

ADDENDUM TO DRAFT REPORT ON THE SECOND SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM

The attached report should be incorporated in the draft report of the World Urban Forum II, dated 16-09-2004.

Annex I

REPORTS ON PARTNER DIALOGUES

**3. URBAN GOVERNANCE
PART I: INCLUSIVENESS – TOO LITTLE OR TOO MUCH?**

Thursday, 16 September 2004 am

Panelists

1. Dana Cuff, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA
2. Olivio Dutra, Minister of Cities, Brazil
3. Ilmaar Reepalu, Mayor of Malmö, Sweden
4. Charles Keenja, Former Chairperson of Dar-es-Salaam City Commission, now Minister of Agriculture, Tanzania
5. Kumari Selja, Minister of State for Urban Employment and Poverty of Alleviation, India
6. Clarence Anthony, Mayor of South Bay, Florida, USA and Treasurer, UCLG
7. Jude Howell, Director, Centre for Civil Society, London School of Economics, UK

Documentation

HSP/WUF/2/4 “Dialogue on Civil Society’s Contribution to Urban Governance”

1. ISSUES

Inclusiveness can too easily become “politically correct” and not subject to critical scrutiny. It is important to explore the pros and cons of inclusiveness, its scope and boundaries, and to debate on how inclusiveness can actually work in local governance. Civil society perspectives on stakeholder participation often contrast with, even contradict, governmental viewpoints on how to balance this with the representative role of elected members. Problems of inclusion are also quite pronounced in cities that contain conflicting communities and migrants. All these issues, the wider context they relate to, and their various ramifications, were explored during the Partners’ Dialogue on Urban Governance.

2. DEBATE

The discussion began with a number of speakers underlining the importance of viewing inclusion in the broader institutional context in cities. The formal mechanisms of participation, including innovations such as Participatory Budgeting were examined in detail. Presentations also generated a discussion on non-formal mechanisms of fostering inclusiveness, especially the strengthening of non-governmental and community-based organisations. Panelists provided illustrations of initiatives to foster inclusiveness, particularly from Brazil, Tanzania and India. The case of Tanzania is especially unusual, as it highlighted efforts of a non-elected local authority (the Dar-es-Salaam City Commission) to build public participation in planning, implementing and monitoring development projects. Other speakers also observed that CBOs make formal institutions work more effectively, stating that “Inclusiveness produces efficient and effective communities.” Issues of building inclusiveness in societies with large migrant populations in an otherwise homogeneous community, such as Sweden, were also discussed.

A number of key interventions from the floor pertained to the “opportunity cost” of public participation, especially for the poor, and particularly in situations where the process of participation is lengthy and time-consuming. The issue of cost to cities, especially those in developing countries, was also discussed. The speakers agreed that it can never be “too costly” to engage citizens in a process that will affect their lives, and that it is important to educate both leaders as well as citizens about the importance and mechanisms of civic participation. It was accepted that this may well lead to the empowerment of communities, and that this might alter the balance of power in regard to local leaders and politicians, but this was a desirable outcome of the effort.

A few speakers also raised concerns about the influence of donor agencies on the structuring and activities of civil society organisations, which increasingly focus their efforts on ever-increasing challenges of health, education, HIV/AIDS etc., rather than the wider issue of human settlements. Another challenge highlighted was that of involving the “not-so-poor” urban communities, the middle-classes and the rich, which are increasingly apathetic to public participation efforts.

The relationship between the Millennium Development Goals and processes of fostering inclusion was strongly emphasised by many speakers, both from the panel and the audience. Fostering inclusiveness was viewed as a key strategy to achieving the MDGs, especially Goal 7, Target 11, that commits to improving the lives of 100 million slum-dwellers by the year 2020. It was stressed however, that Goal 7, Target 11 cannot be realised without the restructuring of current financing arrangements for housing and sanitation at a macroeconomic level. This would involve a review of the conditionality for debt finance and the establishment of a technically sound financial arrangement to bridge the gap between macroeconomic policy targets and MDG targets and commitments. This view was endorsed by a number of participants, including senior government representatives.

The last major set of issues raised in the debate pertained to the conditions for inclusiveness. It was emphasised that the process should be, and should be seen to be, legitimate, transparent and open. The mismatch between political equality and socio-economic inequality must be addressed. Innovations and best practices must be replicated and scaled up, through the establishment of appropriate policy frameworks.

3. LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- The question is not whether inclusiveness is required, or the extent to which it is important - it is accepted that there is “too little” inclusiveness, rather than “too much.” The real issue is how to achieve inclusiveness in the urban context.
- There is a danger that inclusiveness may be used as simply a “catch-phrase” or a “product” by politicians to achieve their own ends. There is a lot of investment in keeping people poor and excluded, as it helps develop constituencies and various interest groups. There must be a conscious effort to change this situation.
- Inclusion does not imply abdication of responsibility by formal structures of government. There is a strong connection between inclusiveness and structural conditions within which communities and their organisations operate, and governments must work to develop appropriate conditions for inclusiveness to occur.
- Transparency and openness of decision-making process is a key strategy to foster inclusiveness. Building trust is equally important.
- Engaging the poorest and most marginalised communities in decision-making is the most critical issue related to inclusiveness, and should be accorded top priority by national and local governments, civil society organisations, as well as the donor community.

PART II: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES: IS THERE A RIGHT WAY?

Panelists

8. Akin Mabogunje, Chairman Presidential Technical Comité on Housing and Urban Development, The Presidency, Nigeria
9. Pierre Sane, UNESCO
10. Vicenta Bosch I Palanca, Mayor of Bon Repos I Mirambell, Spain
11. Arlette Lopez Trujillo, Secretary, State of Mexico, Mexico
12. Andrew Borraine, South African Cities Network, South Africa
13. Sandy Schillen, Huairou Commission
14. Dania Rifai, International Development Centre, Lebanon
15. Gerry Whelan, Representative of the Holy See, Kenya

Documentation

HSP/WUF/2/4 “Dialogue on Civil Society’s Contribution to Urban Governance”

1. ISSUES

Assuming inclusiveness is a good thing and that empowered communities are necessary to achieve it, how are they nurtured? Do communities everywhere want to be involved? How do cities with large groups of migrants address the issue of citizenship and community empowerment? Are all forms of community empowerment equal? Are there particular forms of local government that are successful in empowering communities? Should civil society always be oppositional? Are there cultural and regional dimensions to inclusiveness? Panelists discussed these and many other issues, as well as the current regional and global trends, related to community empowerment.

2. DEBATE

The discussion began with a quote from G. B. Shaw, “We don’t mind being governed as long as we are allowed to control our governors”. This set the tone of the debate, with a number of speakers underlining the importance of a vibrant civil society in holding local governments accountable. Speakers subsequently identified ways to nurture community empowerment. Structural issues include the role of the neighbourhood, the presence of clientelist relationships, the vibrancy of the informal sector, and the presence of organized women, youth and religious groups, which all influence the potential of community empowerment. The role of civil society in this regard includes mobilization, enlightenment, service delivery and advocacy. Leaders have a key responsibility in ensuring a climate where civil society can be empowered.

From the global perspective, empowerment is an essential prerequisite for urban policy making through public participation. However, for this to succeed, communities need skills and confidence. The enhancement of multi-cultural consciousness is considered to be an essential element of promoting inclusiveness and empowerment. Social groups such as migrant communities need to be provided with a space to make their views heard and their contribution incorporated into the social fabric. It was observed that there are some promising experiences in this regard, but there is need for up-scaling.

National perspectives emphasized the theme of subsidiarity, bringing power and resources to the lowest possible level, as close as possible to those who are affected. Democracy needs equality and in this respect it is essential that the excluded social groups, particularly women, need to be empowered. Indeed, as one of the speakers put it, women want half of heaven, half of the earth and also half of power.

The process of empowerment in the area of environment was addressed, where both individual and group benefits of empowerment were explored. In order to overcome the crisis of governance, which often arises from excluded communities, it was found essential to bring in new actors into the process of local governance, need to consolidate organizational structure, need to identify critical issues that affect them, and equally important, systems of self-regulation.

Empowerment depends on local conditions, opportunities and local political context. The role of local government was underscored as being necessary for inclusive governance. Structures and processes of local government have to be conducive to inclusiveness. Inept local governments tend to be defensive and thus undermine and impair the involvement of communities. However, it was also recognized that it is essential to empower sub-municipal spheres of local government for them to be amenable to citizen participation. In some contexts, in this regard, where the challenge is to ensure the inclusion of the majority of society, who have been historically excluded, the challenge of including minorities tends to become complicated and may appear as xenophobic.

Community perspectives stressed that solutions relating to the challenges facing civil society come from the grassroots. Experiences of communities and neighbourhoods have shown the extent of sacrifices that can be made to achieve goals and results. At the same time, however, there are often gaps in trust amongst various levels, such as between NGOs and local authorities, and between NGOs and CBOs. Empowerment entails not only redistribution of power but also of resources, shifting them to community spaces. The tension between NGOs and local authorities was repeatedly raised as a issue, determining whether they are competitive or complementary. Illustrations were given to show the impact of empowerment both positive and negative through different institutional arrangements.

The debate also brought out the outcomes of processes that address changing values and norms within communities, whereby fundamental transformations obtained at the level of leadership, gender, ethnic relations, and the building of social capital through such interventions.

3. LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Empowerment is not only an end in itself, but also a means towards access for the poor to public goods such as transportation, land and basic services
- Inclusiveness and empowerment require strategy formation. These are guided by 5 P's which were brought out in the discussion. These are convergence of Perspectives, proper Positioning, dynamic Planning, Practices that work, and to be aware of Ploys.
- The city is more than a physical, economic and demographic space. It is significantly a political space. Any process of empowerment has to recognize this particular dimension.
- In the final analysis, inclusion is guaranteed when every urban citizen has a "Right to the City".

4. URBAN RENAISSANCE - DIALOGUE ON THE EVOLVING CITY

16 September 2004 pm

Panellists

1. Jeremy Smith- Secretary General of the United Cities and Local Government (UCLG- European Section)
2. Dr. Patrick Lumumba, Secretary "Kenya Constitution and Review Commission"
3. Ms. Christina Corrales, Mayor La Paz, Bolivia
4. Mr. Mikhail V. Stolyarov, Expert Council Member in the Federal Assembly of Russia
5. Ms. Asma Chaabi, Mayor Essaouira, Morocco
6. Mr. Prasanna Gunawardana, Mayor Colombo, Sri Lanka
7. H.E. Nicophone Soglo, Mayor Kotonou, Benin
8. Mr. Teodor Antic, Lawyer, Director of the Institute of Environmental Studies, Croatia

Documentation

HSP / WUF / 2 / 4, Partners Dialogues: Urban Renaissance untitled Dialogue On Urban Renaissance : Towards New Powers For Local Governments In A Globalizing World

1. ISSUES

Urbanisation and globalisation have become very relevant in the work of local authorities since the Habitat II Conference, in 1996. It has been noted that there is a direct link between Urban Renaissance, as a process of improving the quality of life in towns and cities and the promotion of decentralisation as a mean for achieving these goals. The dialogue session on Urban Renaissance during the Second World Urban Forum examined this crucial issue within the context of globalisation, and UN-HABITAT's mandate on empowering local authorities inter alia through the implementation of the Governing Council's resolution 19/12 on "Decentralisation and Strengthening of Local Authorities". The fourth themes that were the basis for the dialogue included (i) Power And Responsibilities of Local Authorities, (ii) Administrative Relations – Local Autonomy, (iii) Financial Resources and Capacity of Local Authorities, (iiii) Local Governance and Democracy. This dialogue was prepared in direct follow-up to the inaugural meeting of the Advisory Group of Experts on Decentralisation (AGRED), which was established by the Executive Director in March 2004. In their presentation, experts stressed that decentralisation is not an end in itself. With reference to the work on the Charter of Local Self Government prepared by UN-HABITAT for discussion, experts considered that the new proposed guidelines were practical and easy to use by Local Authorities in their daily work for the benefit of the urban citizens. Some others stressed that the decentralization process can't be successful and completed if there are no efficient implementation mechanisms to deepen the dialogue between central and local

governments. Good laws without the means and rules to implement them will only breed discontent and despair. It was referred to the principle of subsidiarity as one of the underlying principles of empowering local governments.

2. DEBATE

Based on their national and regional experiences participants took actively part in the discussion. Centralised and inefficient urban governance was criticised and the definition of subsidiary within the relevance of local context questioned. Further, questions were raised related to the specific experience of African Municipalities with an emphasis on the waste management and garbage collection, disaster control and participatory approach on the urban planning. As a feedback from the panel it was highlighted that the regime of law should be paired by the actual implementation of these laws hence bridging the gap. It was emphasised that creating a legal regime which is sound and functioning was key for decentralization to be effective. There is hope that the effort currently undertaken by various countries to promote decentralization may succeed. Some participants pointed out that it is the elected leaders themselves who slow down the process while holding the power leading to inefficiency in service delivery. Experience shows that enshrining devolution in the constitution was a means of emasculating the central government. Local authorities should be given sufficient powers to help them deliver basic services. If decentralisation is supposed to improve life conditions for people, local authorities must receive proper financial support; when transferring power, one must also transfer funds. It was also stressed that the partnership between local government, private sector and civil society was essential in the urbanisation process. Participants were unanimous that efforts undertaken by UN-HABITAT in the promotion of effective decentralization had helped both central and local government in finding a common ground for a constructive dialogue.

3. LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Effective decentralization has the potential of helping countries and involve communities, including the urban poor, towards sustainable development in the establishment of a fair society
- Countries need to examine the possibility to of providing support to cities using funds from international donors, in addition to national budgetary support.
- There was a call for more emphasis to be put on the needs and priorities of local citizens other than that of reenergizing the cities and local authorities. The process of strengthening local authorities should also take into consideration the needs of normal citizens in their daily life.

Annex II

REPORTS ON THEMATIC DIALOGUES

5. URBAN DISASTERS AND RECONSTRUCTION SUSTAINABLE RELIEF IN POST-CRISIS SITUATIONS; TRANSFORMING DISASTERS INTO OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Thursday, 16 September 2004, a.m.

The Urban Disasters and Reconstruction Dialogue debated the establishment of a permanent link between emergency relief and the transitional phase of development, including disaster risk reduction, and followed a series of three networking events, examining the roles and responsibilities of three main stakeholders, namely the international community, civil society and national/local authorities.

Panelists

1. Ms. Nesreen M. Siddeek Berwari, Minister for Municipalities and Public Works, Iraq (represented by Hussein Sinjari)
2. Ms. Helena Molin Valdes, Deputy Director, UN-International Strategy for Disaster Reduction UN-ISDR
3. Mr. Brock Carlton, Director, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, International Center for Municipal Development
4. Mr. Mihir Bhatt, Director, Disaster Mitigation Institute
5. Mr. Dennis McNamara, Director, Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division, UN-OCHA
6. Ms. Grace Okonji, UNIFEM

Documentation

1. ISSUES

The changing nature of conflict and natural disasters is leading to re-visioning of traditional approaches to relief assistance. Natural and human-caused emergencies are increasing in regularity, and perhaps more importantly, their impacts on populations and human settlements are rising alarmingly. This, coupled with cycles of dependency and shortage of resources, all point to the need to develop innovative approaches and re-examine traditional policies on relief assistance.

UN-Habitat's concept of sustainable relief has been developed out of the recognized need to address relief efforts within the framework of longer-term development strategies. Sustainable relief implies assistance that is focused on the longer term requirements of an entire population, while equally addressing the emergency needs of the few. Equally, it also entails developing a culture of prevention, in which all actors can play an active role in mitigating the effects of disasters and conflicts.

The concept of sustainable relief addresses emergency situations stemming from both natural cataclysmic events and conflict. Sustainable relief in human settlements is a process. To be achieved, a series of guiding principles was introduced for critical review and debate during the discussions. These guiding principles serve to articulate the basic practice philosophy that actors must adopt to ensure that assistance has a positive effect on the sustainable and equal development of human settlements in post-conflict and post-disaster environments – disaster risk reduction being particularly important aspect of sustainable relief.

2. DEBATE

The meeting underscored the importance of disaster risk reduction as a foundation for sustainable development of urban settlements. It was emphasized that disaster risk reduction policies should be integrated into all poverty reduction and development policies, be cross-sectoral, thus complementing the overall concept of sustainable relief. In particular, disaster risk reduction needs to be included in local government agendas, using participatory processes as a key vehicle for implementation. Disaster risk reduction is a joint responsibility, which should be facilitated by solid political commitment and sound institutional support.

The meeting further debated the disaster risk reduction in an urban context. Urban settlements represent concentrations of production, economies and social development, at the same time generating risks and encompassing vulnerabilities not only for its residents, settlements and assets but often also for economies in regional, if not global, extent. With the ever shrinking global village; contingent risk from crisis in human settlements affects neighboring towns, regions, states, and in some cases the rest of the planet. The discussions focused on the importance of multi-sectoral and multi-level capacity building for reducing risk, including with decision-makers.

Understanding the way gender can be incorporated into different aspects of disaster management and risk reduction was a critical point in the discussions. The coping strategies and priorities of men and women are different, and a gendered approach is critical to ensure that all needs are met in this regard. Women are not only effective managers of resources, mobilizing communities and keeping peace, but are often the first responders and should also be included in the policy-making processes at higher levels.

Other points of emphasis included the importance of understanding the root causes of disasters, identifying the gaps in strategy implementation, respect for accumulated cultural wisdom and community intelligence, and consideration of environmental aspects as key elements in implementing disaster risk reduction as part of sustainable relief.

Cities are managed and communities interact at the local level. Active participation of civil society is crucial to achieving sustainable disaster mitigation strategies, as well as recovery from a crisis. When disaster strikes, the most vulnerable segments of society are the ones most affected. Unless poor were made a part of reducing their vulnerability, unless governments at all levels stood behind their commitments to minimize risks, and until the international aid community engages with their development counterparts to ensure sustainability, disasters will continue to impact on the most vulnerable citizens of the world's cities. Joint efforts of the communities, private sector, financial institutions and academia would strengthen the voices of the civil society towards more inclusive and comprehensive disaster management strategies.

Dialogue on funding disaster risk reduction should be encouraged. Resources tend to categorize emergency, reconstruction and development. Donors often associate disaster risk reduction as an aspect of emergency funding, whereas it should be categorized as a development issue and needs to generate funding and resource on a multiyear basis.

The debate clearly underlined that in addition to community-based approaches, community rooted institutional development and protection of employment and livelihoods are equally important during the recovery. There was a general agreement that recognizing diversity of experiences and promoting horizontal city-to-city, community-to-community networks would foster the creation of viable and less vulnerable communities.

Decentralization and the empowerment of local authorities was a topic of extensive discussions. When human settlements fall into crisis, through conflict, or because of disasters, institutions across the board suffer. Peace-building and recovery in post-crisis environs is a process in which the roles and responsibilities of various actors at all levels needs to be clearly defined. Social inclusion, transparency and accountability formulate the basis for building trust and sense of ownership in society as a whole. Starting point is the legal and policy framework followed by strategic leadership and planning, operational management, and service delivery within local authorities; and ‘governance links’ to community. But decentralization is not just about shifting of power and resources from the center to the governorate and municipal levels, as an end in itself. Decentralization is about the public interest, particularly important in peace-building and post-crisis reconstruction process.

We should not create artificial barriers between natural and human-made disasters, because the one often influences the other. Disaster risk reduction, peace-building, conflict prevention are as important before, through and after a disaster.

3. LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Utilizing a set of twelve guiding principles underpinning the concept document entitled ‘Sustainable Relief; transforming disasters into opportunities for sustainable development in human settlements’ participants in three networking sessions shared personal and institutional experience as a basis for illustrating or suggesting modifications to the concept of Sustainable Relief, which were presented and further debated in the Dialogue entitled Urban Disasters and Reconstruction. Lessons learned include the following:

- Decentralisation of responsibility for prevention of, and recovery from, crisis in human settlements is essential to ensure appropriate, balanced and sustainable vulnerability and risk reduction.
- Building a culture of prevention entails a cross sectoral, multi-dimensional approach integrating participatory analysis of risk, implementation of programmes, and development of policy and legal frameworks with all stakeholders including civil society, private sector, local, national and international government, in an engendered and comprehensive process.
- Enhancing the guiding principles through action aimed at accumulating city safety data; making the pro-poor disaster reduction debate within networks of local authorities operational, coordinating a city recovery fund run conjointly with local government and civil society, is essential to sustainable city safety.
- Effective peace-building requires due attention to clear and understandable legal and regulatory frameworks, effective and impartial land and property administration, ensuring function interface between local government and its citizens in dialogue that builds trust and commitment, capacity building where essential, and the common vision and coordination of international actors.
- Understanding that crisis, and in particular conflict virtually always creates displacement, sustainable strategies integrating rights based approaches to shelter, tenure, and protection of the most vulnerable, need implementation at the earliest stages of crisis.
- These elements need to be reflected in UN-Habitat’s programmes implementing the guiding principles for sustainable relief.