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Public Discourse

## Negotiating Change: Building Local Democracy in South Africa

by Mark Swilling

SOUTH AFRICA. On November 1, 1995, South Africans voted in the first democratic non-racial local government elections in this country's history. No fewer than 15,000 candidates ran for 4,000 seats in just over 700 local governments. This represents the majority of newly established local governments. The rest, mainly in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, where a low-intensity civil war is still simmering, and in Greater Cape Town, where boundary disputes have delayed progress, will vote before April 1996.

These local elections mark the end of the first phase of a transition to democracy that began when Nelson Mandela strolled purposefully out of prison that sunny February back in 1990. The local government elections occurred some 18 months after the historic April 1994 election which led to the inauguration of the current Government of National Unity led by President Mandela. It is now possible for the

political leadership that sits in the national Constitutional Assembly to hammer out a final constitutional framework for the national, provincial, and local levels of government.

Transitions to democracy have taken place over the last 25 years across Eastern Europe, Latin America, Southern Europe, and now in Africa. However, the South African transition is unique in at least one important way: the national constitutional settlement that led to the final death of apartheid occurred at all three levels of government. The tenth chapter of the new post-apartheid interim Constitution (which will be replaced by a final Constitution by 1999) lays out a framework for managing the transition at the local government level. In essence, this framework provides for a three-phase transition process.

The first, or "pre-interim," phase of the transition process involves multi-stakeholder negotiations at the local level and focuses on defining the structure and composition of each new local government. The second phase started with the November 1, 1995, elections for the newly created non-racial councils. The second phase will last until about 1999 when the final Constitution is introduced. The final Constitution will make provisions for local governments that are likely to replicate the negotiated models created during phase two rather than introduce a completely new model.

### Negotiation forums

The Local Government Transition Act makes it compulsory for every village, town, and city throughout South Africa (including the former "homelands") to establish a "negotiation forum." This law requires each negotiation forum to include the old apartheid local government structures from each local area, plus rate-payers, resident organizations, business organizations, political parties, and service providers. This structure prevents any single party from dominating the

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We welcome your comments, thoughts, and suggestions on *The Urban Age*.

Editor:

Since its inception, *The Urban Age* has covered environmental issues that transcend cultural barriers and international boundaries. It follows that the flow of ideas so generated has been very enlightening and informative, especially to people in developing countries. We are looking forward to the Habitat II Conference to be held in Istanbul in June 1996. We need to address ourselves to the global problems of debt crises, political instability, ideological differences, and technological imbalance or else the idea of "urban sustainability" is an illusion. We should not forget that these drawbacks have become a part of life in many a Third World country.

issue on Privatization and Cities was appropriate to our times. City administrators are inviting private infrastructure investments in urban basic services, transportation, construction, and other areas.

Gagan Dhir

School of Planning and Architecture

New Delhi, India

Editor:

Your issue on the Human Environment of Cities is timely. I agree that in trying to find solutions to present urban environmental problems in developing countries, innovation and ingenuity are very important. In upgrading or planning low-income residential areas, the essential linkage between housing and income generation needs to be taken into consideration. Economic activities peculiar to specific localities should be studied and strategies designed to mitigate or curtail negative environmental effects of these activities.

Programs to assist low-income entrepreneurs should always have an environmental component during which entrepreneurs can be educated on how to make their activities more environmentally friendly. This will help improve the human environment of cities and consequently help achieve sustainable urban environments.

Eric P. Tudzi

University of Science and Technology

Kumasi, Ghana

Editor:

I have been a regular reader of *The Urban Age* for the past two years. The text, reports, and ideas published by peers in urban studies are truly commendable. The journal has been very stimulating in updating me on the latest trends and practices followed in the developing as well as the developed world. It is quite heartening to see that with the opening up of the Indian economy, multinationals are coming in to render their services in various fields, including urban settlements. Your

partnerships among stakeholders to achieve common goals is another major theme found throughout this issue.

Each article describes innovative strategies for meeting challenges, solving urban problems, and/or creating long-lasting social transformation and change. A common characteristic of these strategies is an understanding that barriers and adverse conditions can be resolved or overcome by developing and implementing long-term action plans that are sustained over time.

As G. Shabbir Cheema points out in his Guest Editorial, real innovations generate actual improvements in people's lives. This practical realization is the driving force behind many of the policies and programs described here. The Guest Editorial and the article from Latin America provide useful insights into many of the common elements and characteristics of innovative practices in urban management.

It has been a pleasure to be back with *The Urban Age* as the Guest Editor for this issue. As always, we welcome your comments, suggestions, and feedback.

—Bonnie Bradford

# Innovative Urban Management Practices

*G. Shabbir Cheema is the director of the Management Development and Governance Division of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).*

Cities are centers of opportunity and the setting for the dynamic expression of human potential and human development. However, the rapid concentration of people in urban areas has placed an extraordinary strain on the ability of national and municipal governments to meet the needs of city dwellers. The lessons provided by innovative urban management practices will therefore play a critical role in directing policymaking that is ultimately aimed at achieving sustainable human development.

Institutional change is urgently needed for the effective management of the urbanization process: political and revenue-generating capacities need to be decentralized to metropolitan governments, existing local authorities need to be reshaped to manage their new capacities, human resource capacities at metropolitan levels of government need to be enhanced, and new urban planning mechanisms need to be created. At the national level, governments may need to establish or strengthen national departments for urban development to ensure the effective formulation and implementation of urban development policies.

Urbanization has brought with it a greater demand for housing and other services including transport, water, sanitation, communications, electricity, and public health. Failures of public management and scarcity of financial and technical capacity have resulted in widespread deficiencies. Effective urban management is necessary to support policies and practices for the efficient and equitable provision of urban services that will include the capacity to mobilize resources and improve the effectiveness of local government expenditures.

Many government and development agency initiatives

have focused on the role of private initiatives to improve the delivery of urban services. Given their potential for lower production costs, improved efficiency in service delivery, and greater capacity to maintain capital equipment, private enterprises can have advantages over government agencies. However, a critical need will remain for a regulatory framework that protects the interests of the public, particularly the poor, and that incorporates safety and environmental concerns.

Effective urban management is also essential to support productive activities that tend to be highly concentrated in major metropolitan areas. Cities in developing countries account for as much as two-thirds of GNP, benefiting from economies of scale as well as the proximity of labor, capital markets, and technology. Constraints that hamper urban productivity include infrastructure deficiencies, inappropriate regulatory frameworks, weak municipal institutions, and inadequate financial services.

A key issue and major challenge to urban management will continue to be how to improve productivity while directly alleviating the growing incidence of urban poverty and improving equity. It is increasingly evident that the improvement in overall economic growth per se is not sufficient to reduce poverty, although it has been a major factor in lowering urban poverty levels in some countries.

Government interventions in partnerships with communities and actors such as nongovernmental organizations, and effective organization of the poor at the community level, are crucial. Women carry the major burden of productive, reproductive, and community management work. The active participation of

## Common Elements of Innovations

Cities are intrinsically different and cannot accommodate standardized formulas or rigid methodologies for improved urban management and urban governance. Diverse physical, geographic, socio-economic, cultural, political, and other factors necessitate "tailor-made" rather than "one-size-fits-all" approaches. However, it is possible to identify some essential aspects that characterize innovative urban management practices:

- **Involvement of civil society.** The urban environment affects all people in a cross-sectorial manner and should be improved through institutional interfacing between government, the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations, trade unions, the scientific-academic community, and others.

- **Institutional development.** The development of a technical and legal/enforcement framework for implementing urban management practices is made possible through proper institutions for planning, developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating activities. Capacity building is a fundamental component of institutional development.

- **Participatory approaches.** Participatory approaches, when balanced with representation structures, are a key element in improving the decision-making process toward effective urban management. The issue is not to adopt either a bottom-up or a top-down methodology, but to keep both of these in mind depending on the scale of activities.

- **Finding entry points.** All elements of the natural resource base and human-made interventions in any given urban area are interconnected. However, the analytical integration of problems tends to lead to paralysis. Effective urban management practices should find entry points that are acceptable to people and their representatives. To ensure complementarity, entry points should be identified using a holistic view.

- **Appropriate technology choices.** Affordability, user-friendliness, a balance between labor-intensive versus capital-intensive options, ease of operations and maintenance, demand-driven approaches, and capacity-building opportunities are some of the elements that should be considered when undertaking technology choices for urban infrastructure and services.

- **Results-oriented approaches.** The ultimate criterion for evaluating urban management is its impact on people's lives. The production of action plans, urban assessments, institutional improvement, and community mobilization exercises are means for achieving people-centered end results. Innovative practices can only be considered real practices when they actually generate an improvement in people's living conditions.

—GSC

women in community-based projects is therefore vital for bringing about improvements in the living conditions in poor urban settlements.

A final concern that must be considered in developing urban management systems are the environmental problems that accompany rapid urbanization, some of which are directly linked to poverty. Urban areas are major consumers of energy and

natural resources. Environmental problems such as air and water pollution are exacerbated by urban densities and congestion and the consumption patterns that exist in cities. This has serious implications for public health and the long-term viability of the urban economy, and critically affects the urban poor. Innovative urban management strategies are needed to address these urgent environmental issues.

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policymaking process. Each negotiation forum is required to agree on the non-racial boundaries of the new local government for each area, plus its administrative structure, distribution of powers, budget, and the composition of the council and its executive body.

**4** In effect, South Africa's leaders agreed to manage the transformation of local governments via negotiated local social contracts.

This innovative approach to local governance differs radically from the traditional approach during transitions to democracy. In the traditional approach, political elites negotiate a power deal that creates a new central government which in turn imposes a uniform local government model onto all localities, irrespective of regional differences and local specificities.

South Africa's first non-racial general election took place on April 27, 1994. By this time, many local areas had already established negotiation forums. However, it took another year of intense local level negotiations involving thousands of stakeholders before most areas were able to reach agreement on the shape of their non-racial local governments. While there were "hiccups," none were serious enough to undermine the overall strategy. The success of the local negotiation process led to the decision by the Government of National Unity to

### Awards Program for Innovations in Government

Contact: Gertrude R. Jeffers, Assistant Director for External Relations, A. Alfred Taubman Center for State and Local Government, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 79 John F. Kennedy Street, Cambridge, MA 02133, USA, Tel: 617-495-0557; Fax: 617-496-4602.

The Innovations in American Government Awards program is sponsored by the Ford Foundation and administered by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Since 1986, the Innovation Awards have honored 155 exemplary initiatives in the United States at the federal, state, and local levels that provide creative solutions to pressing social and economic problems. In 1995, 30 finalists were selected by the National Committee on Innovations from more than 1,450 applicants. Fifteen winners each received an award of US\$100,000, and the other 15 finalists received US\$20,000 each. The awards are intended to recognize, document, and help disseminate information about outstanding, innovative approaches to governmental problem solving. Applicants must be from the United States or territories of the United States. Informational inquiries are welcomed from individuals and organizations interested in developing awards programs in their own countries.

hold nationwide elections for the newly negotiated local governments on November 1, 1995. As President Mandela remarked on November 3, 1995, the successful completion of the local government elections put in place the final piece of South Africa's new non-racial democracy. The final phase of the negotiated revolution in South Africa came to an end with the local elections.

### Negotiating simultaneous change

Why was it necessary to manage the negotiated transition of all three tiers of government simultaneously? The answer is quite clear. First, the main imperative that led to a unitary conception of central government was the need to create a single South African nation out of the racial divisions of the past. Second, at the provincial level, there was a patchwork quilt of ethnic homelands and white provincial administrations. It was necessary to integrate these meso-level structures into nine provincial governments, each with their own legislatures, executives, budgets, powers, and public services. The meso-level is essentially federal in nature.

The third reason for managing the negotiated transition in all three

tiers of government simultaneously relates to the importance of local social movements in recent South African history. The popular mobilization of local communities since the late 1970s underpinned the formation of local social movements. Initially, these local social movements focused their activities on the destruction of apartheid local governments. Beginning in the mid-1980s, their focus shifted to the negotiated transformation of local governance. These well-developed and deeply rooted local negotiation processes predated the national negotiation process, which began in 1990, and provided a model for how participants can negotiate and manage change. Rather than stop the local negotiation processes that were already underway, the national negotiators agreed to provide the local negotiators with a legal framework for standardizing the local negotiation of local government transformation so it would be consistent with the framework for managing the transition as a whole.

The process of local level negotiations triggered a learning process that went far beyond the initial intentions of resolving conflicts and changing institutions. Most importantly, local negotiations have done more to facilitate building local communities across old divisions than any other factor. While some extremists felt betrayed by the uncertainties and tried to derail the process of negotiated community-building, most local leaders found that they had more in common compared with what divided them. They found they shared similar values and needs, and discovered that in their visions for the future they wanted their towns and cities to be places where their children could be safe, healthy, find shelter, and earn an income. As they hammered out their new modes of local governance, a set of relationships emerged that was based on trust rather than expedience, understanding rather than legal compulsion, shared vision rather than individualistic interests. This did not result in the suppression of diversity in the name of a false unity (which is common during transitions), but rather the retention of diversity within a framework of managed reciprocity.

### Implications of local level negotiations

The process of local level negotiated transition has had far-reaching implications for the search for new modes of urban governance and urban development in South Africa and elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa. Three aspects of South Africa's negotiated local governance process are especially noteworthy:

- The process stimulated a participatory policymaking culture in which organized civil society has been able to take advantage of the space for reciprocal organization of stakeholder interests. Civil society has been able to influence policy development in a way that has tended to weaken the traditional stranglehold that professionals in bureaucracies would otherwise have in the policy process.

- It is unlikely that local government budgets can provide the primary source of revenue for investment in the upgrading of existing and development of new urban infrastructure. If local governments remain committed to meeting the service needs of their communities, then local governments have to facilitate the mobilization of other resources for urban development. By bringing the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and development funding institutions into the negotiation process, it was possible to raise awareness about the need for public-private-community partnerships aimed at complementary resource mobilization.

- By incorporating a multiplicity of stakeholders into local social contracts, a political culture was created that was built on a demand for decentralization of power to the lowest level. This is significant

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because one explanation for the failure of centrally driven, technically conceived decentralization policies has been the absence of a local political culture that demands decentralization from below.

### Rethinking the role of local government

These three processes have made it possible to think about the role of local government in at least four new ways:

- Local governments began to be seen not just as providers of basic services, but also as facilitators of local urban economic development.
- The notion that local governments are merely the “arms and legs” of higher levels of government has tended to be replaced by the idea that local governments also have “heads.” In other words, local governments have relative autonomy over local policy issues when they have their own local tax base.
- Participatory governance is not just a way of legitimizing local government structures and policies (which is why participation emerged in the 1980s and early 1990s). Participatory governance is also a way to mobilize resources from the private and community sectors for local urban development.
- Leadership within local governments should be the joint responsibility of both the political executive and the chief officers. Together they should develop a joint approach to strategic management, rather than viewing politicians as providing “rubber stamps” for the administrators, and considering administrators as mechanically executing the policies of politicians.

### Challenges and unresolved issues

As in any experimental process, problems are bound to occur. In the case of South Africa, several problems merit special attention. During the first and second phases of the transition, the new political elites consolidated their power base in a way that tended to undermine the participatory and negotiated policymaking process. Many of the newly elected transitional local councils and transitional metropolitan councils decided to abolish the negotiation forums after the agreements reached in these forums were implemented. In addition, many African National Congress-aligned politicians refused to give up their official positions in civic associations after they took office in the new local governments. This effectively meant that they achieved control over the local government and retained control of the organizations that had previously led the social movements.

While it is all very well to extol the virtues of community participation in decisionmaking, actual participation presumes that community-based organizations (CBOs) have the capacity to organize their members, formulate policy proposals, and attend lengthy negotiation meetings. In general, they do not have this capacity. Resolving this problem by providing state funds to CBOs holds the danger of cooption. The alternative of leaving CBOs at the mercy of international aid or philanthropy is also unacceptable. This suggests the need for concrete mechanisms that have yet to be developed for ensuring that CBOs have access to resources to build their capacity to participate meaningfully and effectively.

Despite the changing conceptions of local governance, much depends on the capacity of local administrators to think and behave in new and different ways. Most people currently employed in local administrations have traditionally worked in a de facto welfare system. While local governments were able to generate local budgets from their respective tax bases which were, generally speaking, adequate to finance high-level municipal services, such as tarred roads, water-borne

### New Nigerian Journal Spotlights Urban Issues

*Contact: The Editor, The Urban Forum, c/o Urban Development Bank of Nigeria, Okoi Arikpo House, 5th Floor, 5 Idowu Taylor Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria, Tel: 234-1-2620237, 2620238, 2620239; Fax: 234-1-2620310.*

The Nigerian Urban Forum is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable urban development in Nigeria. As part of its activities, the Nigerian Urban Forum has recently launched a twice-yearly journal called *The Urban Forum*. Its first issue, produced for the period January through June 1995, focused on “Contemporary Urban Problems and Development Issues in Nigeria Today.” The July through December 1995 issue will discuss “Basic Issues in Nigerian Urban Settlements.” The journal, established to provide a voice for stakeholders in urban centers and to act as a medium for promoting environmentally friendly and sustainable human settlement development in Nigeria, will disseminate information on the activities of the Nigerian Urban Forum.

sanitation, high-quality drinking water, reliable electricity, and good solid waste collection systems. This encouraged an administrative culture that assumed that financing would follow from good planning, and therefore resource mobilization from the community and private sectors was unnecessary. Inward-oriented service provider bureaucracies were the result rather than development-oriented, citizen-responsive administrators rooted in local conditions. This legacy will retard future progress and may undermine the new conceptions of local governance that have begun to emerge.

### The road ahead

South Africa has much to learn from countries that have undermined local governance for various reasons. It is now uniformly accepted that undermining local governance has had a detrimental impact on development in these countries. As South Africa proceeds down its democratic road, it may well need to remember these lessons. It is now abundantly clear that when resources diminish and development slows down, decisionmakers have a remarkable proclivity to centralize. This would, of course, be extremely damaging in the case of South Africa.

The processes and ways of thinking described, as well as the potential dangers and problems, will continue to shape South Africa’s emerging local governance system over the next decade. Undoubtedly, what happens in South Africa will influence Southern Africa and, indeed, all of Sub-Saharan Africa. This influence has already started to happen at the formal level via the forums of organized local government. However, there is also evidence of an emerging set of networks that are transferring new ideas and approaches. In particular, when one looks at the emerging new local government systems in Angola and Mozambique, it is clear that these systems could follow the traditional legalistic route where structures are put in place without a development process to ensure that they can operate. Alternatively, these countries may learn from the South African experience that space for reciprocity, mutual trust, and political plurality are preconditions for building local institutions that have the capacity to manage urban development processes effectively.

*Mark Swilling is the director of the Graduate School of Public and Development Management at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. He is also a consultant to the South African Government and nongovernmental organizations on development strategy, and works with the newly created local governments to build their capacity for democratic and developmental governance.*

# Institutional Behavior Change in Tunisian Municipalities

**6** by May Yacoob and Diane Bendahmane

May Yacoob is technical director for community participation at the Environmental Health Project (EHP). Diane Bendahmane is technical director of marketing and information services at EHP.

**SOUSSE AND KASSERINE.** Twenty staff members from the municipalities of Sousse and Kasserine, two secondary cities in Tunisia, are working on a community mapping project with the residents of peri-urban/informal neighborhoods. The community mapping exercise is a follow-up practicum for staff participating in CIMEP (Community Involvement in the Management of Environmental Pollution), a program to change the behavior of municipal officials so that they can plan and implement environmental health programs in poor urban areas with full community involvement at all stages. Workshops cover teamwork, communications skills, training and facilitation techniques, identifying high-risk behaviors, and monitoring changes in environmental health conditions. The training process takes approximately 18 months.

Peri-urban poverty is more complex than the provision of

infrastructure, which often is not used because it is out of step with local conditions and behaviors. Although most ordinary people come in contact with government only at the municipal level, municipal staff may lack the skills necessary for interacting with people, especially for communicating with peri-urban communities, finding out what their problems are, and gaining an appreciation for the resources and capabilities they can apply to finding solutions. Under the CIMEP model, the provision of infrastructure is based on actual health behaviors, practices, and environmental conditions. Local neighborhood-level managers are charged with ensuring the appropriateness of the infrastructure installed, its continued maintenance, and its use over a long enough period of time to improve public health conditions.

In Sousse and Kasserine some changes in municipal behavior are already evident. For example,

## Changing Municipal Behaviors

Conventional Behavior	CIMEP Behavior
Activities are sector-specific.	Activities are cross-sectoral.
Planning is done within the municipality.	Planning is done with communities.
Staff provide services.	Staff facilitate and enable.
Stakeholders are informed of decisions.	Stakeholders are brought into the decisionmaking process.
Activities are crisis-oriented and problem-focused.	Activities are based on community vision and capabilities with technical support from municipalities.
Decisions are made within the bureaucracy.	Decisions are made through consultation and consensus building.

municipal staff are listening to women and discovering that women know what they are talking about, especially when the topic is family life and health. Direct contact with customers made it possible for staff to move from generalities into specific plans based on customers' needs and resources. Behavioral change can also be seen in the municipal staff's enthusiasm for the training

methods modeled in the workshops. Participants come expecting lengthy didactic sessions where the instructor talks and the students are passive. Experiential, adult learning techniques are being warmly embraced and put to use in the staff's interaction with community members. The above box lists some conventional municipal behaviors and the changes CIMEP is working to effect.

Municipal staff training, with the follow-up practicums, is the heart of CIMEP. Three other components are also part of the methodology:

- **Socio-environmental study.**

Before training begins, an assessment is carried out to identify local resources and institutions as well as the socio-cultural conditions that contribute to environmental health problems. Both quantitative information from official sources and qualitative information obtained through rapid community assessments are used.

- **Decisionmakers meeting.**

At the end of each round of

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## Zlatna Takes Charge of Its Environmental Health Problems

**ZLATNA.** As in the CIMEP/Tunisia program, participation of all stakeholders is a salient feature of the technical assistance that the Environmental Health Project is providing to improve environmental conditions in Zlatna, Romania, where a copper smelter and refinery is the main source of environmental health risks. The three areas of concern are reducing the exposure of children to lead, air quality monitoring and control, and occupational health and safety.

The activity has made an impact on Zlatna by beginning to change the mind-set of municipal officials, industry, and the public. The idea that the town could analyze and then do something about its environmental health problems was

foreign. Municipal officials were used to carrying out decisions made at the national government level, but they weren't used to taking action on their own.

The approach of the activity is to foster maximum collaboration and participation. An intersectoral working group was established for each area of concern. The groups included representatives from the smelter, the Zlatna hospital, the county Environmental Protection Agency and Sanitary Police, the Center for Medical Research in the nearby town of Cluj, and the Zlatna kindergarten. The working groups have been responsible for developing and implementing workplans outlining short-term actions to improve conditions in their area.

The Working Group on Lead, for example, presented the results of a program to test the blood lead levels of 300 children at a well-attended community meeting in Zlatna and advanced a community effort to respond to the high blood lead levels and to reduce children's exposure to lead by setting up family counseling for children most at risk, preparing health education materials, and creating safe play areas at the preschools in Zlatna.

The working groups in Zlatna are now disseminating lessons learned and program approaches to other communities in the region with similar problems. The mayor of Zlatna praised the effort as a "real lesson in democracy for Zlatna."

# Report Cards: A Novel Approach for Improving Urban Services

by Samuel Paul

*Samuel Paul is the founder and chairman of the Public Affairs Centre in Bangalore, India.*

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BANGALORE. Can report cards on public services be used to enhance the quality of urban governance? The users of public services are an important source of information and knowledge about service providers. The Public Affairs Centre (PAC), a new, independent, nonprofit organization based in Bangalore, India, provides some interesting evidence on report cards and how they can be used to encourage

taking steps to interact with citizen groups and public agencies with the hope that joint actions to improve agency performance and accountability will follow.

### Signals from citizens

PAC's report card on Bangalore's public services illustrates the kind of findings that are emerging from these studies. Bangalore is a growing city of

- Results from a random sample survey were used to rank public agencies in terms of citizen satisfaction. All the major public utilities and all other agencies in Bangalore were given low ratings by citizens. Even the best rated among the agencies—public hospitals—received a satisfaction rating of only 20 percent.

- Many of the problems encountered by the public in dealing with these agencies are

almost all public agencies. Across all agencies, one out of eight people said they ended up paying bribes ("speed money").

- The costs of public services to citizens of Bangalore are not limited to official fees and bribes. People invest large sums of money in assets such as underground sumps, overhead tanks, stabilizers, tubewells, and generators to protect themselves against unreliable public services. These long-term investments amount to nearly \$300 million at current prices.

### Media coverage of results

The Indian Government was not involved in any stage of PAC's study. The report card findings were released to the press and government agencies on the same day. Almost all the newspapers in Bangalore promptly and prominently reported the findings of the report card. Freedom of the press in India and the fact that newspapers are not owned by the state clearly had a great deal to do with their willingness to publicize the study. Perhaps the novelty of the methodology—the use of public feedback as an assessment tool and the quantification of results that permitted comparisons across services—also influenced the media's response.

A common problem with reports in daily newspapers is that they catch the reader's attention only for a day or two. One newspaper, the *Times of India*, came up with an innovative idea to keep the findings of the study in the public consciousness. For two months, the *Times of India* published one finding at a time on the front page of its Sunday editions. The finding appeared as a bar chart that compared

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*The deterioration of urban and civic services is a concern of many Bangalore residents.*



public interest in the improvement of urban services as well as to encourage public service providers to be more responsive to citizens.

PAC's basic mission is to improve the quality of governance in India. Since the deterioration of urban and civic services is a matter of great public concern in India, PAC has made urban and civic services the focus of its attention. To date, PAC has prepared report cards on public services in the cities of Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calcutta, Madras, and Pune, and more studies are underway. As the results are disseminated, PAC is

over 4.5 million people, about one-eighth of whom live in slums. City services are provided primarily by public providers that are large bureaucracies operating under monopoly conditions. The following are among the Bangalore report card findings:

- The citizens of Bangalore identified eight different service providers with whom they most frequently interact. They are the Bangalore Development Authority, the Bangalore Municipal Corporation, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sanitation Board, the Karnataka Electricity Board, the Regional Transport Office, public hospitals, and public sector banks.

not attributable to supply shortages. Over 25 percent of all problems concerned excess billing, something that can be at least partially improved through better internal management at little cost.

- According to the survey, nearly 60 percent of Bangalore citizens visit public utility offices two or more times to sort out a single problem or service such as excess billing or the need for repairs. A major reason for these multiple visits is lack of information and guidance from agencies to citizens.

- Corruption is a serious problem reported by citizens in

# Innovations and Risk Taking: The Engine of Local Government Reform

**I** by Tim Campbell and Travis Katz

Tim Campbell is the principal urban specialist in the Advisory Group in the Technical Department of the Latin America and the Caribbean Region at the World Bank. Travis Katz is a consultant in the same department.

Decentralization in Latin America and the Caribbean has dramatically transformed the face of the local public sector, producing a new generation of leaders and a "quiet revolution" in popular participation in local public choices. Though not the majority, many elected officials are more responsive than ever to their constituents, and are proactive and innovative. Mayors in scores of cities have launched new ways of doing business, including professionalizing employees and raising new taxes—actions that were nearly unthinkable only a decade ago. A drive to deliver makes local

above—from national political figures and fiscal policymakers—as well as from below—from their constituents. This understanding also makes them keenly aware of the risks involved in launching something new. It is useful to try to better understand these forces, to document cases, and to identify common patterns in innovation. In the Conference on Decentralization Policies that Work: Lessons and Best Practices held October 25–26, 1995, in Cartegena, Colombia, the findings from 16 Latin American case studies drawn from five categories of interest were summarized. Case study examples from each of

many, but not all, of the 16 innovations.

- *Climate of change as incubator.* Reform of the political process and of the state were important in some cases, and opposition governments were decisive in others. A strong regional identity was often important, as well as concrete, well-developed models of innovations.

- *Champion and visionary.* Leadership was integral to the success of these innovations. A champion or visionary was able to see a new way of solving problems and converting this vision into practical steps. Leaders were also important as communicators to the public and as focal points to sustain interest and generate commitment in the community.

While development agencies cannot engineer the kinds of political revivals that underlay some of these reforms, they can be ready to react. Future projects may need to explore new avenues of dissemination, stimulating leadership to adopt tested innovations from other jurisdictions, and attracting risk-takers with incentives to launch new and spread tested programs, particularly following political and institutional reform.

2. **Simple tools and appropriate technology.** The 16 cases bear out the importance of a long-recognized feature of successful technology transfer—organizations, tools, and technologies are readily taken up when they advance the purposes of local leaders or their communities.

- *Simplicity of idea.* Nearly all the innovations were simple, fairly concrete ideas, as opposed to abstract or ideological concepts. For example, in Curitiba a

series of innovations allowed the bus system to achieve the transit volume of fixed rail lines at a fraction of the cost.

- *Importance of social organization.* Construction of basic infrastructure in Mendoza depended heavily on grassroots, often single-purpose, organizations. Once again, the organizing principle was to be able to carry out concrete improvements that can be seen and verified, rather than being based on more abstract concepts such as a political ideology or larger social concerns. Moreover, actions were linked to beneficiary payments and executed under the watchful supervision of the community.

- *Social relations and dialogue for collective support.* Small, intimate projects relied as heavily on intensive dialogue with the community as did large, complex ones, and innovators gave strong emphasis to inventing new, or making effective use of existing, communications channels with the public. Organizational tools and techniques, like community outreach and management of neighborhood meetings, were adopted and refined, and were critical to the success of the programs.

The study of innovations suggests that voluntary organizations and social communications, and particularly extensive involvement of beneficiaries in key aspects of programs, are decisive in program success. Participation is the surest way to tailor a project, a program, and an innovation so it serves the vital interests of the community.

3. **Starting with the right size.** The lesson is to start with a small boat in a quiet harbor.

*continued on page 9* ▶

leaders eager consumers of new ideas and techniques and makes the process of innovation—of changing standard practice in local governance and management—much more important for financial and development assistance agencies to consider.

## Understanding risk taking

As a group, local elected leaders share a common understanding of the pressures from

these categories are described briefly in the box on page 9.

## Identifying shared factors

Key factors can be identified in the conception, launching, and dissemination of innovations. The following are shared factors in the 16 case studies examined.

1. **Context of origins.** In addition to "quiet revolution," reform of the state, natural disasters, and crises lay behind

# LATIN AMERICA

*continued from page 8*

• **Appropriate scale.** Scale of operations is critical, especially for neighborhood works, to facilitate sustained personal contact of program officials and leaders, making legitimacy easier to achieve. Small-scale operations also foster a sense of partnership between neighborhood residents and program officers. Increasing the face-to-face contact among neighbors engaged in a common enterprise heightens mutual responsibility, and this is essential in managing the risks for community members who undertake credit obligations.

• **Start in a harbor.** Pilot community projects reflect a well-known practice in social action: innovations need an incubator. All the cases found ways to start by launching a small version in a safe environment.

**4. Staying the course.** The cases with the longest track records (Cali and Curitiba) are marked by complementary and mutually supporting parallel innovations that serve to reinforce the original idea and make it more effective. As might be expected, the longer running cases are also the most successful at dissemination.

• **Sustained commitment and the long view.** An extension of the importance of leadership, particularly by local governments, is that a leader must be able to articulate commitment convincingly and be able to sustain public trust. In all cases this was done by periodic doses of direct contact with clients, such as neighborhoods, council members, or the larger community, who are participants in the enterprise. The most successful cases have crossed multiple political administrations precisely because political leaders see their own interests served as communities become involved.

• **Complement and support.** The long-running cases show that over time, supporting, complementary innovations are integral to the flourishing of the original innovation.

## Replicating innovation

These cases from Latin America show that innovation results from an interaction among civil society, the private sector, and sociopolitical systems that are typically undergoing reform. They provide a number of lessons for financial and development assistance agencies and policymakers.

Financial and development agencies should not necessarily expect to foster innovation directly, or even to finance innovative projects. However, much can be gained by sponsoring horizontal learning experiences—for example, meetings, municipal associations, and other forms of dissemination geared specifically for spreading innovative ideas and best practices.

While visionary leaders cannot be manufactured, many things can be done to foster and reward leadership. These include bringing the idea of leadership into formal education, widening the channels of dissemination, improving training programs, publicizing good practices, and offering prizes as part of institutional strengthening at the local level.

One of the most striking features of the innovations is the strength of the linkages forged between the preferences of neighborhood residents for public works and services, and the payment burdens they must bear to achieve cost recovery. One of the signal features of the many innovations seen in the aftermath of decentralization in the region is the restoration of this critical fiscal connection. User charges and betterment levies are being found to be efficient and fair means to recover costs for medium-sized infrastructure and services.

These cases also show that social organization, particularly communications with grassroots groups, is a skill area with a high payoff for launching and sustaining change and keeping local leaders accountable. Communication skills also help mobilize community resources in local development and secure community ownership and commitment.

## Professionalism in Municipal Management: Professional City Manager in Tegucigalpa, Honduras

The Municipal Reform Law of 1990 gave responsibility for planning and administration of local services and revenue raising to local governments. The City of Tegucigalpa, with financial and technical assistance from external development agencies, hired a professional city manager to oversee the city's technical and administrative duties, leaving policymaking and long-term planning in the hands of the mayor and council.

## Mobilizing and Managing Local and Regional Resources: Betterment Levy and Referendum in Tijuana, Mexico

In the wake of devastating floods, the mayor of Tijuana put together a comprehensive plan for the construction of desperately needed infrastructure. The costs of completing the plan were estimated on an aggregate and per capita basis. The city then held a referendum—with a positive outcome—on whether the citizens were willing to pay for the proposed services.

## Delivery of Services: Integrated Mass Transit in Curitiba, Brazil

In response to both the oil crisis and heavy traffic congestion, local leaders in Curitiba began to think of ways to make buses behave more like metro systems. The resulting innovations include dedicated lanes, revenue sharing, advance ticket sales, level platforms which speed the boarding and off-loading of passengers, and longer buses.

## Involving the Private Sector: Public-Private Partnerships for Services in Cali, Colombia

An entrepreneur businessman in Cali helped trigger private sector partnerships with the city and regional governments as well as with community groups to provide or improve services for Cali citizens. The partnership began with a single city park, and grew into a system of parks, a natural preserve, and eventually social services to low-income communities. The partnership has also extended into budget making, police and security systems, and long-term strategic planning.

## Local Participation and Public Choice Making: Credit for Basic Social Infrastructure in Mendoza, Argentina

The threat of cholera in 1991, coupled with democratic reforms, forced Mendoza Province to invent new ways of providing basic sanitation to the poor. By relying on social censure, the province was able to broker credit to extend credit to poor communities for basic infrastructure. Since 1991, the program has implemented 274 small projects benefiting more than 50,000 households.

Much of the secret of success lies in starting small and continuing to build—focusing on the natural social units that exist in urban environments, for example, grassroots community groups that are already mobilized around local priority issues. It is important to take a longer view, and to help national and local leaders do the same to

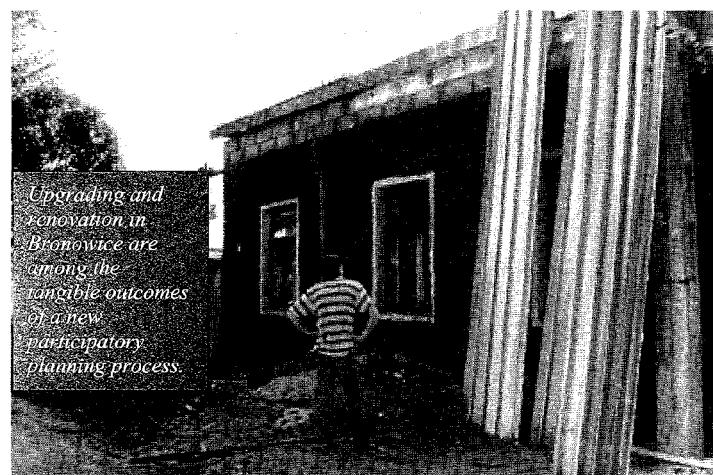
encourage new and sustain ongoing change over time—for example, by working more with intermediate levels of government, which often have longer political administrations than at the national level.

# Initiating Neighborhood Partnerships in Poland

by Mona Serageldin and Ewa Kipta

**Mona Serageldin** is an adjunct professor of urban planning and design, and associate director of the Unit for Housing and Urbanization of Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. **Ewa Kipta** is an architect and planner in the Urban Planning Unit of the City of Lublin, Poland, and head of the Local Initiatives Program Team.

LUBLIN. In 1990, the Urban Planning Unit of the City of Lublin initiated a participatory planning process to engage residents in the rehabilitation of their neighborhoods. Based on a shared vision of the future, this process has been a cutting edge concept in Poland both for the city planners and concerned citizens.



Strong backing from the city government was necessary to begin this initiative. The director of the city's Architecture, Urban Planning, and Construction Department supported the rehabilitation of existing housing as a component of Lublin's overall housing strategy. In addition, the reform-minded city president was willing to experiment with innovative ideas and encouraged planners to pursue this new approach.

In Lublin, the participatory planning process was launched in two lower income districts: Bronowice and Kosminek. Bronowice has a population of 4,000; Kosminek has approximately 2,000 residents. Both districts consist of a 19th century core of multi-family housing originally designed for workers employed in adjacent factories, along with good quality single-

family housing, and illegally built housing. Because the districts were designated as urban redevelopment sites, residents had been denied access to infrastructure—they could not even connect to existing networks, on the grounds that all existing housing was "temporary," pending demolition.

Lublin's community planning process has required an extensive

outreach effort over a two-year period. Regularly scheduled public meetings were held, and motivated residents have become the important link between the city and the community. Through this process, the residents have become aware of the role they play in shaping the future of their neighborhoods.

Lublin's initiative extended the Housing Act of 1991's use of a cost-sharing formula to provide serviced land for new privately developed housing projects to existing residential areas. This was part of the city's rehabilitation strategy to upgrade obsolete infrastructure and extend services to underserviced marginal and informally developed zones.

The Act for Support of Local Investment, adopted in January 1994, commits the city to stimulate local initiatives in infrastructure development through the

sharing of investment costs. Residents along each street designate representatives who negotiate with the city on behalf of residents for necessary improvements and sign the cost-sharing agreements for which they are personally liable. The municipality covers 50 percent of the cost of water, sewerage, and power lines; 70 percent of the cost of roads and sidewalks; and 100 percent of the cost of drainage and street paving.

The actual impacts of these initiatives have exceeded initial expectations. In the short span of two years, 137 houses have been renovated in the two pilot areas and 50 new buildings have been constructed. Only six shops existed in the neighborhoods before regularization. Today, 55 shops have been opened in the rehabilitated buildings and 18 buildings have been entirely converted to commercial use. Close to 120 people are working in these microenterprises.

In addition to the inputs of residents themselves, construction activities have provided work for over 100 people engaged in building trades. The changing image of the area is attracting private developers and investors interested in vacant parcels close to the city center.

In January 1995, the neighborhood partnership initiative was formalized to guarantee its continuity as a key environmental improvement strategy. To accomplish this goal, the U.S. Agency for International Development is supporting Lublin with technical assistance and training.

Frameworks for participation and empowerment help structure the interface between the city and the community and help promote public-private partnerships. These frameworks also assist in shaping

operational strategies that integrate economic revitalization and environmental upgrading at the community level. Even with part-time involvement in the program, the dynamic and dedicated neighborhood partnership team has managed to:

- maintain an ongoing dialogue with residents to set priorities for upgrading activities, and leverage and coordinate public and private inputs in the development process;
- formulate planning regulations that promote the development of microenterprises and home-based economic activities and expedite permitting procedures to stimulate housing renovation and expansion;
- inventory potential sites for the development of business incubators and compile information about organizations providing support services to small businesses so local microentrepreneurs can access these resources;
- foster awareness of environmental issues to prompt residents to finance house connections to sewerage lines and contract private services for solid waste collection in the unpaved zones;
- prompt residents to participate with the Lublin Foundation for Environmental Protection in cleaning up and landscaping the riverfront; and
- expand the program to other neighborhoods while simultaneously increasing the scope and diversity of the activities initiated.

The local initiatives program has demonstrated that participatory planning and community-based development processes adapted to the dynamics of the local economy can ensure the sustainability of revitalization efforts with diminished public inputs.

# An Interview with John Parker

*John Parker, cities correspondent and Europe editor for The Economist, and author of Turn up the Lights, The Economist, Survey of Cities (July 29, 1995), gives us his views on innovations in urban management.*

**UA:** *What are some of the major impacts that national versus municipal governments have on innovative practices in urban management?*

**JP:** Generally speaking, cities tend to be badly governed, but that is not really their fault. Cities face two external problems: jealous national governments and narrow-minded suburban ones.

National governments treat big cities as rivals, and allow them too little fiscal responsibility and not enough discretion in running their own urban policies. The governor of Bangkok, for instance, spends only 5 percent of the taxes raised in his city, while responsibility for sorting out Bangkok's notorious traffic jams is divided between 15 government departments and agencies. No wonder little gets done.

The problem is not really that national governments discriminate against cities—in the past, they often had policies that made cities grow artificially fast (for example, they kept urban food prices low, so cities attracted more rural migrants). The real trouble is that national governments rarely know much about urban problems and do not see cities as their primary constituencies.

Britain's ruling Conservatives, Germany's Christian Democrats, France's Gaullists, and Japan's Liberal Democrats all started as parties of small-town shopkeepers and farmers. In contrast, cities tend to side with opposition Social Democrats. This pattern is not unique to industrialized countries: the Communist parties of China and Vietnam are predominantly rural in origin.

**UA:** *Given these constraints, do you think cities worldwide are reviving or declining?*

**JP:** What is often not realized is that the cities of industrialized countries are reviving after decades of decline. The populations of London and Paris fell by nearly one-fifth in the 1970s but in the 1980s, London started growing again and Paris's population leveled out. In the 1970s, the United States had three cities of over 5 million people (New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles). Now it has five (those three, plus Philadelphia and San Francisco). In all, the populations of what the Census Bureau calls "center cities" (downtowns) rose by around 8 million in the 1980s.

This also reflected an economic turnaround. It was not merely growth in urban poverty. Cities in Europe, the United States, and Japan reflected the changing world economy and benefited from the international finance boom, legal services property, and various other so-called "producer services." They also grew richer from tourism. New Orleans, for example, was revived by a tourist boom.

So the notion that cities are finished in the West seems to me completely wrong. Cities still have big advantages. They provide pools of labor. They enable small specialist suppliers to succeed by concentrating in one place. And they make minds meet so that (to quote Alfred Marshall) "the mysteries of the trade becomes no mystery; but are, as it were, in the air." That is why businesses tend to congregate in particular spots: international finance in New York, London, and Tokyo; the fashion industry in the Po Valley in Italy; and so on. All cities have these advantages and there is no trick about achieving them. What cities can do, however, is minimize their dis-economies of scale, such

as traffic jams, pollution, and poor housing.

**UA:** *What are some good examples of innovative practices in urban management?*

**JP:** I have three favorites: Singapore for traffic control, Barcelona for the fabric of the city, and Indianapolis for urban government.

Singapore auctions off certificates giving the right to run a car for ten years. The prices of car ownership certificates are high—often more than the car itself. The city also requires drivers to pay extra for driving in the center at rush hours and is introducing an electronic road-pricing scheme. The results are astonishing. It is the only big city I have ever been in without serious traffic jams at rush hours. Cars move at about 25 miles an hour. In Bangkok, they move at 5 miles per hour. The scheme sounds simple enough to copy, but other cities should be warned: Singapore has been experimenting with traffic management schemes for more than a decade. Introducing them cold to an unprepared population is not possible.

Barcelona has managed to transform itself from a drab Mediterranean port into a state-of-the-art metropolis. The key to this has been strong political leadership.\* The city has had just two mayors during the whole period, and substantial public investments (12 percent of the municipal budget goes to capital projects, a very high proportion). The money has been used for 1,000 statues, new roads, and museums. Barcelona staged the 1992 Olympic games, which speeded up the transformation (the houses for Olympic athletes, for example, became a fashionable residential area). But the transformation was

already underway before the games and would have continued without them. This is the nearest thing Europe has seen to a wholesale urban transformation since Baron Haussmann in 19th-century Paris. But while Haussmann tore down most of the old city, Barcelona has kept the existing fabric and embellished it.

Indianapolis is a shop-window for good ideas in urban management in the United States. Privatization has been the mayor's main concern: he has contracted out about 60 municipal services, from sweeping the streets to running the airport. Private contractors do the work more cheaply than the city government used to do it, saving the city \$300 million a year. Even though he is a Republican and the party is committed to cutting taxes and public spending, Mayor Steve Goldsmith ploughed the savings back into municipal investment, and is halfway through a \$500 million three-year program to repair the city's roads, sewers, and other infrastructure. It is a useful reminder that public investment plays a critical role in urban management, and city governments are the right institutions to direct the spending.

\*Editor's Note: See the Mayor's Column and Interview with Pasqual Maragall, Mayor of Barcelona, in the Winter 1994 issue of *The Urban Age* on "Politics and the City."

# Dubai Conference Highlights Best Practices

by Randa Fouad

Randa Fouad is head of the Information and Press Relations Department of Environmental Quality International in Cairo, Egypt, and regional information advisor for the Urban Management Programme, Arab States.

The second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), also known as the City Summit, will take place in Istanbul, Turkey, from June 3-14, 1996. Habitat II will address the emerging and chronic problems of the world's cities and will be the last international conference organized by the UN in this century.

A major initiative of the preparatory process for the City Summit has been the identification, documentation, and dissemination of "best practices" in improving the living conditions and environments of the world's cities. Best practices may be defined as actions, initiatives, or projects that have led to tangible improvements in the quality of life and the living environments of people in a sustainable way. Best practices

*The recent Conference on Best Practices held in Dubai provided a unique opportunity for participants to learn from successful experiences.*



usually result from partnerships between several actors and warrant further application in a similar or adapted form.

The International Conference on Best Practices in Improving the Living Environment, which

was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from November 19-22, 1995, has been one of the primary preparatory activities leading up to the City Summit. The conference was organized by the municipality of Dubai in collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS)(Habitat). It has been one of the few events on the road to Istanbul in which a municipality has provided funded assistance to facilitate the documentation and presentation of best practice case studies from developing countries.

Over 800 participants from around the world attended the Dubai conference. The Best Practices conference provided an opportunity for representatives of national governments, local authorities, nongovernmental organizations, and the private and professional sectors to share, discuss, and learn from each others' successful initiatives; and to take these shared experiences and best practices back to their cities, towns, communities, or villages to improve their living environment. The best practices presented addressed issues such

as urban services improvement, urban governance, and housing development.

H.H. Shaikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and Chairman of Dubai Municipality opened the Dubai conference. He said it was fortunate that the Dubai conference coincided with the United Nations' 50th anniversary, as both the United Nations and the Dubai conference were geared toward finding solutions to the many problems facing the world and to bringing about peace and prosperity to humanity. In the opening session, Wally N'Dow, Secretary General of Habitat II, stated that the selection and dissemination of best practices would be the most important and the most lasting heritage of Habitat II. The municipality of Dubai and UNCHS jointly selected 28 case studies for presentation and discussion during the conference (see box). The selection was based on the following criteria established by the Preparatory Committee for Habitat II:

- **Impact:** programs that have achieved tangible improvements

*continued on page 13 ►*

## Dubai Best Practices Case Studies

### Africa:

- (1) Build Together Program, Namibia;
- (2) Municipality of Rufisque, Senegal;
- (3) City of Cape Town, South Africa;
- (4) Sustainable Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania

### Asia and the Pacific:

- (1) Housing Settlement Project in Shanghai, China;
- (2) Province of Anhui, China;
- (3) Public Housing, Hong Kong;
- (4) Urban Basic Services, New Delhi, India;
- (5) Municipality of Tehran, Iran;
- (6) City of Cebu, the Philippines;
- (7) Government Housing Bank, Thailand

### Eastern and Western Europe:

- (1) City of Vienna, Austria;
- (2) Case Study of Pact-Arim, France;
- (3) City of Duisburg, Germany;
- (4) City of Tilburg, the Netherlands;
- (5) City of Gothenburg, Sweden;
- (6) The Big Issue, United Kingdom;
- (7) City of Leicester, United Kingdom

### Latin America:

- (1) Municipality of Belo Horizonte, Brazil;
- (2) City of Bogotá, Colombia;
- (3) Case Study of Luang Prabang, Lao PDR

### Middle East:

- (1) Alexandria Businessmen's Association, Egypt;
- (2) Urban Planning and Reconstruction of a War-Torn City Center, Lebanon;
- (3) Presentation of the Arab Urban Development Institute, Saudi Arabia;
- (4) Dubai Municipality, United Arab Emirates

### North America:

- (1) Metropolitan Toronto, Canada;
- (2) Regional Municipality of Hamilton, Wentworth, Canada;
- (3) City of Chattanooga, United States

in the lives of women, men, and children.

- **Partnerships:** cities and communities that are able to form lasting partnerships between local and national governments, community organizations, the private sector, and international agencies.

- **Sustainability:** initiatives that have resulted in changes in legislation, policies, and decision-making, thus ensuring sustainable benefits to people.

The Dubai conference also addressed issues such as employment creation, environmental management, and shelter development. It was unanimously agreed that community participation and partnerships were key conditions for the implementation of best practices, and that all stakeholders have to be included for sustainable development to take place. Videos, speakers, and panelists provided a wide range of presentations from both developed and developing countries, all of which focused on (1) the methods used to bring about positive changes in people's living environments, (2) why these methods worked, and (3) how they could be transferred or adapted to other situations. Best practices were further highlighted in an exhibition held throughout the conference which provided participants with access to diverse descriptive material.

The best practices presented at Dubai constitute the nucleus of the first database on best practices, currently being developed jointly by the Together Foundation and UNCHS. Dubai participants had the opportunity to view the initial data entered into this database. It is expected that the database will be available at the Habitat II Conference in Istanbul in several forms: a multimedia CD-ROM; diskettes for DOS, Windows, and Macintosh; a World Wide Web site on the Internet; and an abbreviated printed version. The database will cover issues such as housing development, pollution control,

poverty alleviation, and transport.

During the conference, Wally N'Dow announced that UNCHS is currently reviewing more than 300 best practice nominations from cities in about 80 countries worldwide. In March 1996, an international panel of experts will select the 100 most deserving best practices which will win awards to be presented at the Habitat II Conference. The Government of Canada will provide the necessary resources and host the jury that will select the winners, while the awards will be sponsored by the Government of Tokyo. It was also announced that H.H. Shaikh Maktoum Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai had allocated US\$150,000 annually to the Dubai Prize for Best Practices—an award that will be given to selected best practices every year.

The lessons learned at the Dubai Conference and the experiences gained through the documentation and sharing of these local initiatives culminated in the Dubai Declaration. The Declaration will provide the foundation for discussions on best practices during the Habitat II Conference, and will also present suggestions and recommendations on how to transfer experience, expertise, and know-how. The Declaration will be a valuable input to the Habitat Agenda—the Global Plan of Action that will emerge from the Habitat II Conference. The Dubai Conference achieved its aim: to define and organize the best information and success stories from cities around the world in preparation for Habitat II.

## Host Country Preparations for Habitat II

The Housing Development Administration of Turkey is the organization responsible for coordinating and implementing the preparations for Habitat II, under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Istanbul, the conference, the associated forums, and most other parallel activities will be held in an area called "Conference Valley," located in close proximity to most major hotels. Several cultural events, open to the general public, will take place during Habitat II. These include the exhibition on best practices being organized by the Habitat II secretariat, an exhibition on the City of Istanbul, and an exhibition on housing and settlements in Anatolia. Other exhibitions organized by several UN agencies and other cultural activities including film festivals on cities and city life, concerts, symposia, and seminars will also take place.

## NGO Secretariat Established

In accordance with the agreement reached with the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) present at the Prep Com II (held April 24–May 5, 1995), an NGO secretariat has been established by the Housing Development Administration of Turkey. The secretariat will prepare the venues and provide logistical support for the NGO Forum. NGOs in Turkey have established a host committee which is currently composed of 20 NGOs.

For more information on host country preparations and the NGO secretariat, contact: Habitat II Project Coordination Unit, 7-8 Kisim 1-7-B Blok, D 12, Atakoy 34750, Istanbul, Turkey. Tel: 90-212-559-9755 or 559-9761; Fax: 90-212-559-0509; E-mail: habit-kd@yunus.mam.tubitak.gov.tr

## Habitat II International Trade Fair

The Habitat II International Trade Fair on Housing and Construction Technologies and Human Settlements will take place in Istanbul's World Trade Center during the Habitat II Conference. The Trade Fair, which will be open to all conference participants, will promote innovative, low-cost, appropriate, and environmentally sound products for human shelter and settlements. Seminars and meetings at the Trade Fair will focus on practical implementation of the issues of the Habitat II Conference.

The Trade Fair welcomes a wide spectrum of participation. For more information and reservations, please contact: CNR-WTCI Cobancesme Kavşağı, Havaalanı karsısı, Yesilkoy 34830, Istanbul, Turkey, Fax: 90-212-663-0973 or 90-212-663-0975; Tel: 90-212-663-0881, or Elvan Çantekin, Trade Fair Task Manager, Habitat II Project Coordination Unit, 7-8 Kisim, 1-7-B Blok, D 12, Atakoy 34750, Istanbul, Turkey. Tel: 90-212-558-3508; Fax: 90-212-559-0509; E-mail: habit-kd@yunus.mam.tubitak.gov.tr

## Beijing Conference to Focus on Managing Water Resources

Managing Water Resources in Large Cities will be the focus of an international conference to be held March 18–22, 1996 in Beijing, China (see The Urban Calendar on page 15 for details). The timing of the conference coincides with the global observance of World Water Day on March 22, 1996. This year's theme, "Water for Thirsty Cities," emphasizes the growing water crisis which threatens the sustainability of the social and economic development of cities around the world.

UNCHS(Habitat) has been designated as the lead agency within the United Nations for World Water Day 1996. For more information on World Water Day preparations and observances contact: Kalyan Ray, UNCHS (Habitat) Focal Point, Research and Development Division, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: 254-2-623039; Fax: 254-2-624265; E-mail: Kalyan.Ray@unep.no

## Urban Management: Policies and Innovations in Developing Countries

by G. Shabbir Cheema (ed.). Praeger Publishers, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881, 1993. ISBN 0-275-94085-3.

This book outlines the critical issues in urban management in the developing world and analyzes the ways governments have tried

to come to grips with them. It includes country case studies and comparative analyses of urban

management issues by leading authorities on urban issues.

A common theme is that governments and donor agencies have been slow to respond creatively to developing countries' urban challenges which have been obvious for some time. The slowness in the response is largely due to out-of-date government structures, a lack of coordination between government levels and sectors, inappropriate economic incentives, and resistance to change. However, the ideas and experiences conveyed in this book illustrate how governments have tackled contemporary urban issues and provide urban planners and practitioners raw material with which they can begin to formulate private sector and community-based initiatives.

For example, the key issue of what municipal governments can do to improve their financial base at a time of increasing budget constraints is examined in the context of a case study in Brazil. This case study suggests that the mobilization of resources that is most flexible, and which varies from one level of government to another and according to the type of service and project involved, is the most effective.

**Urban Management**  
POLICIES AND INNOVATIONS  
IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES  
Edited by G. Shabbir Cheema

## Breakthroughs: Re-Creating the American City

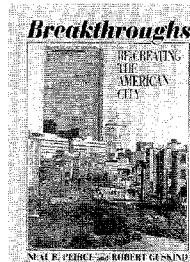
by Neal R. Peirce and Robert Guskind. Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Livingston Campus, Building 4161, New Brunswick, NJ 08903, 1993. ISBN 0-88285-145-4.

*Breakthroughs* chronicles six urban management cases in U.S. cities that have been exceptional in devising real solutions to critical and increasingly common urban problems. Each of these cases received New York's prestigious Rudy Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment.

The book draws conclusions from these six cases about how breakthroughs can be achieved in urban management. For example, one of the award-winning projects, a tenant leasing program in New York, became a landmark housing project by encouraging residents' participation and by recognizing the shortcomings of strictly city-owned and -directed public housing.

The Boston Southwest Corridor Development project achieved major accomplishments

through a consultative and decentralized design. The project began with the popular overturning of a freeway plan and ended with a public transport service and a neighborhood development scheme. Another award-winning program described in the book is the Portland Downtown Plan in Oregon, which transformed a riverfront area from a noisy traffic zone into a parkland with bus services and a light rail system.



## The Life Cycle of Urban Innovations, Volume 1

by Elwood M. Hopkins. UMP Working Paper Series 2, UNHCS (Habitat)/The World Bank/UNDP-Urban Management Programme, 1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20433, 1994.

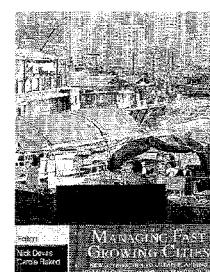
The aim of this working paper is to explore the life cycle of urban innovations, and the most effective methods for disseminating original and innovative ideas in urban development. The author describes a five-phase life cycle of urban innovation: conception, implementation, evaluation and redesign, routinization and institutionalization, and dissemination and replication. The author also describes the process of building up capabilities at a national and a regional level for urban planning, and opening up lines of communication.

The paper emphasizes the importance of participation in urban development and reviews numerous successful and innovative case studies. One such case is São Paulo's

Community Wholesale Markets Project, in which cooperatively managed markets purchase food directly from farmers and resell this food at wholesale rates to low-income urban residents, thus avoiding the commercial intermediaries who mark up prices between producers and consumers. In a case study from Los Angeles, California, retired chemical and environmental engineers visited small businesses and advised managers on how to make cost-effective adjustments to improve environmental standards, manage waste products, and—at the same time—increase profits.

## Managing Fast Growing Cities: New Approaches to Urban Planning and Management in the Developing World

by Nick Devas and Carole Rakodi (eds.). Longman Group UK Limited, Longman House, Burnt Mill, Harlow, Essex CM20 2JE, England, 1993. ISBN 0-582-09304-X.



This volume summarizes recent experiences in urban management in developing

countries, commenting on successes and failures, and pointing the way to the next decade. The ten chapters examine distinct aspects of urban management and planning, covering topics ranging from the ways in which urban land is bought and sold, the ways that political control can influence urban decisionmaking, and the legal bases for urban planning.

A common theme is that city planners and managers have failed to meet the challenges posed by massive urban population growth in developing countries. The book asserts that city planners must adopt better policies of urban governance. Basic principles in urban planning and management can be transferred from one country to another, or from one organization to another. However, the legal, institutional, technical, and practical solutions for cities worldwide will depend on a thorough understanding of the local political, social, economic, and cultural situations, and how these are changing. Consequently, the ultimate responsibility for good urban planning rests with an individual country's own politicians, officials, and residents.

Below is a selection of urban events and training courses culled from The Urban Age's current files. We are not always able to list events more than once, given space limitations. Please refer to past issues of The Urban Age for additional events scheduled in 1996. Send your announcements to: The Editor, The Urban Age, Room S6-147, The World Bank, 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA. Fax: 202-522-3232. E-mail: mbergen@worldbank.org

## Conferences

**New York, New York**—February 1–2, 1996. **Seminar on Children's Rights, Housing, and Neighborhoods.** Contact: Ximena de la Barra, UNICEF, Three United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel: 212-702-7246; Fax: 212-702-7148.

**New York, New York**—February 5–16, 1996. **Third Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat II.** Contact: J. Mungai, UNCHS(Habitat), P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: 254-2-623133; Fax: 254-2-624250.

**Medellín, Colombia**—March 11–15, 1996. **Fourth International Convention of Habitat Colombia.** Contact: L. Betancur Balazar, P.O. Box 251716, Santafé de Bogata D.C., Colombia. Tel: 312-7964; Fax: 249-4629.

**Bangkok, Thailand**—March 11–15, 1996. **Second Urban Forum for Asia-Pacific.** Contact: Jens Overgaard, ESCAP, United Nations Building, Rajdamnern Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand. Tel: 66-2288-1234; Fax: 66-2288-100.

**Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil**—March 17–21, 1996. **Recife International Meeting on Urban Poverty.** Contact: D. Biau, UNCHS(Habitat), P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: 254-2-623210; Fax: 254-2-624264; E-mail: Daniel.Biau@unep.no

**Amman, Jordan**—March 18–21, 1996. **Regional Conference on the Future of Arab Cities.** Contact: Ali Shabou, UNCHS Regional Information Office for Arab States, P.O. Box 35286, Amman, Jordan. Tel: 962-6-668171-76; Fax: 962-6-676582.

**Beijing, China**—March 18–22, 1996. **Managing Water Resources in Large Cities.** Contact: N. You, UNCHS(Habitat), P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: 254-2-623029; Fax: 254-2-623080. E-mail: habitat2@unep.no

**Miami, Florida**—April 17–19, 1996. **Second Inter-American Mayors Conference: An Emerging Policy Agenda for Local Government.** Contact: Rachel Cardelle, Conference Coordinator, Florida International University, Institute for Public Management and Community Service, TC-30, 1200 S.W. 8th Street, Miami, FL 33199, USA. Tel: 305-348-1271; Fax: 305-348-1273; E-mail: cardelle@servms.fiu.edu

**Tokyo, Japan**—April 23–26, 1996. **Metropolis for the People: Seeking a Solidarity among World Citizens.** Contact: M. Torikai, Director General, METROPOLIS '96 Organizing Committee Secretariat, c/o General Affairs Division, Bureau of City Planning, Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 8-1 Nishishinjuku 2-chome-Shinjuku, Tokyo 163-01, Japan. Tel: 81-3-5388-3218; Fax: 81-3-5388-1358.

**Istanbul, Turkey**—June 3–14, 1996. **United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II): The City Summit.** Contact: UNCHS(Habitat), P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: 254-2-623067; Fax: 254-2-624060; E-mail: habitat2@unep.no

**New Delhi, India**—September 9–13, 1996. **Water, Engineering, and Development Centre (WEDC) Conference: Reaching the Unreaches—Challenges of the 21st Century.** Contact: Professor John Pickford, WEDC, Loughborough University of Technology, Leicestershire LE11 3TU, U.K. Tel: 44-1509-22-2390; Fax: 44-1509-21-1079.

**Sendai City, MIYAGI Prefecture, Japan**—October 14–17, 1996. **International Federation for Housing and Planning 1996 World Conference.** Contact: IFHP Congress Department, 43 Wassenaarseweg, 2596 CG The Hague, The Netherlands. Fax: 31-70-3282085.

**Bangkok, Thailand**—November 5–8, 1996. **International Conference on Urban Engineering in Asian Cities in the 21st Century.** Contact: Secretariat, International Conference on Urban Engineering in Asian Cities in the 21st Century, School of Civil Engineering, Asian Institute of Technology, P.O. Box 2754, Bangkok 10501, Thailand. Tel: 66-2-516-0110; Fax: 66-2-524-6059; E-mail: anilew@recsun.ait.ac.th

## Education Programs and Courses

**Bangkok, Thailand**—The Human Settlements Development Program of the Asian Institute of Technology is holding a training workshop on the Bangkok experience and its lessons for other Asian cities. **Bangkok's Dynamic Housing Market: Lessons for Asian Cities**, to be held March 11–23, 1996, will cover the operation of the private sector in land and housing development, and the government sector framework for these operations. Contact: Professor Ray Archer, Fourth Bangkok Development Workshop, Asian Institute of Technology, G.P.O. Box 2754, Bangkok 10501, Thailand. Tel: 66-2-516-0110; Fax: 66-2-516-2126.

**Madison, Wisconsin**—The University of Wisconsin Disaster Management Center is sponsoring the first **International Emergency Settlement Conference**, April 15–19, 1996. The conference will address identification and planning of emergency settlements; political, security, protection, civil and human rights aspects; basic assistance needs; and social, psychological, economic, and developmental issues. Contact: Don Schramm, Disaster Management Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 432 North Lake Street, Madison, WI 53706, USA. Tel: 800-462-0876; Fax: 608-263-3160; E-mail: dmc@engr.wisc.edu

**Research Triangle Park, North Carolina**—Research Triangle Institute (RTI) offers courses in the Sustainable Cities Curriculum for 1996 which are open to participants from around the world. The following courses are conducted in English at the RTI campus in North Carolina: Urban Environmental Management, April 15–May 3; Capital Finance for Cities, May 6–17 and November 4–15; Central/Local Fiscal Relations, June 10–21; Reinventing Governance, July 15–26; Local Economic Development, September 9–20; and Water Utility Management, October 7–18. Contact: Hazel Ryon, Research Triangle Institute, 300 Park Drive, Suite 115, Research Triangle Park, NC, 27709, USA. Tel: 919-541-1234; Fax: 919-541-6621.

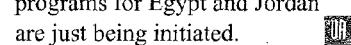
## TUNISIA & ROMANIA

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workshops and practicums, a one-day decisionmakers meeting is held to discuss the issues that constrained the work of the municipal staff in the communities and the best ways to remove those constraints. The issues are likely to be in the areas where institutional changes might be required or legislative action needed.

**Funding for microprojects.** Funding for small neighborhood-level projects provides experiential learning in resolving environmental health problems and is also a mechanism for strengthening the administrative and financial capabilities of nongovernmental organizations, for they administer the micro-project funds. The microprojects give neighborhood residents something to bring to the table when discussing their problems and priorities with the municipality.

CIMEP is being implemented through the Environmental Health Project, a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded project that assists USAID missions and development organizations to address environment-related health problems. The CIMEP approach has been applied or is currently being implemented in Belize, Ecuador, and Tunisia. The Tunisia effort is the first in a regionwide application of the CIMEP approach; similar programs for Egypt and Jordan are just being initiated.



## INDIA

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different agencies on a specific dimension, including corruption.

### Agency reactions

Almost all the public agencies covered by the study acknowledged receipt of the report. In one case, the chairman of the public transport corporation invited PAC to an internal seminar with his senior managers to discuss the report card findings and to involve these managers in developing strategies to improve performance. They are in the process of taking actions to improve their overall performance, and have introduced an award system to encourage staff to be more responsive.

For several months after the report card was published, the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA)—the worst rated public agency in the city—had no response. In March 1995, the new chairman of BDA began to initiate a turnaround of his organization. At a public meeting in June 1995, he announced he was initiating major reforms in BDA and sought public cooperation in containing corruption. He began his address with a reference to the poor citizen-rating BDA had received in the report card.

He has since involved PAC actively in the reform process and has set up several task forces involving citizens' groups to explore areas for joint action.

PAC is responsible for managing the group on the decentralization of BDA services. While it is too early to say what will emerge out of these initiatives, it is significant that the lead urban development agency in the city has responded to the report card signals and is making moves in the right direction.

### Intercity comparisons

Intercity comparisons of report cards can yield interesting lessons on the performance of public service providers and bring out patterns of citizen and agency behavior that may call for further research. For example, Bangalore leads on the corruption front while Calcutta and Pune reveal much less evidence of corruption in services. Calcutta electricity and Pune police are rated much higher than their counterparts elsewhere. Sanitation turns out to be the number one problem identified by the urban poor in almost all cities. Availability of services in the slums has improved in most cases, but the poor

complain bitterly about the inability of service providers to resolve problems once a breakdown occurs.

PAC's report cards work does not mean that PAC is merely a critic of the establishment. Informed assessment of what goes on and the creation of public awareness are no doubt important functions that PAC will continue to perform. But it is also willing to work with public agencies to reform the policies, systems, and practices that are at the root of the problems. PAC's current work with BDA, the city corporation, and the police are examples of partnerships for change. Its workshops and publications are a means of sharing information widely with like-minded groups in other parts of the country and abroad. PAC has recently published a manual for using the report card methodology that should be useful to other organizations that may want to use this approach.



*Photo credits: page 1 (South Africa): Eric Miller/Panos Pictures; page 7 (India): Anant Nadkarni; page 8 (Latin America): Courtesy of DNP, Colombia; page 10 (Poland): Mona Serageldin; page 12 (Dubai): Hussein Anwar.*

## Next Issue

The next issue of *The Urban Age* will focus on Mayors: Partnerships for the Third Millennium. We look forward to receiving your comments and thoughts on this upcoming issue.

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