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Reducing Poverty, Sustaining Growth—What Works, What Doesn't, and Why  
A Global Exchange for Scaling Up Success

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# **The City to City Challenge in Ghana, Morocco, Tajikistan, and the United States**

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## **Executive Summary**

This project consists of a pilot effort to demonstrate feasibility of international municipal cooperation in achievement of Millennium Development Goals by cities in Part II countries. In this demonstration, two pairs of cities—Tamale, Ghana and its sister city Louisville, Kentucky, USA; and Dushanbe, Tajikistan with Boulder, Colorado—have agreed to focus on MDGs as a part of the Sustainable Cities Program of Sister Cities International, an international NGO headquartered in the US. The two pairs of cities are part of a network of 1,500 cities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America that are in sister city relationships with 750 cities in the US.

Though small in scale, the project in several respects is unlike virtually all the others represented in the Shanghai Conference. First, the project is fundamentally a result of horizontal cooperation at the municipal level that is already operating on a very large scale—on the order of thousands of cities—in much of the world. Though not necessarily focused on poverty, nor MDGs for that matter, municipal international cooperation (MIC) has already proven to be an effective and potentially powerful institutional form of cooperation, one that represents an entirely new, far-reaching, and promising channel of development assistance. In this respect, the project is also in a special category. The challenge of this project is to test the feasibility of inducing cities to focus on MDGs. Key elements of scalability are already demonstrated. The issue is to incorporate MDGs and poverty reduction into an on-going networked process.

The cities in this project are following a common format and process of education about poverty and MDGs in selection of goals, diagnosing current situation, laying a plan for improvement, and launching efforts to improve circumstances. The details of the project are as follows:

- The project is a joint undertaking by Sister Cities International in partnership with the World Bank Institute, with financing by the President's Contingency Fund.
- Learning activities. Conferences and face to face meetings with representatives of the cities helped to educate present members and led to the selection of pairs of cities to take part in the demonstration.
- Selection of specific MDGs took place in joint community consultations in Tamale and Dushanbe, with delegations from Louisville and Boulder taking part. Tamale selected a goal in water and sanitation and Dushanbe has indicated interest in strategies for productive work for youth, focusing on a cyber-café installed as a result of a long standing exchange between Boulder and Dushanbe.
- Initial inquiries or diagnostic work was launched in each city to learn about MDG awareness (very low) and to gauge current circumstances and set goals for improvement.
- Each city is then engaged in the production of an action plan, making use of resources already at their disposal, such as educational activities, technical skills, and awareness-raising efforts.

- Implementation of action plan and monitoring and evaluation are future phases of the demonstration, to take place in calendar 2004 and 2005.
- Future phases of work will follow foundation funding to translate lessons from this pilot to 20 cities.

This project is promising for several reasons. MIC builds on a network of tens of thousands of cities now beginning to take on more prominent roles as globalization reduces or blurs the importance of national boundaries. In many cases, certainly in Sister Cities International, behind the city leadership is a committed community, usually consisting of one or more neighborhood organizations or issue-oriented groups that have been operating on the basis of cultural exchange or enlightened self interest for many years.

Cities in Part I countries have large externalities in technical, financial, and humanitarian resources on a scale that is already in the neighborhood of total global concessionary assistance, but not currently put to work by, nor under the control of, national or international bureaucracies. One of the first steps to harness the potential is awareness raising. Awareness raising in Part I countries will help to build understanding and support for the MDGs. Ample anecdotal evidence already suggests that by tapping into this latent pool of city resources, as many European and US cities have been doing since the 1950s, the scaling to improve MDGs can be achieved without proportional increases in “additional” concessionary aid. Finally, development agencies are not needed to play a primary driving or sponsoring role, in city to city exchange.

## **Implementation Process**

### **Rationale**

Much of international development assistance is geared to (at least was designed for) a world of poverty rooted in subsistence agriculture with sporadic and seemingly ad hoc cities pocking the developmental landscape. The last three decades have drastically changed the institutional matrix in Part II countries. The world of rural and agricultural orientation is a world of the past, one that can no longer serve as a useful guide for policy and resource decisions for an urbanizing world. Today and increasingly in the future, urban institutions, and cities themselves, will play a much more important role in providing services and reducing poverty.

Already at the turn of the last century, 47 percent of the world’s population lived in cities and this proportion is expected to rise to 60 percent by the year 2030. Virtually all of the increase in this global urban population will be concentrated in the developing countries. The urban population of those countries made up 40 percent of the total (2 billion) in 2000 and it is expected to increase to 54 percent (3.9 billion) of the population by 2030.<sup>1</sup> Of equal significance is the sheer number of cities. They are organized developmental units that lie around the heart of

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations 2003. Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 2001 Revision* <http://esa.un.org/unpp> (accessed on January 7 2003)

poverty in the world. Million sized cities already number in the 500 range; 100,000 size cities number in the ten thousands. Cities represent the most immediate, front-line institutions saddled with poverty; the organizational units that are last to be equipped to address these tissues; and importantly, potential institutional partners whose poverty alleviation potential has not been tapped. Sustainable poverty reduction then needs to be framed in an urban world.

City to city cooperation is one promising tool for larger scale mobilization of cities as partners in development and in achieving the MDG Targets by 2015. The many powerful trends now sweeping across the globe—decentralization, democratization, liberalization of trade, and increasing velocity of communications and transactions—all create a new prominence, new possibilities, and new challenges for cities. One observer with a career in international diplomacy, declares that “cities are the only socio-political unit in the world now gaining in power.” (Savir, 2003) As cities become aware of these changing circumstances, they are seeking new channels of exchange, learning, and assistance.

One channel of assistance, already with a long record of sustained success, is municipal international cooperation (or MIC, see UNCHS 2003). Conventional forms of assistance has limited reach, given the size and scope of urbanization. Conventional direct assistance—for example, lending and technical assistance by the World Bank to eligible cities—is limited by funding (less than US\$ 2 b per year compared to \$165 b in private assistance) and its impact is spotty (10-15 projects). At the same time, because cities shave a great many of basic functions in governance, and because they are nurseries of new ideas and methods, and they are inventing many techniques to strengthen capacity in many areas.

By contrast, European, US, and many regional organizations have been in the forefront of fostering horizontal assistance through MIC. For example, some European countries channeled financial contributions of over US\$ US\$150 million per year through the several thousand local governments at the regional and district levels. At the same time, because cities shave a great many of basic functions in governance, and because they are nurseries of new ideas and methods, the many new techniques and practices invented in one place have potential for application elsewhere. Associations of local government authorities promise to accelerate spread effects. Scores of national and international associations are quietly working to improve effectiveness. In 2004, several of the largest will celebrate a unifying congress.

## **Objectives**

Recognizing the large latent resources in city to city exchange, the World Bank Institute and Sister Cities International formed a partnership to explore practical steps and policy issues involved in focusing on MDGs in both “offering” and “host” cities. The main aims of this pilot are the following:

- Awareness raising about the Millennium Development Goals in pilot cities
- Awareness raising about specific roles local governments and citizen groups can play in reaching MDG targets they have identified as priority

- In Tamale, raising awareness about the preventive aspects of health care, especially in the provision of safe water and sanitation and reaching toward a balance between direct health care and preventative aspects.
- In Dushanbe, raising awareness about the role ICT and global partnerships can have in achieving the MDGs regarding employment of youth.
- Capacity-building of local governments and the network for city to city cooperation, starting with support to Tamale/Louisville, Dushanbe/Boulder, as well as to community based and citizen organizations in training, sharing of experience, and direct advisory services.
- Support poverty reduction strategies at the city level— supplementing existing PRSP strategy for Tamale by facilitating participatory processes through which local stakeholders raise awareness about MDGs, identify their priority goals, create a plan of action to address specific goals, target and indicators and execute the plan of action, monitor progress and compare with original conditions and evaluate process. In Dushanbe, facilitate participatory process during which the local stakeholders also identify vision for their city, analyze its economic prospects, set priorities for action, and offer advice for external assistance to implement the strategy.
- Scaling-up the program through SCI Network for Sustainable Development as well as through WBI and other means (e.g., international NGOs such as the Urban Age, Glocal Forum, International Union of Local Authorities).
- Support formulation of national urban and city-to-city (C2C) strategies--helping constituents understand MDGs and articulate how C2C can contribute to national goals of broad-based growth and poverty reduction, by identifying the economic roles and development requirements of different types of cities within the country.

## **Program**

The MDGs City to City Challenge pilot project begun in October 2003. WBI and SCI are helping to guide the participating cities to explore the practical steps and policy issues in addressing and improving conditions of selected MDGs. The pilot is a part of a broader initiative—the MDGs City to City Challenge—that will be financed by foundation sources and launched in FY05 to begin a larger scale mobilization of cities as partners in development.

During the pilot, task teams in each of the pilot cities undertake the following steps: 1) take part in WBI learning activities about MDGs, 2) select an MDG, specific target, and indicator(s) on which they wish to work, 3) conduct a diagnostic assessment of present conditions, 4) prepare an action plan to complete tangible project(s) within their communities to improve conditions, 5) implement the action plan to the extent possible, 6) monitor progress and compare with initial conditions. Upon the completion and evaluation of the pilot, the pilot partners, SCI and WBI, begin the broader MDGs C2C Challenge. Several components make up the pilot effort.

Selection of specific MDG, target and indicators by the city to city pairs: Through participatory community process, Tamale/Louisville pair chose to work on MDG 7 – Ensure Environmental Sustainability, Target 10: To halve, by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, and Indicator 31 – Proportion of urban and rural population with access to improved sanitation. Boulder/Dushanbe chose to work on MDG number 8: Develop global partnership for development, Target 14: Develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth. The sister cities saw this target as a natural sequel to their ongoing project, the construction and equipment of a cyber café in Dushanbe. The cities have agreed to dedicate the use of the café to training and technical assistance for youth. (Dushanbe and Boulder cooperated on the construction and equipment of a traditional Tajik teahouse in Boulder in the late 1990s.)

Diagnostic work. The subsequent stage of work is to inventory existing national and local quantitative and qualitative data about the chosen MDG, target and indicators in each of the four cities. For Louisville and Boulder, this is a process of awareness raising and education about the world's commitment to poverty reduction. For Tamale and Dushanbe, it is the most important input to a plan of action. Tamale and Dushanbe will develop a customized diagnostic tool for assessing the present state of conditions in three neighborhoods, one urban, one peri-urban and one rural. The format of data will be based on UN's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Demographic and Health survey and Living Standard Measurement survey. In Tamale, a local consultant conducted the survey, interpreted the results, and submitted a report to the cities as well as to WBI and SCI.

Putting together a plan of action. The plan of action will be based on the outcome of diagnostic work. In Tamale, the action plan is put together by means of a inclusive community participatory process. It was agreed that the first phase of the action plan will involve an education campaign about MDGs and specifically about the chosen priority MDG, target and indicators, while the other phases may include education about how to secure donor support for implementation of projects related to MDGs; training or trainers from participating community groups about strategies and techniques to improve conditions in the selected MDG areas; capacity strengthening; and other needs. By April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 the first phase of the action plan will be completed. This consists of a large scale education campaign about the MDGs and specifically about MDG 7, Target 10 and Indicator 31 in Tamale and MDG 8, Target 14 in Dushanbe.

Monitoring and Evaluation in this project serves three purposes: 1) to provide information for decision-making and improved project management; 2) to demonstrate results, and 3) to empower communities and other stakeholders. Independent consultants are being identified in each client city to: a) liaise with PPPCC and record flows of information to various stakeholders in the community during the pilot, b) monitor progress and ensure participatory progress various steps of the pilot c) write a narrative report for each phase of the pilot, focusing on three particular aspects: i) transparency – the availability and access to information; ii) accountability – the use and application of information; and iii) inclusion and participation; d), provide feedback to WBI and SCI on any actual and/or potential bottlenecks and problems to be overcome.

### **Context and consistency with PRS**

The objectives of the two cities fall neatly with current PRSP or MDG frameworks for their respective countries, largely because the cities adopted the broad guidelines of PRSPs and MDGs. For example, Tamale's choice of Goal 7, Target 10 flowed naturally from participation in the deliberations in Tamale by various officials of key agencies in Ghana's PRSP. Human Resource Development and Basic Services Component of Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy GPRS focuses on Health: Health Care and Safe Water and Environmental Health as one of five interrelated sectors (including education, skills and entrepreneurship development, HIV/AIDS, Population Management and Health: Health Care and Safe Water and Environmental Health). The Ghana PRS calls for ensuring a balance between direct health care and the preventive aspects, especially in the provision of safe water and sanitation, given the close relationship between diseases that affect the poor and poor environmental health. Ghana's PRS outlines interventions on health care and safe water and environmental sanitation<sup>2</sup> that are expected to result in children mortality rate dropping from 171,000 in 2000 to 130,000 in 2005.<sup>3</sup> Increasing access to portable sanitation is key to achieving health outcomes and poverty reduction. The target of GPRS for 2005 is to increase the proportion of urban population with household latrines from 34 to 45 percent and reduce the proportion of population with unsafe method of solid waste disposal from 91 to 75 percent.<sup>4</sup>

It is notable that the strategy emphasizes a district and sub-district community-based approach for reaching a majority of the poor as well as the importance of coordination with other sectors to support health improvement.

In the case of Tajikistan, Goal 8, Target 14 was a natural choice, given the serious problems of unemployment. Unemployment is estimated at nearly a third of the nearly 1.6 million person labor poor when factoring "hidden" unemployment. Official statistics do not reflect the actual level of unemployment, as they include only the number of officially registered unemployed. Of the total officially unemployed, the young constitute two-thirds and women more than half. Individuals with no professional training or who have lost their skills due to long periods of unemployment represent a significant proportion of the unemployed.

### **Institutions and commitment at the local level**

Each pair of sister cities has more than a decade of experience working together, as described below. Perhaps because community groups were involved in the identification of goals, the pilot projects are also consistent with local level objectives in both communities. In the case of Tamale, the Tamale Municipal Assembly Medium Development Plan is structured to align with

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<sup>2</sup> Responsibility for Health Care lies with the Ministry of Health, while that for Safe Water and Environment Sanitation lies with a municipality and agencies including Community Water and Sanitation Agency, Ghana Water Company Ltd, Ministry of Local Government and Rural development and District Assemblies..

<sup>3</sup> GPRS 2003-2005, pg 109

<sup>4</sup> GPRS 2003-2005, pg 110

the Ghana PRSP. In this context, the institution of chieftaincy is a key institutional variable. Tribal affiliations play a significant role in Ghanaian society, especially at the local level. The National House of Chiefs has authority over traditional laws and customs, and chiefs have a great deal of influence in the community and government. Tribal conflict in 2002 resulted in a government-imposed a curfew state of emergency to quell ethnic violence. Due to this situation, the Tamale Municipality (TAMA) has been unable to hold elections. An Interim Management Committee (IMC) is governing Tamale in the meantime in cooperation with the Municipal Chief Executive (MCE), a position similar to a Mayor.<sup>5</sup> Despite this difficult political impasse, municipal authorities provided complete cooperation, inviting community groups of various kinds, including schools, women's organizations, and youth, to take part in consultations about community needs and preferences.

The Tamale Municipality (TAMA) is fully committed to the pilot. The municipality affirmed its intention to give their time and efforts into developing an action plan related to Goal 7, target 10, and indicator 31. Institutions participating in the pilot mainly in advisory roles are: Environmental Department, Ghana Water Company Limited, Municipal Water and Sanitation Team, Waste Management TAMA, and Ghana Health Services. An NGO, New Energy, offered important contribution of experience and advice based on a strong track record in local affairs in Tamale. The Minister of the Northern Region, Ernest Akofour Debrah, has also agreed to fully support the efforts of the pilot program. It should also be noted that the Vice President of Ghana, Alhaji Aliu Mahama, is originally from Tamale and takes an active role in the Louisville-Tamale sister city relationship. He welcomed a delegation from Louisville, WBI, and Sister Cities International to his home where he was briefed about the broader contest of the pilot, its relationship with GPRS and the phases of the pilot process. Mr. Alhaji Aliu Mahama offered his full support.

For its part, the Louisville sister city committee (known as the Louisville-Tamale Committee) discussed at great length possible project ideas that fit into achieving one of the MDGs. The Louisville-Tamale Committee invited representatives from the Mayor's office as well as leaders of Sister Cities of Louisville to participate as well. To date, efforts have included the launch of a massive educational campaign in Louisville about MDGs, presentations to the Louisville Board of Health, the Government and Education Forum and the other Committees of Sister Cities of Louisville. The other committees have agreed to use this opportunity to educate their own sister cities about the MDGs. Many local organizations and institutions are affiliated with Sister Cities of Louisville, including the University of Louisville, the UN Association in Louisville, and various Louisville utilities, including the sanitation and public works agencies in the city.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with Tamale Municipal Chief Executive

<sup>6</sup> Metropolitan Sewer District: consultant on wastewater and liaison to the Sewer District; Mr. Rudolf Davidson, Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet for Public Works and Services, Metro Louisville; advisor on solid waste management and sanitation; Mr. Donald Hubbs, Louisville Water Company: advisor on water supply and distribution; liaison to the Water Company.

Women's groups have played a significant role in this effort. During the first phase of the pilot, WBI/SCI facilitated meetings of representatives from major women's groups in Tamale. The groups represented were the National Association of Teachers for Ladies, the National Democratic Congress, the Federation of Muslim Women Association, the Christian Mothers Association, the Ghana Health Service, and of course, the Louisville-Tamale Committee. Also, women from traditional areas of society including tie-dyers and weavers were represented. The outcome of the meetings was creation of a coalition of women's groups that will be actively involved in executing the pilot. This decision came from the conclusion that women have a greater impact on household sanitation practices. The coalition will have a large role in disseminating information throughout the pilot in a way that their peers can understand and relate to.

Upon return to Louisville, the Louisville-Tamale Committee leadership met with the Director of the Women's Center at the University of Louisville and discussed creating a coalition of women's groups in the metro Louisville area and an existing organization known as Benchmark 2000, that has already done a study on the status of women and girls in Louisville at the beginning of the Millennium.

As for Boulder and Dushanbe, the sister city relationship dates to 1980s when two women citizens of Boulder felt a need to bypass the walls of the cold war that kept people apart. After several years of search and negotiation, Dushanbe and Boulder became sister cities in 1987. In 1990, Dushanbe presented Boulder with a traditional Tajik "choihona" (teahouse), the only one in the Western Hemisphere, a priceless representation of the Persian culture and Tajik artistry and the largest gift ever presented to the US by the former Soviet Union. The 2,000 square foot structure was assembled by local Boulder construction workers and visiting Tajik artisans. The doors opened in 1998. The teahouse operates as a full service restaurant and offers ethnic foods from many cultures and exotic teas from around the world. It draws more than 100,000 visitors each year.

This year, Boulder approved financing for a cyber café to Dushanbe, where both physical and technological access to the rest of the world is difficult. The café is designed as a restaurant, learning center, internet portal, and place to have fun. The gift to Dushanbe will reflect the culture, style, sensibilities and resources of Boulder—its technology, Western openness, and education. The building will showcase "green" architecture, with solar heat and natural light, low water use toilets and other innovations.

The discussions between the two cities has focused on construction of the café, and with the onset of the MDG C2C Challenge, the cities have focused on making use of the cyber café as an instructional and training center for youth. The contributions of Citrix Corporation are intended to set the technological groundwork for this effort.

### **Preliminary results and comparison with initial objectives**

Because this pilot is only recently launched, the results can be measured only in terms of the process, of agreements, work plan, information exchange, and deliberation. On these points, the

outcomes have been both productive and promising. This results in part from the well-established sister city relationships the two pairs of cities have enjoyed over multiple years. The importance of these initial conditions is part of the proof of concept sought in this pilot effort. All of the cities agreed to undertake the MDG challenge, and their reactions, enthusiastic exchange, and contributions so far are consistent with this volunteer spirit. In the case of Louisville and Tamale, the historical linkages are especially strong. A key linkage between the cities is the commitment of civic groups, one of them led by a professor at the University of Louisville, Dr. Susan H, who enjoys honorary chieftain status conferred upon her by the dominant tribe in Tamale.

Though Dushanbe and Boulder are at a slightly less advanced stage of the pilot (diagnostic work is set to begin in February), they are at a somewhat more advanced stage in terms of the teahouse-cyber café exchange. The Boulder city council has recently approved creative financing for the construction of a cyber café in Dushanbe. Further, a contribution from Citrix, the computer equipment and software company, will furnish the cyber café with state of the art equipment and technical advice as a part of corporate contribution. Along with expertise from Boulder, these inputs are thought to be sufficient to serve the multiple purposes of youth training in Dushanbe.

Minor adjustments have altered the timetable and participants in both US cities (all participants are volunteers). This inevitably means that progress and agreements move more slowly than might be the case with paid professionals. Also, misunderstandings about the use of resources—the Tajik tea house in the first instance, the modalities of meeting MDGs in Tamale—occasion delay and clarification. But these obstacles have been overcome.

## **Impact Analysis**

By leveraging the institutional commitment of Sister Cities, the access and messages to a wide network of cities around the world has been exceptionally cost efficient. The effect of transmitting the message and importance of MDGs to US cities, for instance, was expedited at SCI's annual meeting last year, and will be repeated this year. Scores of cities in the US received information prepared by WBI at a special session on MDGs. A video and personal presentation, along with print materials on MDGs, were offered at the special session. Many participating cities asked for follow on materials; others registered as interested participants.

The impact should be measured differently in Tamale and Dushanbe. These cities are already acutely aware of sanitation and labor problems, but they have been less aware of the concerted effort of the MDGs to improve the conditions of poverty. The city leaders and participating community groups readily absorbed these messages. Tamale has been quick to take up the opportunity to mobilize city groups, both official and in the civil society, to take part in the MDG challenge with Louisville. Both Tamale and Dushanbe have connected these developmental thrust of this pilot to the problems in their communities and have seen an opportunity to draw on a fresh resource—their sister cities—to help address these problems. On

the ground impact on the chosen goals and targets can only be gauged after the implementation of action plans.

## **Driving Factors—Political Economy of Innovation**

Though the pilot projects still have much ground to cover, some of the driving factors are already visible. First a foremost is the history of community to community contact built into the sister city relationship. The facilitation and access provided by this long-standing institutional tissue in both pairs of cities constitute important factor in the relatively easy launch of the MDG C2C Challenge. Gauging by the relatively uncomplicated start up, these established relationships are important driving factors of proof of concept the MDG C2C Challenge.

At a deeper level, the strength of relationships built on experience and cultural exchange have built the basis for trust and cooperation. For instance, since its founding in 1979 by a group of African Americans in Louisville, the sister city relationship has fostered the foundation of a companion Diocese of the Episcopal church of Kentucky in Tamale, an African Cultural Center in the Shawnee Library, scholarship programs at the University of Louisville, collaboration by the Business School at the University on cotton garment manufacture, and a scholarship and aid fund for Tamale. The Rotary, Supplies Overseas and Sister Cities of Louisville collaborated on sending a container of medical supplies to Tamale. The honorary chieftaincy has already been mentioned. These experiences place an entirely distinct character of exchange in this pilot endeavor on MDGs. An exchange of ideas to promote progress in MDGs is not an exchange between World Bank, UN, or donor bureaucrats, nor is it an exchange between private sector suppliers and contractors who have some commercial or profit motive. Rather, the political economic framework in C2C exchange has the advantage of informality and not for profit. Exchange at the level of community group and citizens, articulated by city leaders, technicians and citizens on both sides, is characteristic of many, if not most, C2C relationships. Horizontal relationships often have fewer impediments to overcome. It starts in an atmosphere that is more open, one that is markedly less dependent and less disposed to suspicion and resentment, that sometimes marks formal and commercial relationships of technical assistance.

The key institutional innovation in this pilot is to adapt the institutional and organizational features of sister city (or city to city) relationships to the service of MDGs and poverty reduction. In this respect, perhaps the largest challenge is to raise awareness that the resources, as well as the cultural and social linkages channeled through city to city relationships, can be put to service of poverty reduction. Part I cities have very little problem, even positive reception, of this concept. In a post 9-11 world, some cities are gratified to find a way to connect with the developing world.

Much of the mechanics, as well as the data, of community organizing are already in use by community groups on both sides of the exchange. Participatory decision making at this level is not new or innovative; nor are the mechanisms of channeling resources and grants. These mechanisms have been invented and reinvented in many places, often with success, in such efforts as social funds, matching grants, and community funds created by mayors, cities, and

communities in many parts of the developing world. Neighborhood level survey data proved to be an important factor in establishing baselines and plans. At the mechanical level, i.e., implementing community development programs, the innovations now needed are in accountability and transparency at the neighborhood level. This project will address these issues at a later stage.

The progress made so far can be attributed in part to leadership in each of the participating cities. The importance of leaders—as visionaries as well as communicators—has been documented amply in innovations of local government (Campbell and Fuhr, 2004). External catalysts were also important, such as Citrix, Sister City International, and the World Bank Institute. Citrix, a corporation that specializes in networking hardware and software. Citrix experts are an important factor in helping Dushanbe community leaders understand the potential of the cyber café for the youth of the city. Sister City International induced interest and selected cities (from a dozen or so) that expressed interest in the project. The combination of Sister Cities and the World Bank Institute proved to be a fruitful combination, both because of name recognition and because each brought a special knowledge base and skill to the task.

Further learning and experimentation is expected from these pilots as a result of on the ground experience and arms length analytical work of the empirical evidence. Of paramount importance in will be the understanding of MDGs as well as the movement of indicators in relation to initial conditions. A series of learning events about the process and its specific components will emerge from the pilot. These tools will be disseminated through face to face and DL activities and will be tested in the three year MDG C2C Challenge Program. The topics are expected to include the role of local government in achieving the MDGs; techniques to prioritize and select goals, targets and indicators through a local government participatory process; methods to assess the present state of a city with regards to specific MDGs; techniques to develop and implement an Action Plan for a city; and setting up community funds. In addition, more detailed work on monitoring and evaluating MDG C2C process will be addressed.

## **Lessons Learned**

One of the lessons in this pilot so far is that cities in Part I countries have large externalities in technical, financial, and humanitarian resources that with little effort can be brought to bear on problems of poverty in Part II countries. One of the first steps to harness the potential, awareness-raising, proved to an important, but uncomplicated, input in recruiting Part I cities. Awareness-raising in Part I countries will help to build understanding and support for the MDGs. Ample anecdotal evidence already suggests that by tapping into this latent pool of city resources, as many European and US cities have been doing since the 1950s, the scaling to improve MDGs can be achieved without proportional increases in “additional” concessionary aid.

Another lesson is that conventional development assistance agencies like the World Bank, proved not to be needed to play a primary driving or sponsoring role, in city to city exchange. It is sufficient to stay in the background and to supply critical information at opportune moments.

## CASE STUDIES IN SCALING UP POVERTY REDUCTION

Other lessons included the following:

- The good communications linkages provided by cities, based on years of low intensity exchange also proved to be sufficient to gain access and recognition in this effort and to launch initial stages.
- Smooth transition was made in both cases from the content and character of past city to city exchanges to the content of and issues of poverty and MDGs.
- Authorities and community views meshed easily with PRSP at national level and MDGs were easily comprehended by local community groups and citizens
- In comparison to official development assistance and channels, city to city is slower and sometimes vulnerable to delays.

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## Appendix 1. A Brief history of C2C

**World War II was the major catalyst for the twinning movement.** In 1950s sister city relationships were actively encouraged on a national scale in the US, following President Dwight Eisenhower's call for "people-to-people diplomacy." Those relationships emphasize cultural and social links

In 1960s and 1970s there is a geographic spread of sister city relationships that develop beyond cultural links. Japanese cities also became involved mainly in partnership with American cities. Following liberization process in China, Japanese municipalities as well as those in other East Asian countries, sought additional partnerships with China. Falling exports, following a high Yen exchange rate in 1970s, urge Japanese municipalities to establish links with Asian and particularly Chinese local authorities, as a tool to encourage trade and friendly relations

In late 1970s / early 1980s, MIC begun the process of diversification in three different directions: 1) emphasis on trade as a central component of MIC (best example, the United States); 2) demonstration of solidarity with developing countries through the provision of financial and material aid, in support of local democracy and increased awareness vis-à-vis development issues (example, Netherlands) and 3) political, promoted by municipalities that were engaged in MIC for political reasons (examples: anti-apartheid actions of municipalities from the Netherlands and the US, the "Nuclear Free Local Authorities" actions in Italy, Japan, Spain, UK, Netherlands, US; actions against US policies and sanctions aimed at isolating Nicaragua.

Late 1980s / early 1990s. Fall of communism in Central and East Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, represent opening new territories full of opportunities to municipalities in the industrialized world.

Since mid 1980s, MIC is characterized by increasing diversity and correlations worldwide, increased professionalization within MIC, greater participation of the donor community in MIC activities. (German Ministry for Technical and Economic Cooperation, Canadian International Development Agency, Directorate General for International Cooperation of the Netherlands ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Finnish International Development Agency, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Norwegian Agency for Development, the Overseas Development Administration, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, Swedish International Development Agency, United States Agency for International Development)<sup>7</sup>

From 1990s, there is the continued expansion of MIC and the main factors are : Decentralization of public administration, Decentralization of development cooperation, Decentralization and democratization, Globalization and localization, Heterogeneity

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<sup>7</sup> IULA/VNG (1995) Local Challenges to Global Change : A Global Perspective on Municipal international Cooperation Sdu Publishers, The Hague pp 24