © IFAD

Globalization has brought about territorial changes that pose dilemmas for planning, particularly in cities that have been unable to capture or succeed in international markets. Which city model should local authorities follow in search of progress and well-being of their own communities? This is a key question in contemporary debates on urbanism.

Often, the response to this dilemma is to intensify efforts to attain the status of a "global city" or world city by investing in infrastructure to attract foreign capital. Some progressive municipalities have at the same time adopted policies aimed at equity by implementing social housing programmes and subsidizing transport or infrastructure. Whilst most people would agree that there is a need to balance policies so as to achieve both competitiveness and equity, the results on the ground tend to point towards greater exclusion and marginalization. It is assumed that large multinational companies will solve problems such as unemployment. But the result has been more unemployment and more poverty for many urban residents. Socio-economic difficulties in countries in the South point to a scenario where multinationals are quick to reduce costs in terms of labour, and shift from country to country, depending on each country's competitive advantage.

However, a recent research study in which I was involved, has shown that it is not these companies, but the small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and increasingly the micro-businesses, which succeed in providing much needed employment. Regardless of their social level, a large portion of the population in developing countries has turned to micro-businesses in search of survival. The technology of communication, production and transportation in today's globalized world provides the unique opportunity for matching supply with demand, and allowing for the exchange of goods and services at low cost. The degree of vulnerability of micro businesses pushes them to seek out the informal sector. But this informal setup, which would appear to provide an important competitive edge in terms of reducing costs through avoiding tax and other regulation requirements, over time becomes their main obstacle to growth.

With no regard for zoning bylaws, informal networks crop up in certain neighbourhoods that provide a combination of incentives: good location, skills of the population, existence of community networks, affordable housing and infrastructure. Informal businesses have grown consistently and steadily in Asia, Latin American and Africa (in that order). Employment and income have been provided in this way through the small and micro business.

Territorial planning plays a key role in the success equation of these enterprises. Marginalized populations are all too aware of this, and hence stubbornly refuse to follow the modern plans for globalized cities, which tend to relocate them to remote and peripheral areas, far from their potential markets. Seeking their own form of survival, they tend to mock regulations and confound plans to consolidate purely residential areas by increasing the incidence of micro and small industrial activities in urban areas.

The communities where new micro business networks are appearing are rich in social interaction, transfer of know-how and innovation, and are real incubators of popular businesses. Their success has led several governments and development agencies to imitate them, albeit with extreme caution and often ignoring their popular roots. However, their approach is technocratic, quite contrary to the fluid community spirit that produced micro enterprises in the first place.

The idea of viewing the "informal city" as an opportunity to solve the problem of structural poverty, rather than a problem or a threat to be eradicated, stems from its enormous productive potential. The ability to transform a marginalized neighbourhood into a micro-productive district will depend to a large extent on the way in which this problem-opportunity is approached. The main challenge facing cities in the South is to recognize the enormous potential of the "informal city" in order to build genuine and truly "global" cities.

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Globalization's Impact on Local Governance

By Solomon Benjamin

Emerging trends in Indian metro-cities suggest that globalization involving multi-national corporations have tended to promote governance structures that reinforce poverty and threaten the livelihoods of the urban poor.

Indian cities are characterized by vibrant neighbourhood-based local economy clusters. Such " *Neighborhoods as Factory*" are centered around manufacturing and services relating to items of daily use[1] : cooking utensils, domestic electric cables, electric equipment, simple washing machines, plumbing fixtures, auto-repair, among others. Viswas Nager, for instance, a *Neighborhood as Factory* in Delhi, specializes in cables and conductors. As India's foremost cluster with 2000 home- and neighborhood- based enterprises, it generates between 25 to 40 per cent of the total production of domestic light duty cables. With a voting population of 21,000 in 1991, Viswas Nager provided direct employment to about 25,000 people and indirect employment to an estimated 30,000 people. Delhi has at least 15 such industrial clusters, and about 60 smaller ones.

The startling fact is that public input to spur this economic productivity comes not from specialized technical training, business development programmes, or even financial schemes. Instead, it comes from land regularization that provides access to basic infrastructure and regulations that allow residents to develop plots incrementally in response to opportunities, like renting out space to a new firm or to in-coming entrepreneurs and workers. Responsive land settings are also characterized by a diversity of tenure systems that allow various income groups to settle in close physical proximity to each other. Poor groups access and benefit from such productive land settings not only due to their functional economic linkages but also via the political process.

Many of these *Neighborhoods as Factories* fall outside the formal planning process. However, their development is driven by intense local politics. Local groups (especially low-income groups), form associations to influence decision-making at the municipal level via councillors. This process is messy, complicated, requiring political acumen, but one that has proved quite effective in the Indian democratic system. It manages to ensure (although in an uneven and unpredictable way) that poor groups can access public resources via "vote-bank" politics. Since public investments respond to priorities related to particular neighborhood economies, politics is centered on livelihood issues. If need be, such politics plays a crucial role in subverting regressive interventions like evictions and demolitions.

Significantly, the influence of this type of politics has transformed municipal structures to "Porous Bureaucracies" characterized by relatively easy access. Unlike more explicit confrontational protest, groups use more subtle and sophisticated strategies, or "*Politics by Stealth*". This is important since the politics relates to not only inappropriate planning but to the competition with richer groups in influencing

A neighbourhood store in Mumbai. © Rasna Warah

public decision-making and access to public investments. Also, poor groups are active agents rather than passive beneficiaries.

The role of MNCs

Globalization in Indian cities is promoted through a strong alliance between domestic corporate groups and multinational corporations (MNCs), whose complexes of steel, glass and granite with international standard connectivity require high value infrastructure and services. Government support on these issues is critical and institutional structures also take on a particular significance.

Earlier forms of governance centered on municipal structures that allowed easy access to local (including poor) groups. The emphasis on master planning justified special purpose developmental agencies, such as "Development Authorities" where policy- and decision-making processes were controlled by higher level political and bureaucratic circuits at the provincial and national government level. Significantly, while corporate groups have easy access to these circuits, the poor, among other local groups, and local elected representatives are excluded.

This centralization has further reinforced the power of corporate groups. In Bangalore, for instance, the Chief Minister has established a high powered conglomeration of corporate groups known as the Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF). This group not only directs overall policy-making but also supervises the operational procedures of service provider institutions and city corporations. Elected representatives find themselves by-passed on vital issues.

Another change is a newer genre of institutions set up specifically for mega-projects aimed at the corporate sector. These draw upon significant public funds and police powers to acquire land serviced with high level infrastructure. The land is allotted to corporate entities on a subsidized basis and established around highly confidential "MOUs". Not surprisingly, public investments in this governance structure feed further divisions in already divided cities. It is hardly surprising that such forms of governance lead to high levels of corruption where corporate representatives on the governance committees are accused of using their position to speculate on real estate ventures spurred by public investment.

When powerful corporate (both domestic and international) interests benefit

from such institutional trends and exclusionary master planning promoted in the name of planned development, there are serious impacts in terms of displacement and mass eviction of poor groups and destruction of their livelihoods. In this setup, Neighborhood as Factory type of local economies are categorized as land use violations and unauthorized construction and are deprived of infrastructure services which threaten their economic productivity.

The zeal of the political elite to turn Bangalore into a Singapore has resulted in extensive evictions and demolitions of settlements, especially small business clusters in productive urban locations. The demolished land is re-allocated by master planning to higher income interest groups, including corporations. Similarly, urban renewal promoted by the BATF in traditional central city market areas has evicted hawkers out of productive locations. In November 1999, the Supreme Court of India ordered a clean-up operation in Delhi to "restore the dignity of planned development" and directed the government to shift initially 31,000 and then 97,000 home-based micro-enterprises. At stake is the livelihood of at least 2 million small entrepreneurs and workers. In February 2000, the Supreme Court again directed the Delhi Government to shift 3 million residents out of 1309 settlements. In December 2000, these events led to extensive riots, leading to the complete closure of the capital for a week. In Mumbai, the State government moved to "de-recognize" hutments housing 2.5 million people i.e. half the total slum population in the city. In addition, Mumbai's famous mill areas that once supported a vast worker population are being re-zoned to cater to a corporate elite; many of these areas are being turned into policed entertainment complexes.

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Reference

¹ **Benjamin S. 1996 'Neighborhood as Factory: The Influence of Land Development and Civic Politics on an Industrial Cluster in Delhi, India'** *Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation submitted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Urban Studies and Planning.*

India's Indebted Cities

By Darshini Mahadevia

The sentiments

" *The quality of life in cities should be improved to make cities attractive for international investments.*" This statement by the Municipal Commissioner of Ahmedabad City, on the occasion of the public presentation of the Urban Indicators Performance Study for 10 cities in Gujarat (the second most urbanized state in India) on 30 June 2001 captures the mood of "urban India".

The second draft plan of Mumbai (Bombay), prepared in 1995 states: " *In the context of liberalization of economic policies, Greater Bombay has a very significant role to play, not only in contributing to the national economy, but also in facilitating integration of the country's economy with the rest of the world. … (It) has the potential to emerge as an international city, fostering growth of financial and business services, and hi-tech, export-oriented industries*". In line with this, the state government has developed an International Finance and Business Centre in Mumbai. Ahmedabad, the second largest city in west India, also proposed an International Trade and Finance Centre, which, however did not take-off. Hyderabad, the fifth largest metropolis in India, nicknamed Cyberabad, has altered its appearance to fit the global economy. The city has built complexes, such as Software Technology Park, Infocity, and so on, to promote the Information Technology sector. The popular belief is that, Bangalore, once called the Silicon Valley of India, has lost out.

The Urban Agenda laid out by the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) states: " *In the era of economic reforms, liberalization and globalization, cities and towns are emerging as the centres of domestic and international investment.*" The first goal of the Urban Agenda therefore is: Supporting economic reforms, industrialization, productivity growth, expansion of financial and other services, and promoting economic activity in both formal and informal sectors. Open any Development Plan of a metropolitan city or read any state's urban development policy document and you will find the same sentiments expressed. Indian states are trying hard to market their main city to the global economy.

The arena

Is "urban India" a homogenous entity? Far from it. Urban India is

Mumbai's rising skyline; many Indian cities are borrowing heavily to gain 'world city' status. © Rasna Warah

diverse, with varying city sizes and functions. The theatre of globalization is unfolding in only a few metropolitan cities. There are about 37 such cities now, five of which have been classified as mega-cities, namely, Mumbai (Bombay), Kolkata (Calcutta), Chennai (Madras), Bangalore and Hyderabad. These, in addition to a few other metropolises (Ahmedabad, Surat, Pune, Jaipur, and the administrative capital, New Delhi) have developed links to the global economy. The rest (more than 3,500 urban centers) are mired in local economies.

Increasing debt and vulnerability

Urban sector reforms have been initiated for the primary purpose of encouraging private sector investment in urban infrastructure. Various modes of Private-Public-Partnership (PPP) are being explored by different urban local bodies. Municipal bonds, tradable development rights, urban shelter and infrastructure funds, and use of land as a resource are some of the new techniques being applied by the city authorities. The Constitution (74th) Amendment Act of 1992, which introduced decentralized urban governance, is being used for financial participation of even the poor urban communities in privatization efforts.

Urban infrastructure and service management in large cities and metropolises now fall under the PPP. Development corporations have been established in various States, including Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. The small and medium towns that do not have any revenue base are excluded from the urban sector reforms.

Some metropolitan cities have gone in for innovative financing of urban infrastructure. Ahmedabad City, being one of them, was the first city to raise 1,000 million rupees from the capital market through bonds (subscribed mainly by institutions). It is going again for bonds of the same amount through private placements with financial institutions. The city has borrowed at commercial rates from various financial institutions, such as the Housing and Urban Development Corporation

(HUDCO) and the Industrial Credit and Investment Company India (ICICI) that have diversified into urban infrastructure financing, US Housing Guarantee Funds through USAID, and so on. Water supply and sanitation and road and bridge widening projects have been taken up. In the process, the ten best "octroi tax" collection points, and property tax of all but one of the five zones of the city, have been escrowed. The share of loan charges on the revenue account has

> The globalizing cities of India are rushing to privatize and liberalize using the debt route.

increased from 10.8 per cent in 1996-97 to 14.3 per cent in 2001-02. The expenditure on the revenue account on some of the social services has decreased; medical aid from 11.4 per cent in 1996-97 to 9.47 per cent in 2000-01, and public health has fallen from 2.5 per cent to 2.1 per cent in the same period. The general resources of the city are getting tied to debt repayment. This is just a taste of things to come.

The casualties

Unfortunately, displacement of slum dwellers in the metropolitan cities has increased as roads are being widened and land is being reclaimed for city beautification projects. Slums are being evicted from city parks or open spaces for local environmental concerns. For example, large-scale displacement has taken place in riverfront

development projects in Ahmedabad, Indore, Hyderabad, and New Delhi. Under "operation flush-out", 835 households in Indore were evicted. In Bhubaneshwar, evictions are anticipated for the proposed Metro Rail Transit System (MRTS). In Delhi, it is expected that eviction of *Jhuggi-Jhompri* (JJ) colonies will lead to the displacement of some 80,000 households. In Mumbai, 2,500 households were evicted from a colony in Santa Cruz West because of a Public Interest Litigation filed by a local citizen's group asking the Court to widen the road as per the provisions of the master plan. About 86,000 households were evicted from a National Park in May 2000 after a Public Interest Litigation was filed by an environmental group.

One of the consequences of this one-sided globalization agenda in the urban sector has been a slowdown in rate of urbanization from 3.1 per cent per annum in the 1980s to 2.7 per cent per annum in the 1990s. Migration to the metropolitan cities has been discouraged to keep the urban poor away from these cities.

Policy-makers, now liberated from the clutches of the socialist ideology that was prevalent in India in the 1960s and 1970s, have swung the other way. Various experiments in privatization and commercialization are underway. These are restricted to a few urban centers, mainly the metropolitan cities and a few other large cities. The globalizing cities of India are rushing to privatize and liberalize using the debt route. The long-term impact of these policies is not yet known. Most of these projects have been taken up under the influence of international funding agencies, often without adequate studies or information on sustainability.

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Privatization Increases Vulnerability in Cities

For slum dwellers in developing countries, globalization is not the answer to poverty but an important cause of it.

By David Westendorff

The tragic events of 11 September — deplorable in the depth of their cowardice and cunning disregard for human life — have accomplished something their perpetrators desperately wanted: to instill fear and an enduring sense of insecurity among the people that stand to benefit most directly and disproportionately from the prevailing mode of globalization. The World Trade Towers embody in the popular consciousness the nerve centre of a global capitalist system of trade and investment. Massive companies and huge lots of commodities were bought and sold there, as were risk capital and the related services that make such huge transactions possible and consistently profitable. Fabulous fortunes have been and continue to be made in Wall Street. The primary objective of this global capitalist system is uninterrupted economic growth on a global scale. Questions of distribution are left largely aside, assuming that markets and, sometimes, governments will on the whole spread the benefits of growth fairly between and within countries.

For slum dwellers in developing countries, globalization, as it currently operates, is not the answer to poverty but an important cause of it. While many in the stratosphere of the global economy continue to debate this, the strength of the perception among the world's poor that economic globalization is bad for them will continue to produce willing martyrs to the unholy cause of terrorists.

Privatization of basic services may not improve the quality of life of the urban poor. © United Nations

Nonetheless, the most influential multilateral development and finance agencies emphasize the role of unfettered market forces in development strategies. In the past half-decade, these agencies have not only continued to press for "fair competition" in international economic relations, but to apply the same rules within domestic economic relations. The failed Multilateral Agreement on Investment and the coming GATS are a case in point. These agreements seek not only to assure equal treatment between foreign and domestic investors in the domestic economy, regardless of levels of development, but also to ensure that where services can be provided by the private sector, domestic regulation cannot prevent it. Health care, education, essential urban services such as water, sanitation, fire protection, prison management, etc. at the national, subnational and local levels are all targets for deregulation and/or privatization.

Numerous local authorities and associations of local governments perceive these multilateral agreements as a threat to the wellbeing of local populations. Are local authorities right in opposing these proposed agreements? Should local authorities (metropolitan and sub-metropolitan) be exempt

from agreements that promote and deepen international competition in the provision of public and social services? The answer to the first question is, yes, at least in the short-term. Over the next 10 to 15 years, there is good reason not to push for deep integration of the local public service economy into the global economy. Here are some of the principal reasons:

● Today the developing world's largest metropolitan areas shelter large and increasingly vulnerable low-income populations. If the peripheral settlements outside the formal boundaries of these cities are taken into account, populations living at or below the poverty line often exceed 50 per cent of the total urban population. For these populations, urban services are either absent or erratically provided. Where they exist, they are often provided by private enterprises at higher-prices and lesser quality than those provided to better-off neighborhoods. Many more poor households make do with self-provisioning. In medium and smaller cities of the Third World, the quality and terms of urban service provision tend to be worse.

● Despite the failings of state entities to deliver high-quality services to urban residents, very few of the increasingly vocal and competent civil society groups that are working to improve living conditions in cities of the Third World are clamouring for privatized delivery of services. More common is the call for local authorities to expand and improve service provision, often in close collaboration with civil society organizations. These collaborations are not always successful, but they do appear to generate positive synergies and contribute innovative solutions. In some cases these are market-oriented, in others not.

● There is ample evidence that the cost of delivering adequate services to seriously degraded urban settlements is more expensive than delivering them to well-off neighborhoods. The risks of contamination and/or breakdown are higher in the former as are the costs of maintenance due to the fragile environmental and social conditions. Under a more market-oriented service

provision regime, private providers will have even less incentive to assume these extra costs, nor will increasingly cash-strapped public authorities have the resources or political will to subsidize services to low-income residents.

● The history of public and social service delivery reveals that the most extensive, inclusive and best-managed systems were developed and operated under some form of state control. There are no long-term studies showing that private sector development and management of "public" services is sustainable and equitable. With the growing numbers of vulnerable populations in cities of the developing world, the hope that entrepreneurs will be innovative enough to provide the needed services without subsidies may be

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misplaced. (Taking into account that inclusivity is an important aspect of quality of service, the rapid decline in the quality of privatized services in the UK and New Zealand may be taken as an indication of the current state of affairs.)

● The knock-on effects of privatization can be serious. First, economies of scale apply to public services. If the viable portions of the public service market are privatized and the subsidized

portions are left to the state, the costs of providing to the latter will rise. At the same time, the public provider will have fewer internal sources of revenue for cross-subsidizing services to low-income residents. Second, public services are intended to promote the broadest public welfare. If the government does not have an intimate understanding of the needs of all the population groups to be served, and the technology, economics and management of the services provided, how will it maintain its capacity to adequately monitor the performance of the actual service deliverers or to set appropriate standards?

● An increasingly democratic network of local authorities around the world has begun to work with civil society and the private sector to ensure the delivery of high quality services to urban residents. These are nascent efforts but it will take years of testing and implementation before any reliable conclusions can be drawn about which effort has had the most positive long-term social impact.

● Last, but not least, the politics of re-regulation or a return to public provision are fraught with apparently insurmountable obstacles. Bond markets, a bell-weather of market fundamentalism, do not reward government decisions that could increase the role of the state in the economy, lest they signal a potential slowing of economic growth or an increase in public-debt.

If privatization is irreversible, can we really afford to take a chance before there's a lot more evidence telling us where and when to privatize and when not to? No, because it is a risk that will certainly court more insecurity at home and abroad.

David Westendorff coordinated research projects on Urban Governance at the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) between 1993 and 2001. He has recently relocated to Beijing, China where he continues to coordinate research projects for several international agencies and the NGO coalition INCHRITI.

The Need to Belong
A Tale of Three Cities

By Rasna Warah

When I watched the World Trade Centre's twin towers collapsing on television on 11 September 2001, I felt as if a part of me had also disappeared. Three months before the terrorist attack on New York, I was in the rooftop bar of the World Trade Centre staring in awe at the Manhattan skyline, which at night from half a kilometre up, looks like the stars are descending to Earth. That image will stay with me forever.

I am not American and I have only been to New York four times in my life. But for me, New York is, in a way, my spiritual home. It is a city that embraces you the minute you step on its countless curbs, the one that pulses with life, where every pore in your body dances to its endless buzz. Until August this year — when I went to Havana — it was the only city in which I felt truly alive.

Why do New York and Havana – cities that couldn't be more different – have this effect on me? Havana is the antithesis of New York, socially, economically and ideologically. The contrasts are stark. New York is the bastion of capitalism and the driving force behind globalization. Havana is one of the few – albeit defiant – symbols of socialism and insularity in the world. New York welcomes immigrants; Havana views foreigners with suspicion. In New York, money and what it can buy determine social status. In Havana, there is no class system – the doctor and the waiter are both civil servants and earn almost the same salary. In New York, homeless people live on the streets. In Havana there is no homelessness as the state ensures that everyone is housed. In New York, as in the rest of the States, race still matters. In Havana, race is irrelevant – almost everyone is Mulatto (mixed race).

Yet, why do I feel like I belong to them both? More importantly, why is it that even though I was born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, I look to other cities for a sense of belonging?

Maybe it is because both New York and Havana are people-driven cities — defined by the people who live in them. Even a casual visitor can add to the cities' dynamics. Both cities throb with life's myriad of colours and sounds. People meet, eat, negotiate, argue and love on the streets; they claim the urban spaces, rather than shun them. New Yorkers and Havana's citizens, like all Cubans, have a *joie de vivre*. People lay claim on their urban spaces as if they owned every slab on the pavement, every tree in the parks and every brick in the public buildings.

The need to belong is probably exacerbated by the fact that my own city — Nairobi — has never been – and never pretended to be – a city belonging to the people who live in it. Since colonial times, Nairobi has always been a place where people came to work, not to settle. Unlike many cities, Nairobi was not born naturally as a port or trading centre. It was created as a resting place for colonial administrators and railway engineers. Colonial policies were predicated on containment, labour supply and racial segregation. Africans were encouraged to come to the city as "single" male migrants, rather than as families. The indigenous population, therefore, came to view Nairobi as a place where it could earn wages that could be repatriated to their families "back home". Unfortunately, this trend continues to this day. Even Members of Parliament representing a Nairobi constituency rush back to their villages for support and succor.

Then there is the physical and psychological make-up of the city, which makes it completely unconducive to urban life. Everyone—including the slum dwellers – lives in suburbs. The rich and the poor live in close proximity to each other but might as well be in different worlds. The growing insecurity in the city has turned neighbourhood estates into military barracks, with guards, dogs and fences. Most of the city shuts down after 6 p.m. In a city where the sun shines most of the year, there are surprisingly few pavement cafes. Art and culture is only available to those who can afford the entry fee. In reality, the city streets only belong to two groups of people — those who have nowhere else to go and those who
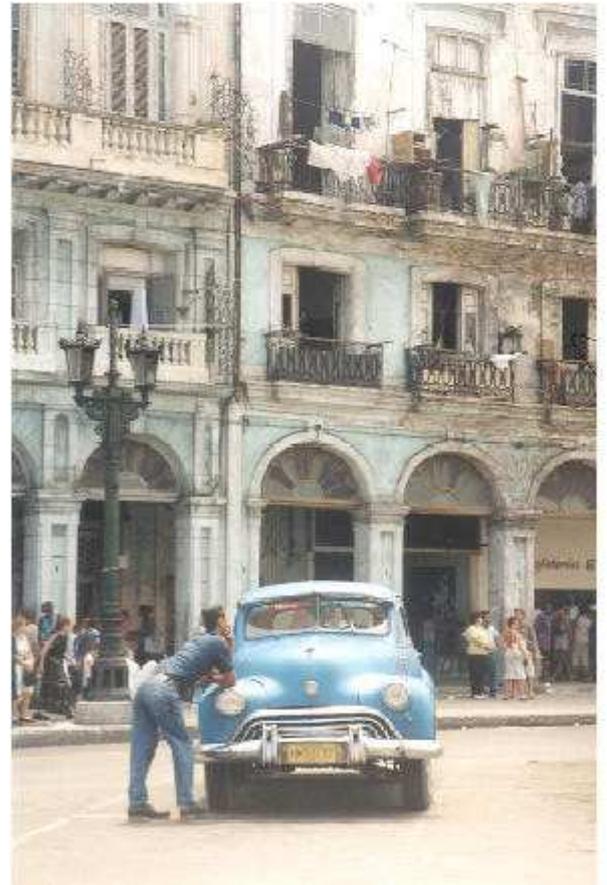
Hanging out in Havana. © Rasna Warah

keep everyone away from the streets i.e. the street children and the thugs. The only thing Nairobi has in common with New York is that in 1998 it also became a victim of terrorist attacks. Havana, on the other hand, has lived in the shadow of a possible US invasion for more than 40 years.

Is belonging to any one city important in this globalizing world? Probably not, because globalization allows us to carry any city with us – in our thoughts and in our memories. As the French-Lebanese writer Amin Maalouf states: "*What makes me myself rather than anyone else is the very fact that I am poised between two countries, two or three languages and several cultural traditions. It is precisely this that defines my identity. Would I exist more authentically if I cut off a part of myself…Of course not. Identity can't be compartmentalised. I haven't got several identities: I've got just one, made up of many components in a mixture that is unique to me.*"

Rasna Warah is Editor of Habitat Debate. She is also author of "Triple Heritage: A Journey to Self-discovery", a book that explores the history and identity of Asians in Kenya.

HABITAT NEWS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ELEVATES HABITAT TO A UN PROGRAMME

In December 2001, at its 56th session, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that elevates the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to a Programme of the UN now called the **United Nations Human Settlements Programme**, or **UN-Habitat.**

The adoption of the resolution means that the new United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, will be in a better position to help governments and other partners to implement the Habitat Agenda, and to meet the Millennium Declaration's goal of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020. UN-Habitat will be called upon not only to do its statutory work, but also to help in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of cities, towns and villages all over the world in post-conflict situations.

"*The year 2002 begins with a new Habitat for a new Millennium*" said Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, the Executive Director of UN-Habitat. "*Our challenge is now to use its enhanced institutional profile to better serve its core mission of prioritizing the brown agenda. Improving the state of human settlements, housing and urban infrastructure is critical if we are to help over one billion poor people who are deprived of the basic fundamental attributes of human dignity — a decent home and an acceptable living environment.*"

In June 2001, governments called for the strengthening of the Commission on Human Settlements and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements in the Declaration on Cities and other Human Settlements, which was adopted at the Special Session of the General Assembly, commonly known as Istanbul+ 5.

In response to this request, the Secretary-General's report on "*Options for reviewing and strengthening the mandate and status of the Commission on Human Settlements and the status, role and function of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)*" (A/56/618, November 2001) outlined the rationale for the elevation of Habitat to the rank of a United Nations Programme. The report set out the main accomplishments of the Commission on Human Settlements and of its secretariat since the establishment of the Centre in 1978. It also emphasized the fact that in a rapidly changing world, the daunting challenge of accelerated urban growth, accompanied by urbanization of poverty, needs to be addressed and that it is in this context that options for strengthening the Centre should be considered. It further states that because of its long experience in discharging its role and functions in the field of human settlements, the Centre had acquired the traits of a full programme.

The resolution goes beyond the designation of the new programme UN-Habitat. It contains many provisions aimed at improving its operational capability. The governing body, to be known as the **Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme**, will report to the General Assembly through ECOSOC, with the Committee of Permanent Representatives to Habitat to serve as the Governing Council's inter-sessional subsidiary body. The Centre as it has been known so far will retain its present role, mandate and functions and shall operate as the Programme's Secretariat. But by virtue of its elevation to programme status, Habitat will be better able to enhance its co-operation with all other agencies of the United Nations system, which operates under the leadership of the Secretary-General within the framework of the Chief Executives Board for Co-ordination.

The adoption of the resolution brings to a conclusion the process of revitalization that was started over two years ago by Mr. Klaus Toepfer, then Acting Executive Director of Habitat, and successfully continued by Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka since her appointment as Executive Director in October 2000.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Tools to Support Participatory Urban Decision-making
Published by UN-Habitat, Nairobi, July 2001
HS/628/01E
ISBN 92-1-131616-2

This toolkit is a contribution to the Global Campaign on Urban Governance, an initiative led by UN-Habitat in collaboration with a whole range of partners. As a strategic entry point for the effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the development goal of this Campaign is to contribute to the eradication of poverty through improved urban governance. To this effect the Campaign aims to increase the capacity of local authorities and other stakeholders to practise good urban governance. Participatory decision-making processes are an essential means to achieve this goal. This toolkit has been designed to enhance knowledge and capacities of municipalities and those working in the field of urban governance, especially, by improving and helping to institutionalize such participatory approaches. It is hoped that the toolkit will contribute to the wider dialogue, advocacy and capacity-building efforts towards good urban governance. The tools contained herein will form part of an electronic database of tools encompassing various principles promoted by the Urban Governance Campaign and would be subject to regular update.

Building an Environmental Management Information System (EMIS)
Published by UN-Habitat, Nairobi, December 2000
HS/605/00E
ISBN 92-1-131463-1

This toolkit is part of a series developed by the UN-Habitat-UNEP Sustainable Cities Programme to provide detailed operational guidance to people implementing city-level projects within the Programme. The toolkit describes the Environmental Management Information System (EMIS) and gives a step-by-step explanation of how the EMIS can be built. It contains not only explanations and step-by-step guidelines, but also special tips and practical advice based on experiences gained in partner cities.

Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons: Sources 7
Published by the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, Geneva, May 2001
ISBN 92-95004-04-3

Housing and property restitution for returning refugees and internally displaced persons may be an emerging concept, but it is based on long existing principles of international law. This Sourcebook provides a comprehensive collection of that law as well as how it can be applied in real world post-conflict situations. It is an essential reference book for those interested in facilitating the right of refugees and internally displaced persons to return home voluntarily in safety and in dignity.

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Associational Life in African Cities: Popular Responses to the Urban Crisis
Edited by Arne Tostensen, Inge Tvedten and Mariken Vaa
Published by the Nordic Africa Institute (Nordiska Afrikainstitutet), Uppsala, 2001.

This book is about the multitude of associations that have emerged in African cities in recent years. In many cases, they are a response to mounting poverty, failing infrastructure and services, and more generally weak and abdicating governments. Case studies in the book are drawn from a diverse set of 16 African countries. A central theme is how economic decline and the downgrading of the role of the state had led to an upsurge in civil society organizations through urban associations and the strengthening of networks.

Implementing the Habitat Agenda: The 1996-2001 Experience
Published by UN-Habitat, Nairobi, 2001
ISBN 92-1-131619-7
HS/631/01E

This publication is a report of the Thematic Committee, a new forum of debate that took place parallel to the Istanbul+ 5 special session of the General Assembly in June 2001. The Thematic Committee focused on concrete experiences since 1996 in the areas of shelter, environmental management, urban governance and eradication of poverty. The report summarizes the 16 case studies presented and lessons learned from implementation of the Habitat Agenda in various contexts.

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