



UN-HABITAT'S HUMAN LIBRARY CONFERENCE REPORT



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Human Library Conference was a successful event and a pathfinder in the history of the UN-HABITAT's knowledge management practice.

The event benefited from the support and collaboration of all staff members of the Regional and Technical Cooperation under the guidance of Daniel Biau, Director, and the Executive Director, Dr. Joan Clos.

Special thanks and gratitude must be addressed to Alioune Badiane, Director, Regional Office for Africa and Arab States, as well as to Liliana Contreras, Senior Programme Manager, and Alain Kanyinda, Overall Coordinator.



Group photo of the participants in the first Human Library Conference, Nairobi, 15 February 2011.

Foreword



Dr. Joan Clos
Executive Director,
UN-HABITAT

The main objective of the Human Library Conference was to provide an opportunity to draw lessons from 25 years of UN-HABITAT's technical and regional cooperation, as well as to explore new perspectives to guide the future work of the Agency particularly in developing countries.

Since 1978, country-level activities have been an important component of the UN-HABITAT's mandate. Also known as technical cooperation activities, they aim to support central and local governments in the development of their institutional capacities and in the formulation and implementation of sustainable urban development policies and strategies.

UN-HABITAT's technical cooperation activities are relevant to both the external support community and the beneficiary governments. They contribute to enhancing the capacities of developing countries for sustainable urban development and poverty alleviation.

We know that any decline in technical cooperation activities and a lack of ownership by the stakeholders could lead to the vicious circle of poverty and under-development particularly in least-developed countries (LDCs) and countries in crisis.

A stronger collaboration of development agencies and beneficiary governments in a renewed partnership with international organizations such as UN-HABITAT will provide a platform to create the necessary synergy for success at country level.

In this connection, the involvement of local authorities, private sector and non-governmental organizations in our development efforts is crucial to ensure accountability and ownership.

After the adoption of the Millennium Declaration in 2000 and the related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2001, a new context emerged promoting a greater coordination and harmonization of the UN interventions in an attempt to "Delivering as One".

Slum conditions in many countries, persistent urban poverty and growing inequalities have led UN-HABITAT to focus its interventions on the MDG 7, targets 10 and 11, as well as in countries confronted with conflict, disaster and post-disaster challenges.

The Human Library Conference was therefore meant to learn from our technical cooperation activities over the last decades at country and regional levels, and to clarify the terms of the debate on normative versus operational activities.

This was a timely and crucial exercise of knowledge management and generation, as highlighted in the motto of this event: *"the present only needs the past to move into the future"*.

UN-HABITAT's mandate is very clear: to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. I see policy reforms at country level as a key aspect of this mandate, both on urban development and on housing and services.

UN-HABITAT's technical cooperation is not only about operations and on the ground project activities. There are many elements of policy, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation at country level which should be supported by sufficient human and financial resources from both development partners and beneficiary countries.

I intend therefore to strengthen UN-HABITAT technical cooperation through the ongoing institutional reform with the aim of developing programmes, projects and activities, which promote stronger in-country synergies and feed into the UN global efforts towards poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Our focus will be on (i) urban land, legislation and governance, (ii) urban planning and design, (iii) urban economy including municipal finances, (iv) urban basic services, (v) housing and slum upgrading, (vi) risk reduction and rehabilitation, as well as (vii) research and capacity development.

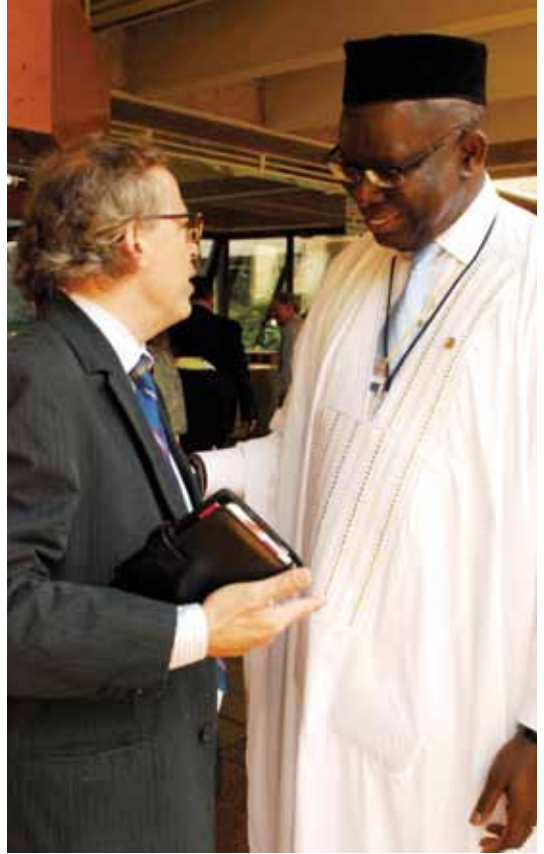
I have followed the Human Library discussions with a lot of interest and am committed to continue supporting this initiative. Institutional memory should be strengthened if we wish to progress in all our programmes. Lessons have to be learnt, best projects have to be disseminated, as well as mistakes analysed. I invite senior staff members to provide their support to younger experts in the fulfilment of their duties. This is a stimulating task ahead of us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Clos', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Joan Clos
Under-Secretary General
Executive Director



The Executive Directors of UN-HABITAT and UNEP share views at a reception in honor of the Human Library Conference participants.



Stimulating discussions and entertainment among participants.

Why a Human Library?¹

Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director, dear colleagues and friends. It is with immense pleasure that I welcome all of you to an event, organized for the first time in the history of our agency, which aims at collecting our multiple experiences and at reflecting on the successes and difficulties faced since the creation of UN-HABITAT, particularly in the developing world. This meeting will certainly help our new Executive Director in designing a new strategy for the coming decade.

Twenty-five years ago, I attended my first Governing Council, then called the Commission on Human Settlements. The meeting was held in Istanbul in the spring of 1986. At that meeting Mark Hildebrand and Mike Cohen presented a new global programme which was to become a flagship of Habitat, the Urban Management Programme (UMP). I was extremely interested by this multi-agency initiative and by the fact that Habitat was moving from housing to city management, together with the World Bank and UNDP. As you all know, UMP remains a milestone in the history of Habitat. Both UMP and its subsidiary companions, the Sustainable Cities Programme and the Safer Cities Programme, were born in the Technical Cooperation Division (TCD).

Later, in the 1990s, we also created the Disaster Management Programme and the Indicators Programme. I believe that these major initiatives played a key role in the building of a strong Habitat, and in

supporting our country activities. Indeed technical cooperation starts and ends with country activities because it is at country level that we are able to influence national and local policies, and to strengthen related capacities. The interaction and synergy between global programmes and country projects has been a trademark of our technical cooperation. Equally, the complementarity between our operational activities and our normative messages has been demonstrated in many countries, for instance in South Africa, in Senegal, in Vietnam or in Colombia.

I would like to give you a rapid overview of our technical cooperation programme. In quantitative terms we have implemented more than 1,000 projects in more than 100 countries. We have mobilized and disbursed more than two billion US dollars over the last 25 years. We, in this room, have created a number of impressive networks. We have built human settlements expertise in many countries and in all regions of the planet. We have worked with mayors, ministers, senior officials, and also with NGOs and CSOs and made Habitat known and respected all over the world. We have cooperated with large numbers of international organizations, not only UNDP and the World Bank, but also UNHCR, UNDCP, ILO, UNEP, the regional commissions, OCHA, and more recently the European Commission. Funds have been raised from bilateral development partners, but also from Foundations and private companies. Governments from developing and transition countries have contributed financially to our projects

...we have implemented more than 1,000 projects in more than 100 countries. We have mobilized and disbursed more than two billion US dollars over the last 25 years.

¹Opening statement By Mr Daniel Biau

and programmes, including in poor countries such as Chad and in emerging economies such as Egypt. Our budgets have been managed transparently by very committed and competent Programme Management Officers. Auditors have never found any major mistake in our accounts and we have been able to overcome all the administrative hurdles which hampered and continue to hamper our work. We have been less efficient in reporting and evaluation, due to lack of time and resources. But we have published a number of good reports on country experiences (including on Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Indonesia) as well as forward-looking guidelines through our global programmes, such as UMP and SCP, who invented, for instance, the concepts of City Consultations and City Development Strategies.

I have worked with all seven Executive Directors of UN-HABITAT since my recruitment by Dr. Arcot Ramachandran in February, 1988. They have all appreciated our technical cooperation activities and enjoyed the resulting support by developing country representatives during the sessions of the Commission and the Governing Council. They have visited, although exceptionally, some of our country projects, and recognized our impact on poor communities. But they have consistently forgotten to provide core resources to support our technical cooperation activities, trusting that our fund mobilization abilities would be sufficient to ensure financial sustainability. This has been a recurrent disappointment among TCD colleagues and myself. This has forced us to move more and more into post-disaster projects, with great success particularly in Asia, in order to get the required overhead income. I hope that this problem could be addressed in the near future, including by involving more regular budget staff in country activities.

Dear friends, you all know our new Executive Director who welcomed us in Barcelona for the second session of the World Urban Forum in 2004. He has been very close to Habitat for the past 12 years, since he attended the 1999 session of the Commission on Human Settlements, where he spoke on behalf of local authorities. The same 17th session of the Commission decided to establish UNACLA

(Resolution 17/18) which was born in January 2000 under his Chairmanship. Later on, Barcelona hosted the world headquarters of UCLG, again thanks to its dynamic mayor. Dr. Clos is the first Executive Director with a serious and recognized experience in city management.

Now, Dr. Clos, I would like to introduce several colleagues who have accepted the invitation to join us today from different parts of the world and to cost-share their participation. These colleagues have been the backbone of the Technical Cooperation Division (RTCD) and therefore the backbone of UN-HABITAT over a generation. It is appropriate to put a brief spotlight on them at the very start of our proceedings, as they really deserve our public appreciation. I am pleased to express my gratitude to the following 'elders':

- **Mark Hildebrand** who started in Chad in 1976, then joined the Africa Section and coordinated our APA Unit (Asia, Pacific and LAC) during 1983-89. He was Chief, TCD until 1994, then Director of Programme Coordination. He initiated, *inter alia*, the UMP and was the first manager of the Cities Alliance in 1999-2006;
- **Mathias Hundsalsz** was Chief, Research and Development Division (RDD) until 1999 and negotiator of the Habitat Agenda in Istanbul. He started in the field before the Vancouver Summit of 1976, in Uganda and Burkina, and went back to RTCD at the end of career. Recently he evaluated the first generation of our country programmes (HCPDs);
- **Roberto Ottolenghi** also started in RDD, he was the active promoter of regionalisation and founder/Director of ROLAC in Rio in 1996. Since 2002 he is a senior consultant, always available to catch a plane and prepare or evaluate any of our projects ;
- **Disa Weerapana** joined Habitat in 1989, he negotiated the opening of ROAP with Toshi and myself and was Deputy Director of the Fukuoka Office until 2001;
- **Heinz Kull** started in Myanmar and Haiti, he became Chief of our Africa Unit and co-leader of

the Disaster Management Unit (DMU) in 1994. Then he was the first (and efficient) Director of PSD;

- **Jorge Gavidia** started in RDD, he was co-leader of DMU, managed our Iraq programme during Saddam (Oil-for-Food) and became the second Director of ROLAC in 2002-2007;
- **Sylvie Lacroux** was section chief in RDD, then became CTA in Burkina, headed our Geneva Liaison Office and is now Deputy Mayor of Ferney Voltaire;
- **Jay Moor** started in 1990 in our Asia Unit, he created the GUO, moved to the indicators programme and initiated the State of the World's Cities Report series;
- **Alberto Paranhos**, former Director of Planning of Curitiba, was the recognized pillar of ROLAC all over his 18 years with UN-HABITAT;
- **Ole Lyse** was the designer, together with **Jochen Eigen**, of the SCP. He worked with ROAAS in several African countries and lives happily in Kenya;
- **Kariba Traore** also started in Haiti, then became CTA in several hardship countries such as Djibouti, Rwanda, Burundi and Chad. He is a builder, a sites and services specialist at ease in post-conflict situations;
- **Seydou Sy Sall** designed and headed the BAHSO (Cooperative Housing Bureau) in Dakar before becoming Minister, then he moved to urban management and is now an international consultant;
- **Jan Meeuwissen** started at UNCHS (Habitat) 29 years ago in Lagos. He is our longest serving manager at present, the de facto deputy of **Toshi Noda**. I think he also represents **Lalith**, the third pillar of ROAP (our most successful fund mobilization branch);
- **Sudipto Mukerjee** and **Doudou Mbye** are the most recent successive leaders (CTA) of our Iraq Programme. Sudipto is now with UNDP while Doudou will soon move from Amman to ROAAS headquarters;
- **Tatiana Roskoshnaya** managed our Russian and Eastern European portfolio from 2002 to 2010. She now lives in beautiful Saint Petersburg;
- **Jean-Marc Rossignol** worked for 14 years as CTA, starting in Burundi, then in Senegal. He is now based in Kigali as private architect and planner;
- **David Kithakye** and **Antonio Yachan** were both senior HSOs in ROAAS for many years and are still very active in Kenya and Chile respectively;
- **Ali Shabou** was the Chief of our Arab Information for decades, familiar with all Middle-East countries. I am sure that he appreciates the current political evolution of the Arab world;
- And finally I salute our fantastically creative Programme Managers (or PMOs) **Ingunde, Jan, Henk and Eric**, who all moved to other agencies when they became too qualified for UN-HABITAT.

I would also like to mention those who were very interested in this meeting but could not travel for personal reasons, in particular: **Jochen Eigen, Franz Vanderschueren, Emiel Wegelin, Dinesh Mehta, Yves Cabannes, Ximena de la Barra, Sara Wakeham, Kidane Alemayehu, Farouk Tebbal, Wagui Siby** as well as my first boss **Paul Bouda** and my predecessor in the Africa Unit, Minister **Vann Mollivann**. They all send us their greetings and their best wishes for Habitat's future. In addition Emiel and Farouk sent us their own written contributions.

Sadly it is also my duty to mention several colleagues who played an important role in our Division and in our history, but who unfortunately passed away and leave us with their image and memories. I wish to quote their names and ask for a moment of silence afterwards. They were all my friends, and certainly your friends. Their spirit is with us in Gigiri this morning. We remember:

- Emmanuel Gapyisi, from Rwanda,
- Seth Sendashonga, from Rwanda,
- Ismail Hammad, from Egypt,
- Abdoulaye Sow, from Senegal,

- John Parkin, from the U.K.,
- Andres Necochea, from Chile,
- Peter Swan, from Australia,
- Andy Van der Schiff, from Zimbabwe,
- Juko Hatva, from Finland,
- Francois Muhirwe, from Burundi.

As Amadou Hampate Ba said in 1960: "In Africa, when an elder dies, it is a library in flames". This is particularly true at UN-HABITAT: when a colleague goes, a part of our institutional and technical memory vanishes. This is why **Alioune Badiane, Alain Kanyinda, Liliana Contreras** and myself have decided to organize this first Human Library Conference, to try and take stock of our collective wisdom and of our diverse experiences, and even of our funny ideas and unrealistic suggestions, and to move into the future.

Here are some 25 veterans who have made UN-HABITAT, who have formulated and shared new modes of cooperation in urban management, in post-disaster recovery, in community contracts, in urban indicators, in reporting on the State of Cities, in housing policy and instruments, in sites and services and urban upgrading. They have negotiated tirelessly with Multilaterals, Bilaterals, Governments, Local Authorities and NGOs. They have drafted hundreds of Project documents, including budgets and periodical revisions. They have recruited hundreds of experts, thousands of consultants, executed two billion US dollars of projects, have built an immense

Habitat-related network, a web of expertise. Those in this room collectively represent more than 500 years of collective professional experience at UN-HABITAT. They have built institutions across the world and they have also built the Agency itself. They have really worked as a team, with profound respect for each other. They have witnessed our ups and downs. They are at your disposal to transfer their knowledge, know-how and contacts to the young generations of the City Agency.

Dear colleagues, we will produce an in-depth report on this Conference as well as a video-film containing interviews of all participants. Younger colleagues are mobilized to interact with senior colleagues during these interviews. Moderators have been selected from within UN-HABITAT. They are all current or former RTCD staff, in senior positions, both in Global Division (GD), Monitoring and Research Division (MRD), Office of the Executive Director (OED) and Regional Offices. They are the leading members of our professional family. You know all of them (**Alioune, Toshi, Cecilia, Axumite, Mohamed, Paul, Eduardo, Mariam**). They are still insiders for a few years and I wish that they will never become complete outsiders. The Human Library should not burn, it will last and expand if we so decide!

On behalf of RTCD and other staff of UN-HABITAT, I wish this brainstorming conference every success and a very warm welcome to all of you.

Karibuni and Asanteni Sana.

INTRODUCTION

The Human Library Conference, an expert group meeting to take stock of the technical cooperation activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), was held at the United Nations Office in Nairobi from 15 to 17 February 2011. It was convened by Mr. Joan Clos, the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, to help establish a new direction for the programme by drawing on the experiences and insights of 25 former senior staff members.

In the tradition of African storytelling, it was convened to enable the veterans, who had worked in many countries around the world, to provide on-camera interviews to ensure that the collective body of UN-HABITAT knowledge was recorded for posterity. In addition each participant was requested to write a paper, giving insights into the past and looking at the programme's future. The aim was to make a substantive contribution to the implementation of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for 2008–2013 approved by the UN-HABITAT Governing Council in its resolution 21/2 of 20 April 2007.

The participants were welcomed to the conference by Mr. Alioune Badiane, Director, Regional Office for Africa, UN-HABITAT, who said the expert group constituted the 'human library' of UN-HABITAT, and their collective experience represented years of expertise that could be tapped for the benefit of the organization.

Opening statements were delivered by Mr. Daniel Biau, Director, Regional and

Technical Cooperation Division, UN-HABITAT, and the Executive Director.

Mr. Biau said the conference aimed to reflect on both the successes and difficulties experienced since the creation of UN-HABITAT, especially in the developing world. It was hoped that the outcomes of the meeting would help the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT to design a new strategy for the coming decade.

He gave an overview of the development of UN-HABITAT in the 25 years since the first session of the Governing Council of the Commission on Human Settlements in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1986 and outlined the technical cooperation programme, in which 1,000 projects had been implemented in more than 100 countries, involving the mobilization and disbursement of over two billion US dollars.

The Executive Director praised the 'human library' concept and said the gallery of experiences represented by the participants would contribute to improving the management of knowledge within the programme. He outlined the difficulties of continually adapting the agenda of UN-HABITAT in a rapidly changing world, where sometimes dogmas went out of fashion only to become popular again later. This was one of many reasons why past experiences were invaluable in planning for the future.

He discussed some of the challenges facing UN-HABITAT as it set its agenda. Over half of the world's population

In the tradition of African storytelling, it was convened to enable the veterans, who had worked in many countries around the world, to provide on-camera interviews to ensure that the collective body of UN-HABITAT knowledge was recorded for posterity

lived in cities and that proportion was projected to increase rapidly as the urbanized population increased by a projected two billion over the next 20 years. Many moved to cities expecting a better life, but sadly most only encountered greater poverty. It was striking that previous massive migrations, for example to the United States and within Europe, had been driven by the demand for labour caused by industrialization. However current rural-urban migration was caused by agricultural reform and the subsequent job losses which drove people towards cities. In such circumstances, it was difficult to see where mass employment for could be generated. There was much discussion of the post-industrial 'service economy' and the 'knowledge economy', but these sectors had failed to provide employment for the vast majority of those living in slum conditions around the world.

The challenge for UN-HABITAT lay in how to engage in strategic planning to help find solutions to the huge problem of the existence of large populations in cities without proper jobs. That required engaging in sustained dialogue with governments at all levels to build capacity to generate and manage the resources necessary to combat the daunting challenges. The strategy of throwing money at urban problems without parallel capacity-building was inefficient and had clearly not worked; financial resources were necessary but should be accompanied by building of institutional capacity to initiate a positive spiral of development. There was no easy formula in that process, which itself presented a difficulty in a media-dominated world in which brief sound bites and simplistic solutions were favoured. Changing mindsets and developing new systems that embraced political, legislative, cultural and social elements required time and effort.

UN-HABITAT needed to respond to the scale of the task by reconsidering the basic essentials at the heart of the programme. Engaging in a large number of small projects stretched its capacity, and there was a need to take a wider overview of key issues. Urban planning, for example, needed to be revitalized so that it proactively responded to projected growth scenarios, rather than reactively seeking to resolve

existing problems. Whether such an ambitious aim was feasible, especially in developing countries, was a matter for vigorous debate. In conclusion, he said that identifying solutions required both wisdom and knowledge, and the expertise assembled for the meeting could contribute significantly to that process.

CONFERENCE AIMS

Mr. Biau gave an overview of the programme for the meeting and invited the participants to introduce themselves and describe their work experiences. Many of them thanked Mr. Biau and the secretariat for convening the meeting, which they described as an exciting and significant initiative.

One participant, describing working in the Research and Development Division in the early 1980s when operational activities had been combined with significant interest in policy work, said the dichotomy that had emerged between the programme's operational and normative activities was imagined rather than real. Another said the most significant lesson he had learned during his career with UN-HABITAT had been the disparity between the programme's normative and operational activities. Over a period of 20 years, he had never seen the direct transfer of normative work from the programme's headquarters to the field level.

A number of participants spoke of the importance of diversifying the programme's funding sources. One recalled that, in the early 1990s, the financial base had been eroded as funding for development aid projects decreased at an unprecedented rate. The response had been the establishment of a disaster management unit, which had had a significant impact on the design of operational projects and their funding. He suggested that a similar lack of funding might be brought about by the recent global financial crisis, increasing the reluctance of donors to allocate scant resources to overseas development.

One participant expressed regret that programmes were almost inevitably underfunded, which caused important ideas to be lost, adding that new rules

designed to counter fraud made agencies less and less competitive and also that performance was measured by financial success. He suggested that UN-HABITAT should focus on a limited number and type of activities for optimal delivery.

One contributor described moves in the 1990s to decentralize UN-HABITAT activities in the light of the considerable difficulties of working on operational and normative activities from a centralized position. At that time, he said, there had been significant resistance to decentralization, including from headquarters in New York, member states, donors, departments and individuals. A number of participants noted that, in contrast to working in Nairobi, at the regional office level the division between normative and operational activities was not apparent. One participant highlighted the fact that the Programme Support Division had expanded from a handful of staff members in the early days to around 50 currently, which had posed increasing challenges for implementation. It was to be hoped, he said, that UN-HABITAT would return to a more flexible and decentralized mode of operation with increased trust in partner implementing agencies.

One participant underscored the importance of working with mayors to improve and promote sustainable urban management, using decentralization as a tool to improve delivery and performance measurement, and strengthening civil society as a strategy to improve government performance.

Another highlighted the numerous benefits of working in a regional office, including the freedom to interpret rules, being closer to the field and therefore understanding and responding to the needs expressed at the local level and developing a wide network of partners, including support agencies, donors, governments and non-governmental organizations. He expressed disappointment that insufficient attention was given to conveying to the local level some of the normative ideas that emanated from the programme.

Several participants drew attention to the wealth of

experience and knowledge on human settlements and housing issues held by local communities worldwide. One said that, during the time he spent working in the Fukuoka Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, genuine consideration had been given to the contribution of communities to the development process and ways in which to give them a voice to help them improve their own environment. The principal driving force had been to help people to have a better life by ensuring that cities catered to their needs. He underscored the importance of projects and programmes being country-driven and stressed the need to include communities involved in conflicts and disasters in reconstruction and recovery efforts from the outset.

One participant said he had found his early experiences in the field so beneficial that throughout his later career he had insisted that Programme Management Officers should have field experience. This policy had been so successful that it had become routine in recruitment for many positions. Another recalled a seminal moment working in Sri Lanka in the 1980s on the development of the Million Houses Programme, namely that government policy could be used as an enabling strategy.

A third described as a major breakthrough the shift in the focus of UN-HABITAT work to urban development and cities in the mid-1980s. Another said that strong counterparts at the national level were key to ensuring high-quality outputs. One drew attention to UN-HABITAT cooperative housing activities, which he described as the most exciting aspect of the programme's work and one which needed to be broadened.

One participant drew attention to the need to consider the specific challenges of individual cities, including in countries with economies in transition. Some of the challenges cited included unstable political situations, lack of continuity of counterpart staff, lack of funding and of sharing of best practices, lack of donor interest in funding UN-HABITAT activities in countries in which they were already working, insufficient development of civil society at the national level, and lack of communication

between policymakers, decision makers and implementers. One participant underscored the need to build capacity at the country and local levels, helping local municipalities or administrations to respond to the specific challenges facing them.

One participant underlined the importance of strategic partnerships, including with other UN agencies, as an entry point to work related to other aspects of United Nations operations.

A number spoke of the importance of positive

human relationships in the working environment, saying that they enhanced the development and delivery of solutions to challenges and priorities. In that regard, several participants expressed their particular satisfaction at time spent working in the Fukuoka Regional Office where they had experienced a friendly team, a pleasant environment and sufficient delegation of authority from headquarters to increase efficiency.





Participants listen carefully to the animated debates in an effort of knowledge sharing between generations.



Preliminary discussions (round-table)

In a round-table discussion, participants presented examples of UN-HABITAT projects or programmes from which lessons could be drawn. The session was moderated by Mr. Badiane.

Ms. Sylvie Lacroux recounted her experience as chief technical adviser to an urban management project covering 12 urban settlements in Burkina Faso. The project had taken place within an adverse national context of structural adjustment, coinciding with investments by the World Bank in the two main urban centres of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. Several factors were identified as having a positive influence on the outcomes of the project: building local capacity in urban management through training sessions for technical staff and local elected authorities; linking the on-site training activities with national and subregional training institutions; networking at the subregional level to exchange experiences with peers; decentralized cooperation (between cities, institutions and other entities) to reinforce local self-development when the facilitating role of central governments was weak; inter-agency collaboration (with the International Labour Organization) in provision of labour and infrastructure delivery; and the contribution of the project to the national decentralization process.

Mr. Mathias Hundsalz used the example of the Community Development Programme of the 1980s to illustrate the relationship between normative and operational activities. Carrying out work on research and development was difficult without an operational base, but funding from the Danish Government made it possible to link research with operational activities involving community participation. The lack of cooperation between divisions at that time made it necessary to set up a more informal administrative and logistical system to implement the activities. An important lesson was that lack of knowledge was as much an impediment as lack of will, meaning that the development of knowledge-building materials,

such as manuals on community participation, was a major part of the process, and was welcomed at the country level. While efforts had since been made to explore further linkages between normative and operational activities, a lack of cohesion between activities remained a legacy of the restructuring of UN-HABITAT over the past 10 years. The next restructuring should identify ways of overcoming the artificial distinction and separation of normative and operational activities.

Mr. Eric Verschuur highlighted a programme in Somalia that embraced everything that UN-HABITAT had to offer, including urban planning, governance, land issues, capacity-building and low-cost housing, all implemented in a difficult political environment. The programme had been funded by the European Community, with compliance of their stipulations adding an extra challenge. It had proved difficult to build trust, but once that had been established the funding for the programme had grown exponentially. Other challenges faced including setting up a delivery structure in the field and identifying competent staff. A flexible approach had been necessary. He also praised the Oil-For-Food Programme in Iraq and the Community Development Programme in Afghanistan for achieving satisfying outcomes in very testing environments.

Mr. Seydou Sy Sall described a project in Senegal, assisted by UN-HABITAT, in which housing cooperatives had proved a successful model for community mobilization. The savings generated had made it possible to construct housing for the poor at reduced cost while achieving environmentally friendly construction standards. Capacity-building and forward planning had been important foundations, which had been successfully expanded, with a large number of cooperatives generating significant funding to upgrade slums and build houses. The project illustrated the importance of continued engagement between UN-HABITAT and

national governments in producing city development strategies. He stressed the importance of linkages – between projects and programmes, between policies and strategies, and between operative and normative activities – to create opportunities to combat poverty.

Mr. Roberto Ottolenghi used the example of Haiti to illustrate the impetus that the work of UN-HABITAT could give to structural change. At a time of political crisis UN-Habitat managed to maintain its relationship with the elected local authorities and was thus able to make a significant contribution to the national plan for recovery and development. When a policy of decentralization was implemented, devolving more finance and resources to municipal and local governments, the programme was well positioned to continue its cooperation. Such channeling of support to local government broke new ground within the United Nations system. He concluded that, while in the end institutions within a country would effect change, agencies such as UN-HABITAT could play a key role in laying the foundation for that change.

Mr. Alberto Paranhos gave examples of projects that had succeeded in reducing inequalities. He offered insight into the challenges of dealing with municipal authorities in Latin America, including the dichotomy between the power of local politicians and the lack of money at their disposal, and the existence of a complex and often outdated legal framework. The approval of the UN-HABITAT guidelines on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities by the Governing Council in 2007 meant that an important tool was available to assist the process. Using the guidelines as a basis, examples of good practice in service delivery in one urban location were replicated in other locations. The programme proved successful in several countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Mexico. One problem faced was the frequent lack of alignment between the local priorities of the mayors of cities and the global priorities of UN-HABITAT. Every opportunity should be taken to educate partners on their global responsibilities.

Mr. Disa Weerapana drew attention to the Urban Partnership for Poverty Reduction in Bangladesh, which began in 2000. The project focused on the extreme poor, as a condition of funding by UK Government's Department for International Development (DfID). It was ambitious and on a large scale, with a budget of over USD 100 million, and sought to improve the lives of six million people in all urban areas of Bangladesh. The focus was from the ground up, empowering poor families to engage in cooperative action at the neighbourhood and community levels, thereby informing city-level and national policy. The initiative was process-driven, and its effectiveness was measured by output indicators, such as the number of children retained in the school system. The scope of the project was wide-ranging, including action on economic, social, health, education, employment and livelihood issues. Women had emerged as key drivers of actions under the project, leading decision-making processes and engaging in debate on policy issues.

Mr. Antonio Yachan said that three factors crucial to the successful implementation of a project or programme were good human relations, knowledge and management. All those factors, he said, were present in the UN-HABITAT Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme, which was operating in many countries. It was designed to be inclusive and participatory, and was implemented by national institutions, without the involvement of chief technical advisers from outside. All local stakeholders were represented, including the private sector and municipal governments, and attention was focused on policy and regulatory frameworks to ensure that they were supportive. Financing was designed to be sustainable in the long term, and countries were advised how to source their own funding and set up budget support for slum upgrading. The programme acknowledged the uniqueness of each country's situation and, therefore the necessity of a flexible, country-driven approach. The ongoing programme was making a significant global contribution to slum upgrading.

Mr. Jorge Gavidia said that there were a number of criteria for assessing the success of a project.

These were – compliance with the Habitat Agenda, knowledge creation, amount of money raised, potential for scaling up, and implementation according to plan. It was difficult for one project to satisfy all criteria. He briefly described two projects. The first had taken place in Kosovo, where UN-Habitat had helped develop a new planning system. The project had involved coordinating four separate streams of funding but had been successfully implemented on schedule, though there was a lack of funds for scaling up. The second, in Guayaquil, Ecuador, was the only instance where UN-Habitat had become the direct adviser to the political authority of a city, in a close partnership lasting six or seven years. He concluded that three main factors allowed projects in difficult environments to function: the quality of the people involved; building cooperation and harmonious relations between divisions and other actors; and successful delegation of authority to the local level.

Mr. Jan Meeuwissen spoke about experiences in Sri Lanka following the 2004 tsunami. Many donors turned up with funding, but with little experience of housing development, and hired contractors to build new dwellings. Unfortunately the Government had declared a no-build buffer zone of 100–200 metres from the coast, resulting in a proliferation of housing on unsuitable sites. Reconstruction was able to begin properly when the buffer zone was revised. In the meantime, funding of three million US dollars from the Government of Japan allowed UN-HABITAT to demonstrate to other donors the benefits of a people-based approach to reconstruction, resulting in a high level of satisfaction with the new homes. That encouraged a flow of considerable additional funding and UN-HABITAT eventually became the largest single agency responsible for reconstruction. The lessons learned were: involve the people in choosing housing most appropriate to them; select the most effective implementation methods and convey the message to the donors in order to generate additional funding.

Mr. Ole Lyse observed that selling advocacy was difficult in the absence of an associated project or programme. An implementation component

was necessary, as in the case of the Sustainable Cities Programme. Also important was a capacity-building infrastructure, taking in workshops, training modules and development of guidelines, in order to ensure involvement of local urban institutions in the implementation process. That, in turn, would involve working with a range of partners, both within and outside the United Nations. The success of a project or programme was to a large extent dependent upon the quality of relationships with other stakeholders and the strength and scale of the networks developed. Those networks often proved useful in implementing other projects in other areas.

Mr. David Kithakye described the impact of the ending of apartheid in 1994 on housing policy in South Africa. In October 1994, negotiations on a new housing strategy culminated in the signing of the Botshabelo Housing Accord, which committed signatories to unified action on housing. In the ensuing years significant funding was mobilized from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United States Agency for International Development and other sources to support the People's Housing Process, which empowered people to build their own homes and recognized the role of community-based structures as key movers in the process. People's Housing Process units were established throughout South Africa, and the initiative changed the face of the country. It was an impressive achievement for UN-HABITAT to be involved in the creation of such a symbolic nationwide programme.

Mr. Mark Hildebrand also commented on the housing programme in South Africa. He said that, while the Government had built over two million homes, the 'backlog' was now bigger than when it began in 1994. In addition, many of the houses built through contractors were poor in design and lacked services. A recent agreement had been made to upgrade 400,000 homes. Commenting on the criteria for a successful project, he said that, while the Technical Cooperation Division had been successful according to a number of criteria, it had not always been able to generate sustainable improvement in human settlements that was no

longer dependent on external outputs. Regarding funding, the key factor was to identify and focus upon the comparative advantage of UN-HABITAT. It could be argued that UN-HABITAT should be prepared to operate holistically, as in Somalia, but there was an alternative argument that it should focus on particular issues, for example working with mayors on slum upgrading. There was also a need to be more creative in identifying funding sources, concentrating more on sourcing local resources rather than pursuing 'fickle donor resources'.

Mr. Kariba Traoré discussed the 1980–1982 Djibouti housing programme, the objective of which was to provide housing for the very poor. Half of the 1,400 homes were self-built by the people and 90 per cent of the costs were recovered. The evaluation was very positive and the Government had continued the programme. It had continued in phases and influenced the entire development of the city of Djibouti, including a new harbour.

Mr. Toshiyasu Noda, stressing the importance of information dissemination, said that good examples of networks existed, for example under the Cities in Climate Change Initiative, and there was potential for further network extension, for example a university partnership network and a technology transfer network. There was also considerable value in involving people and communities in project implementation and it was important to mobilize rapidly in post-conflict and post-disaster situations.

Ms. Tatiana Roskoshnaya said that the paucity of projects in Eastern Europe was at odds with the global mandate of UN-HABITAT. In many parts of Eastern Europe and in the Russian Federation the situation was similar to South Africa, with the existing stock of low-income housing becoming increasingly dilapidated. While several countries were beginning to tackle the issue systematically, authorities often lacked the knowledge of how to make effective use of the funds available. Capacity-building was needed, for example on the adoption of a participatory approach and the development of tools and guidelines. Some successes had been achieved under the Sustainable Cities Programme, but there were areas in which further cooperation

was necessary, for example in the development of indicators, gaining access to funding and educating cities on how to become more sustainable.

Mr. Biau, commenting on the discussion, noted the divergence of opinion on what constituted good or bad practice. He described three broad categories of programmes that had been mentioned: city interventions, requiring land, infrastructure and finance, where UN-HABITAT had built a largely successful network over previous decades; post-disaster interventions, for example in Sri Lanka, where rapid response was required for effective delivery; and interventions in conflict zones, for example in Somalia. UN-HABITAT could be proud of its implementation of programmes and projects at the community level, which was well documented in Asia; at the city level, for example in Latin America; and at the national level, for example the development of national housing policies in Africa. Less success had been achieved in upgrading slums, and further debate was required on the merits of slum upgrading as opposed to demolition and relocation. He also expressed reservations about the stature of city development strategies, many of which had not been implemented.

On the positive side, UN-HABITAT had reached many people through its activities, projects, publications, website and meetings during the course of its existence. Technical cooperation activities, which were closest to the community, had played a key role. Financing remained a problem, and the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness meant that less donor funding was channeled through organizations such as UN-HABITAT, except perhaps for post-disaster and post-conflict situations. Further attention should be paid to working through the countries themselves. The developing world was indeed developing, with funding becoming available in emerging economies. A paradigm shift was needed within UN-HABITAT to respond to that changing scenario. Lastly, he questioned the magnitude of the slum problem, which had possibly been exaggerated. Slum populations, he felt, were decreasing, especially in Asia. There was an urgent need for reliable indicators and data on the scale of the problem.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

PANEL

1 Relations with other United Nations agencies



Cecilia Martinez
(moderator)



Participants

Mark Hildebrand,
Disa Weerapana,
David Kithakye,
Ole Lyse, Doudou
Mbye, Jan
Meeuwissen.

During the panel discussion, on relations between UN-HABITAT and other United Nations agencies within the context of the “One United Nations” initiative, participants considered the following questions:

- a. What could the “One United Nations” initiative mean for a small agency with limited resources, such as UN-HABITAT?
- b. Could UN-HABITAT benefit from the multi-year funding available for the country programme under the “One United Nations” initiative, or were there external factors that limited the agency’s access to such funding?
- c. What was the experience of UN-HABITAT in working with UNDP and other agencies in country operations?
- d. What were the specific contributions of UN-HABITAT to the global United Nations sustainable development and poverty reduction agendas at the country level?
- e. How did UN-HABITAT collaborate with other United Nations agencies at the country level, what were the opportunities and challenges, and what should be done to maximize the benefits of such collaboration, taking into account the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness?

Ms. Cecilia Martinez, presenting background to the discussion, said that the report of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on United Nations

System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment, entitled "Delivering as one" (A/61/583), had been published in November 2006, followed by a pilot project in eight countries in 2007. The objective of the current panel discussion was to debate the relevance to UN-HABITAT of the push towards greater coherence within the United Nations system.

Mr. Hildebrand recalled a time when most UN-HABITAT technical cooperation activities had been financed by UNDP, the then funding agency of the United Nations. There had been a close relationship between those at the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division and the resident participants. UNDP had then decided to become an executing agency, and had set up the entity the Office for Project Services to support the move. Other agencies had begun to compete aggressively in fund-raising with UNDP and with one another. UN-HABITAT had not been immediately threatened, partly because of its specialized nature and partly because UNDP continued to call upon UN-HABITAT when the country priority was urban development or housing. Over time, however, collaboration within the United Nations system was damaged, and it had become increasingly difficult for UN-HABITAT to gain access to funding.

The idea of a United Nations house, where all United Nations offices in one country came under one roof, was not new, and dated back to when the United Nations began operations at the country level. The "One United Nations" initiative had been long in its 'genesis', but had been difficult to achieve given the way in which funding was sourced. The signs were that drastic reductions in donor funding for United Nations programmes were imminent. That would inevitably mean further scrutiny of the efficiency of United Nations spending. In conclusion, he said that working relationships with other agencies and organizations, including the World Bank, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, had often proved fruitful.

Mr. Weerapana said that, under the "One United Nations" initiative, UN-HABITAT was at a great disadvantage, being a small agency that was often not in countries where activities were taking place and therefore not part of the negotiating process for project funding. That disadvantage was exacerbated by the fact that its national 'counterpart', the ministry of housing, was often of marginal importance in the ministerial hierarchy, with little influence on policymaking. In that context, it was a positive move to create UN-HABITAT programme managers with a national presence. He observed, however, that there was not always alignment between the global priorities and principles of the United Nations and national priorities, and the interest of Governments in working with the United Nations was declining. The increasing trend towards grant funds was another factor leading to a fall in funding. It was not always obvious what role UN-HABITAT had to play within the common country assessments under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. It was worth recalling, however, that Governments remained the biggest investors in poverty alleviation and slum upgrading and UN-HABITAT had a vital contribution to make in that area, by improving those programmes and by increasing donor interest in those activities.

Mr. Lyse said that, in his experience as focal point for collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, the relationship between that programme and UN-HABITAT was strong, and their respective strengths and mandates were complementary rather than competing, epitomizing the virtues of the "One United Nations" initiative. Within the global mandate of UNEP, UN-HABITAT was able to help it to gain access at the local level; and within the more country-focused mandate of UN-HABITAT, UNEP could assist that programme in the global dimensions of its work. That complementarity had on occasions been attractive to donors and had helped the organizations to mobilize joint funding. At a practical level, UNEP had assisted UN-HABITAT with participation in the Global Environment Outlook agenda, taking its city profile to a higher level. In addition, the technical expertise

of UNEP had been beneficial in developing joint tools under the auspices of the Cities Alliance. The two organizations had also often carried out joint activities in global events, such as the World Urban Forum and Commission on Sustainable Development sessions. On the other hand, some initiatives had not proved successful. For example, UN-HABITAT had never succeeded in obtaining funding from the Global Environment Facility, usually because its projects were not considered to have the required global scale. By the same token, UN-HABITAT had also had difficulty putting local issues on the agenda of the Environment Management Group.

Turning to UNDP, he agreed that funding via that programme had been very important to UN-Habitat and that the move towards UNDP being an executing agency had harmed UN-HABITAT, although examples did exist of positive collaboration between the two agencies, for example in the UNDP Public-Private Partnership for the Urban Environment programme. He also agreed that the appointment of UN-HABITAT programme managers had strengthened the agency's engagement, even though some lacked the seniority to be effective. In conclusion, he mentioned partnership with the International Labour Organization and with ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability as other examples of fruitful collaboration.

Mr. Doudou Mbaye said that, according to the principles of the "One United Nations" initiative, whereby countries would work with United Nations agencies in a manner that capitalized on the comparative advantages of those agencies, the idea of UN-HABITAT as a small, disadvantaged agency was not tenable. He thought UN-HABITAT was too often 'defeatist' in attitude, whereas it had much to offer and should not minimize its own contribution. The common country assessment was an important tool in identifying housing and habitation issues in which UN-HABITAT could play a role. The "One United Nations" initiative notwithstanding, however, presence on the ground and the building of personal relationships were essential for in-country participation and responding to the individual needs of countries. Using the example of the United Nations Development Group

Iraq Trust Fund, he said there was a tendency for UN-HABITAT not to take the lead and to fail to promote its technical expertise in particular areas, although it had to ensure that the administrative efforts did not surpass the gains available.

Mr. Meeuwissen said that the current competitive climate between United Nations agencies militated against UN-HABITAT. There was a need for a neutral body coordinating United Nations assistance in a country, so that all agencies enjoyed an equal opportunity to play a role depending on their mandates. It was also a disadvantage that UN-HABITAT could not hire its own project staff or give service contracts, being dependent upon UNDP for those services. The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific had sought other service providers, including the Office for Project Services, which had recruited some staff on behalf of UN-HABITAT. In that region, promising relationships were being developed with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and with the United Nations Population Fund, taking advantage of the expertise of UN-HABITAT at the country level. Such relationships showed how the "One United Nations" initiative was intended to operate. If UN-Habitat could demonstrate its comparative advantage and its capacity, there was considerable opportunity to find new ways of working with other agencies.

Mr. Kithakye said that UN-HABITAT often expected more than it offered. It must be prepared to adapt to the new order under the "One United Nations" initiative, ensuring that partners were well aware of what UN-HABITAT could offer, and that it was prompt in delivering an attractive package when the opportunity arose. It was important to maintain good relations with the resident representatives and to take full part in meetings, demonstrating knowledge and wisdom.

In the ensuing discussion, much attention was paid to the implications of the "One United Nations" initiative for UN-HABITAT. One participant said that the initiative offered a great opportunity for UN-HABITAT, but could not be taken for granted. UN-HABITAT had to prove it was efficient and able to deliver, and had to demonstrate added value. In

some cases the UN-HABITAT programme managers had to take the risk of committing the agency to action in order to ensure a prompt response to an opportunity. Another said that there was nothing wrong conceptually with the initiative; the proof was in how well the concept was put into practice. The United Nations was a competitive system, which was likely to continue as such as long as agencies had various scales of operation, funding potentials and levels of representation in a country.

Several participants expressed concern at the financial implications for UN-HABITAT of recent funding trends. One said that the growing trend towards direct budget support, following the approval of a national poverty reduction strategy paper, tended to marginalize agencies such as UN-HABITAT. Another spoke of the value of pooling resources. The water and sanitation sector was usually well financed and there was obvious potential in offering a country a joint package comprising habitation, water and sanitation.

With regard to the role UN-HABITAT could play within United Nations country teams, several participants agreed that the agency should ensure that it clearly identified its comparative advantage and positioned itself accordingly. One said UN-HABITAT should consider whether its comparative advantage lay in its expertise in technical execution or elsewhere, for example as a specialist advisory body to governments. Another said it was unrealistic to expect human settlements to be included as a separate entity in national planning; it was up to UN-HABITAT programme managers to demonstrate how

the programme's human settlement focus could make a strong contribution to high-profile agendas, such as poverty alleviation. A third stressed the unique position of UN-HABITAT as the 'city agency', with mayors as its counterparts. It should focus on engaging them more effectively. Another supported that notion, stressing the cross-sectoral role played by UN-Habitat.

One participant said there were too many UN-HABITAT programme managers with too little substantive and financial support. It might be better to reduce their number and offer them strong expert support, so that they proved their added value at the country level.

With regard to relationships with other agencies, one participant recounted her experience with the UN-HABITAT Liaison and Information Office in Geneva, where coordination was aided by the presence of numerous other agencies and organizations within the city, for example in responding to the 2004 tsunami. UN-Habitat also played an effective role as a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Humanitarian Affairs.

One participant questioned the tendency to refer to cities and urban matters as a 'sector'. Cities, he said, made a contribution to economic, social and environmental issues out of proportion to their size, and were a platform for optimizing sectoral decisions rather than a sector in themselves. Appreciation of that fact was necessary to enable UN-HABITAT to position itself within the strategic planning programme at the country level.

PANEL

2 Relations between divisions



Mariam Yunusa
(moderator)



Participants

Mathias Hundsalsz,
Ali Shabou,
Antonio Yachan,
Jorge Gavidia.

During the panel discussion on relations between the four UN-HABITAT divisions, participants considered the following questions:

- a. How should UN-HABITAT manage its interdivisional collaboration for more efficiency and effective delivery at the country level?
- b. Which institutional mechanisms had been put in place to ensure the success of UN-Habitat normative work at the regional and national levels?
- c. How did the regional and technical cooperation feed back into the normative work of UN-HABITAT? How could the process be improved?
- d. What were the best (and worst) examples of interdivisional cooperation at the country level? How could divisions be encouraged to provide their expertise in support of regional offices instead of working in isolation?
- e. What were future perspectives for UN-HABITAT technical cooperation, and what should be done to tackle the interdivisional shortcomings of the past 25 years?

Ms. Mariam Yunusa, the moderator, said the discussions would focus on the challenges within UN-HABITAT and how to develop its niche position. She drew attention to the medium-term strategic and institutional plan, which was built around six focus areas and intended to provide programmatic coherence. The six focus areas did not, however, fit neatly with its four-divisional structure. The question of realigning the organizational structure with its focus areas was one that continued to engage the Committee of Permanent Representatives and UN-HABITAT staff. She invited the panelists to consider programmatic coherence and how the enhanced normative and operational framework providing for

the implementation of the focus areas fitted into divisional and management structures.

Mr. Hundsalz considered the question of interdivisional collaboration in the light of his work in other organizations and his return to UN-HABITAT after an absence of several years. He said multiple issues were at play: programme strategies, bureaucratic responses and a large range of global programmes and country-level operations. The medium-term strategic and institutional plan was interesting in its conceptual approach to tackling such issues but did not deal with the work of each division. The lack of clear-cut divisional roles and interdivisional collaboration was one of the most important challenges facing UN-HABITAT. He deplored the current differences between divisions that tended to 'hamstring' UN-HABITAT when it came to delivering as one. He noted that where collaboration existed it was largely the result of cooperation between staff members with an interest in particular issues. Interdivisional cooperation began with the sharing of information, yet there was no automatic process for feeding back experiences at the country level into UN-HABITAT normative activities.

Mr. Ali Shabou focused on institutional mechanisms that had been put in place to ensure the success of UN-HABITAT normative work at the regional and national levels, looking at advocacy, technical cooperation and fund-raising. Advocacy had been at issue for the past 30 years, indicating that UN-HABITAT work had been either unsuccessful or overambitious. The programme should have a 'corporate image' mirroring to the world a corporate entity, requiring complementarity of divisions and subdivisions with a flexible central system. While a major advocacy asset of UN-HABITAT was its flagship and technical publications, the fact that they were not well known to central or local authorities, although widely recognized by academic institutions and professionals, posed a problem. Publications and promotional materials, including websites, should be a crucial part of UN-HABITAT advocacy work worldwide.

Turning to technical cooperation, which was the

backbone of UN-HABITAT work, he said that as financial resources were limited it was important to anchor that work in innovative solutions and partnerships with all sectors of civil society. Clear guidelines should be adopted at headquarters level, avoiding bureaucratic and lengthy procedures, to set out for governments and local authorities the steps required for cooperation. Lack of coordination between country offices, the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division and other UN-HABITAT divisions also formed an obstacle to successful cooperation, not least in the area of fund-raising.

Mr. Yachan considered the issue of how regional and technical operations fed back into the normative work of UN-HABITAT. In his view, to streamline UN-HABITAT and improve coordination, normative and operational programmes could be combined, but such a move would require radical restructuring. In recent years, the distinction between the two had become unclear. There was, for example, no clear mechanism for feeding back experiences in the field to the normative section. The enhanced normative and operational framework appeared to be a good platform for combining the two areas of work, with the participatory slum upgrading programme a good example of the involvement of all staff. UN-HABITAT needed a single, clear leadership of operational and normative activities, a clear programme with clear definitions of outcomes, and clear information for countries. The operational and normative should be balanced and should prepare and deliver programmes together.

Mr. Gavidia said that, other than the medium-term strategic and institutional plan, UN-Habitat appeared to have had no other institutional mechanisms for bringing together operational and normative activities, the discussions of many years notwithstanding. The programme had accumulated a wealth of knowledge from technical operations that had not been collated and there were obstacles in the processing and application of that knowledge. He illustrated the dysfunctional relationship between UN-HABITAT divisions and regional offices on the basis of his experience in Latin America, where the two levels had differing perceptions of

their knowledge of countries' needs. There were some examples of excellent cooperation on best practices, however, such as the safer cities and water programmes, arising out of the mutual needs of the regional offices and the divisions. Translating global templates, with funds raised for particular activities and little flexibility, into local contexts continued to pose a challenge. UN-HABITAT needed to reassess its role in technical support and how to carry it out, something that might entail a radical break from the approach of the past 30 years.

Responding to the panelists' comments, Ms. Yunusa singled out the issue of information sharing and distribution, expressing the view that UN-HABITAT was making progress in that direction with the recently-launched Urban Gateway website and the posting of mission reports on the internet. She also drew attention to the World Urban Forum, which was enhancing respect for UN-HABITAT as a United Nations agency. She acknowledged that fundraising, procedures and internal cohesion continued to be thorny issues.

Opening the general discussion, Mr. Biau clarified a number of issues. First, with regard to the medium-term strategic and institutional plan, the six focus areas of the plan had been introduced at the request of the Governing Council and Committee of Permanent Representatives as another way of presenting the Habitat Agenda, and they could be subject to change; the most important was excellence in management. Second, the enhanced normative and operational framework represented an effort to combine the work of all divisions at the country level, but it had not proved successful as it was impossible clearly to identify and distil the work of UN-HABITAT in all countries and there remained no matrix of country activities. Third, in his view, the current structure of UN-HABITAT should be abandoned as soon as possible. UN-HABITAT implemented global programmes rather than undertook normative work. The contradictions lay in the mobilization of funds for global programmes and for regional offices. The reasons for the current lack of coordination lay in lack of interest in programme coordination in the leadership of UN-HABITAT; an attitude of 'fiefdoms'

among middle managers stemming from a lack of funding and management, and their resulting need to fight for their programmes; and the difficult funding situation that had led to fragmentation. He expressed the opinion that, ideally, regional offices should work with regular core staff to undertake initiatives at the country level. The issue of normative work should not be exaggerated, as UN-HABITAT was not a global agency in practice, rather its work was focused at national and local levels.

Participants paid considerable attention to the definition of normative work. One maintained that projects at the country level could not constitute normative work as the knowledge was not applicable worldwide, but could be a norm for all countries in a region with relevance for application therein. Another disagreed, saying that projects could be repeated across regions and beyond, as was the case, for example, with slum upgrading. UN-HABITAT was visible as an organization through its projects and therefore its technical operations needed to be strengthened. To that end it was crucial that seed money should be disbursed to regional and national technical operations.

One participant cautioned against confusing knowledge management with normative work. It was necessary to learn from activities on the ground and a mechanism was needed to bring that knowledge to UN-HABITAT. Greater emphasis should therefore be placed on a knowledge management mechanism. There was not so much a separation between normative and operational work, but rather a lack of coordination, with the normative aspect not well known in the organization. Another participant said that over the years the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division had produced the organization's expertise and that the resources of UN-HABITAT should be put where it mattered, in the generation of new knowledge; that was not being done systematically.

Several participants said that UN-HABITAT lacked strong management and vehicles for evaluation. One decried the current number of chiefs in UN-HABITAT and the fact that there appeared to be restructuring

whenever a new executive director was appointed. UN-Habitat needed decision makers, knowledge management and a platform to share information. Another expressed the view that it was institutional blockages that need to be cleared and that blame should not be attributed to the management team.

One participant said that, if faced with a lack of funding, UN-HABITAT should ensure expertise and accountability among its staff, which could be

achieved through simple methods such as timesheet management. The issues of a lack of common objectives and inability to pool resources also needed to be tackled.

Another participant expressed regret that the enhanced normative and operational framework was not working well. The global programme and regional offices should be working together on the ground, as they were doing with great success on

PANEL

3 Impact of technical cooperation on national policy reforms



Ax. G-Egziabher
(moderator)



Participants

Heinz Kull, Jean Marc Rossignol, Jay Moor, Sylvie Lacroux, Roberto Ottolenghi, Seydou Sy Sall.

During the panel discussion on the impact of UN-HABITAT technical cooperation on national policy reforms, participants considered the following relevant questions:

- How could UN-HABITAT manage to make a difference at the country level in influencing housing and urban policies?
- How could capacity development add value to policy reforms at the country level in key areas of the UN-HABITAT mandate?
- What were the success stories of UN-HABITAT policy advisory activities, and what triggered them?
- How could the lack of funding for normative activities affect the technical cooperation portfolio?
- How could the future country-level activities of UN-HABITAT be reinvented and better articulated to ensure more impact on national policies and

translate global norms into specific strategies?

Mr. Heinz Kull said there were many instances of housing policies developed with UNDP or UN-HABITAT assistance being adopted by governments, reflecting recognition by political leaders that housing, especially for the poor, was an issue that merited their attention. Unfortunately, however, that success at the institutional level did not always lead to an improvement in housing conditions. A prime reason was that governments lacked the experience or finance to translate policy formulation into practical improvement on the ground. Some success had been achieved using finance from the United Nations Capital Development Fund for practical demonstrations of housing development, but many countries continued to lag behind. Technical cooperation should be combined with operational components to test the new policy approaches; and monitoring and evaluation should not

end with the formulation of the new policy but should continue for some time afterwards to ensure that the results were achieved.

Mr. Jay Moor gave a personal account of his experiences in various projects in Asia and the Pacific. While the projects had achieved a degree of success, he did not know to what extent they had been instrumental in changing government policy in those locations. He had, however, encountered some interesting developments, not necessarily related to the projects on which he was working, but illustrating the contextual importance of United Nations engagement: for example, a well-established microfinance system in Indonesia predating the Grameen Bank; and a cadre of young professionals in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and in Sri Lanka capable of embracing new technologies. Those experiences had influenced his work on the Habitat Agenda, which was a permissive rather than mandatory document, recognizing that every city and its country was different – in the extent of civic engagement, the quality of governance, the existence of legal and policy frameworks, the scale of privatization and other contextual factors determining the success of a project and whether or not it could be scaled up.

Ms. Lacroux looked at two disparate projects in which UN-HABITAT technical cooperation had had a major influence on national reforms. The first was an urban management project in 11 secondary cities in Burkina Faso in the early 1990s, at a time when the country was heavily engaged in discussion on decentralization. The project was formulated within the Ministry of Housing and Public Works, under a department created to support local authorities during the decentralization process. Major components were capacity-building among administrative staff at the local authority and municipal levels, and the formulation of a national plan for the decentralization of urban management. UN-HABITAT thus made a major contribution to the process of decentralization in Burkina Faso. In her second example, she described the UN-HABITAT intervention in Kosovo at the conclusion of the war in 1999, when the programme had had to act swiftly

to support the housing and property directorate, to put in place a new system for registration of property and to provide support to municipal governments. UN-HABITAT had developed appropriate tools and carried out training and capacity-building. The project had proved a strong basis for the future development of national policy on housing and property in Kosovo.

Mr. Sy Sall focused on the impact of the cooperative housing model in Senegal, which had been implemented with UN-HABITAT support. The scale, membership and financial assets of the cooperative system had attracted the interest of a number of banks and enabled Senegal to add considerably to its housing stock. The supply of housing had been adjusted to the income levels of the purchasers. The initial technical development had been followed by a consolidation phase and there had been an adaptation of housing types and architectural designs in accordance with the economic reality. Plot sizes had been reduced to make them more affordable. The lessons were that it was important to pay attention to the link between human settlements and the economy in general; that projects should not be limited to technical matters but should contain a policy element and that technical assistance needed to be combined with demonstration projects. In addition, while the ministry of housing might be the entry point for UN-HABITAT, links needed to be forged with other government entities, particularly the ministry of finance. The main difficulty was that decentralization of responsibility had not been adequately accompanied by a transfer of resources.

Mr. Jean Marc Rossignol described a project in Rwanda in which UN-HABITAT had assisted in refining the urban development policy that the Government was putting in place, which focused on land reform. A land law had been adopted that had had a negative impact on the occupants of the land and UN-HABITAT had been brought in to help reformulate the land policy with adequate compensation. In reality the recommendations of UN-HABITAT were not fully adopted as they proved beyond the Government's financial capabilities, but the land reform that was carried out was an

improvement on the original formulation. The project had been implemented with several partners and demonstrated the value that UN-HABITAT could add when partnering with other organizations.

Mr. Ottolenghi said there was a need to consider the impact of development projects. It was fair to say that the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division had not achieved as much as it could, for various reasons, including that its activities were often driven by the agenda of donors or governments, rather than by Habitat Agenda. The lack of core funding and the obsession with overheads were contributory factors. In addition, UN-HABITAT had frequently been too timid in its approach, for example on the issue of legal reform and would have benefited from the addition of an expert on urban law as a staff member. Other factors included the mistaken assumption that projects that had worked in one context were automatically replicable elsewhere and the emphasis on delivery of technical assistance without engagement in policy discourse.

As an example of the problems that could afflict a project he quoted Afghanistan, where UN-Habitat had succeeded in stabilizing tenure and regularizing settlement. In 2005, however, the government passed, by presidential decree, a land act dispossessing all those with land tenure based on customary systems. That act had been drafted elsewhere. UN-HABITAT had carried out an effective project but had paid inadequate attention to legal reform. Others had stepped in and UN-Habitat had paid the price. In conclusion, he made three recommendations: closer attention should be given to project identification and selection; project formulation should always involve a policy element; and the impact of the project should be carefully assessed to enable dissemination of lessons learned.

Following the presentations, the impacts of interventions on further action and policy development at the national level were discussed. One participant used examples from Africa to show that housing projects had often been carried out in isolation and not as a component of a comprehensive plan, and thus lacked policy impact. It would

be useful to carry out an evaluation of housing projects to find out why that was the case. A more favourable environment was emerging, however, as a result of the presence of UN-HABITAT programme managers and focused housing ministries. Another participant said that specific conditions were required for interventions to have an impact at the national level: programmes or projects should show linkage between the local, subnational and national levels; conditions should be created for innovation and institutional reform; and domestic resources for scaling up should be available. Several participants supported the view that lack of scaling up and of post-project evaluation were often serious omissions in project implementation.

One participant drew attention to the situation in the former Soviet Union countries of Eastern Europe and western Asia, where the master plans drawn up under the previous regime had expired and assistance and advice were needed in developing new plans for city development and management.

There was also discussion of the related matter of information dissemination and awareness-raising. One participant said transmission of knowledge could be effective in triggering policy reform. UN-HABITAT had over the years developed a stock of good instruments, and the agency's publications were in use in many locations worldwide. Another said there was no need to 'flood' people with information; as long as it was available on the internet, they could access what they needed using a search engine.

Mr. Kull said many projects concentrated on short-term gains and longer-term impacts were either lacking or were never measured. Post-evaluation of selected projects would help to shed light on whether they had an impact. He added that there should be a compulsory capital investment component in projects so that the policy dimensions could be realized. Mr. Sy Sall said that technical cooperation activities should remain the entry point, with those activities used to identify policy reform needs, followed by a response to those needs. Slum upgrading should be an important component of housing policy. Ms. Lacroux

said there was a role for regional offices to build on the lessons learned from country experiences of policy reform. Legal reform was necessary to support the process at national level. National observatories could assist in measuring the impact of policy change. Mr. Moor highlighted the need to collate lessons learned to inform the future direction of UN-HABITAT. Mr. Rossignol said UN-HABITAT should increase its cooperation with other stakeholders to generate the resources necessary to ensure that projects had a policy development component.

Mr. Ottolenghi agreed that publications could

make an impact, but many remained unread and unused. The potential for disseminating information by electronic means should be further explored. Mr. Rossignol said there was limited time to read all the publications received, so documents needed to be short and pithy if they were to have an impact.

Concluding the debate, Ms. Auxumite Gebre-Egziabher, the moderator, said that there was a need to identify priorities, work with partners and put into action the mechanisms through which UN-Habitat could make an impact based on its expertise.

PANEL

4 Relations between country-level operations and regional and global activities



Eduardo Moreno
(moderator)



Participants

Mark Hildebrand,
Robert Ottolenghi,
Tatiana
Roskoshnaya,
Ole Lyse, David
Kithakye.

water and sanitation and climate change issues.

During the panel discussion on improving relations between country-level operations and UN-Habitat global activities, participants considered the following questions:

- How did UN-HABITAT technical cooperation at the country level specifically relate to the agency's global mandate as specified in the Habitat Agenda?
- Who were the drivers of change at both the country and regional levels, and how did UN-HABITAT interact with them? What were the mechanisms in place to support such cooperation?
- How should UN-HABITAT invest in global programmes with country-level activities, and how should those programmes involve regional offices?
- Which lessons could be drawn from the past 25 years of UN-HABITAT technical cooperation and how do

they affect the global priorities of the agency?

- What were the problems to be resolved in developing regional programmes?

Introducing the discussion, Mr. Eduardo Lopez-Moreno, the moderator, considered the nature of global and country-level activities, noting that the latter could also have global concerns. He also considered the design and implementation of global programmes and questioned the extent to which they came in response to demands at the country level.

Mr. Lyse spoke about urban planning initiatives and the variation in the requirements and needs of various cities and countries. In his experience, the work of UN-HABITAT in that area had been well received over the years, but the interest among local authorities had tended to be in support to assist dialogue with stakeholders and to help regain the reputation and credibility that many

local authorities had lost. The cities he had worked with had had overwhelming problems and lack of services, for example Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, during its cholera epidemic in 2008. The focus on the planning aspect came later. He also advocated that the best way for UN-HABITAT to reach a country was to begin work with one city, rather than beginning at the national level and dealing with several cities at the same time. Replication programmes had proved relatively successful over time.

For UN-HABITAT to achieve success in those areas it was crucial for the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division to work closely with regional offices and also with urban institutions to build capacity and create an anchor for the agency's work; it then became possible to have influence with ministers at the national level in looking at various urban planning approaches. The drivers for change were cities and urban institutions, not the national level. Governments were convinced by a bottom-up approach.

Ms. Roskoshnaya spoke about her experience in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, where the issues needing to be tackled covered the full range of the UN-HABITAT mandate: housing, urban management, planning, migration, legislation, sustainable development, in particular the sustainable financing of development, and the involvement of civil society. She emphasized that cooperation with countries was driven by demand and called for varying approaches, for example, a high level of advocacy work was required in many of the newly independent states with which UN-HABITAT had no agreement. The presence of a UN-Habitat programme manager in Moscow was helpful in reaching other countries, but there were a number of ways in which UN-HABITAT could develop its presence, for example, by the provision of timely advice and reports and through interaction with various inter-city networks and cooperation with universities. It was also useful in the region to create a roster of translation specialists. In her view, it was important to find a way of sharing the experiences of UN-Habitat from various parts

of the world and applying it at the regional level.

Mr. Hildebrand spoke on the relationship between technical cooperation at the country level and the agency's global mandate as set out in the Habitat Agenda. The diagnostic process at the country level was sometimes lacking and, if there were greater use of indicators and the capacity for monitoring them, the relationship between the two could be reinforced. He agreed that, although there were occasions when a minister of housing or urban development was the driver for change, it was more usually a group of mayors working with communities who brought about change. Citing the example of slum upgrading in Brazil, he said innovations did not come from ministries and UN-HABITAT should focus on working with mayors. It was important to understand and empower them, particularly in countries in which central governments were not held in high esteem.

Turning to the distinction between a global mandate and global programmes, he said that originally the latter had not been part of the Habitat Agenda but had later provided an opportunity for the agency to work as a partner with the World Bank and other agencies. There could be added value in global programmes, as in the Cities Alliance, but they might be unsuccessful if they did not work closely with regional offices to the benefit of UN-HABITAT regional activities. The Cities Alliance had been set up for many of the reasons highlighted in the current meeting and with the aim of conceiving technical cooperation products that would stimulate strong demand from cities. That had evolved and changed significantly and there was justification for re-examining the design of global programmes, whether they served a purpose for UN-HABITAT and whether greater scale and funding could be achieved by working collectively with partners. A weak financial basis had clearly become a major issue in recent years. Technical cooperation activities had begun with a clear financial basis that had not been dependent on the regular budget or the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation. Given the changes in the financial environment, the situation was no longer sustainable and there was an argument for restructuring and considering

collective activities.

Mr. Kithakye said the adage “think global, act local” should inspire UN-HABITAT activities. Global programmes should relate or lead to regional and local-level activities. He cited the example of the World Urban Forum, which could be described as a global activity, but was also informed by input from the ground. Activities at the local level should feed into thinking at the global level and that relationship should define UN-HABITAT policies and priorities. The organization’s problems were created by the differences within it, which were often attributable to personality issues, and cooperation was a priority.

Mr. Ottolenghi emphasized that the world of technical cooperation had changed radically and that no country needed generic technical assistance nor were any willing to finance it. For UN-HABITAT to have prosperous operations portfolios it was essential to accept that and to raise the stakes in terms of technical specificity and enhanced knowledge on critical issues. Global programmes should fulfill that role. No programme should be imposed from outside by other agendas; they had always been conceived and debated within UN-HABITAT and should be the product of forward thinking and capturing the need for change. The Safer Cities Programme had been an example of that and demonstrated the need to think more in that direction. Opportunities had been missed and the responsibility lay with UN-HABITAT. It was a sad indictment that the same issues were being discussed after so many years. There was a mood for change in the organization and consensus that the opportunity should be seized.

Opening the discussion, Mr. Lopez-Moreno noted that, while a number of positions had been voiced by the panelists, all had emphasized the usefulness of the connection between local activities and global programmes. He invited the participants to consider to what extent global programmes needed to be revisited.

One contributor warned that global concerns were not necessarily homogenous across regions. He recommended outpostting staff from global

programmes to regional offices with the aim of regionalizing global programmes and feeding back to divisions.

Another pointed out that local authorities were becoming more sophisticated and, while they needed assistance, it had to be more specialized and with more precise knowledge in particular areas. There was already a trend towards greater use of information technology and that would generate a smaller volume of funding for UN-HABITAT operations. The agency was no longer a unique source of knowledge and experience and would have to redefine its role in generating or capturing cutting-edge know-how. He concurred that it was important for UN-HABITAT to identify emerging issues, as had been the case with urban management, and to capture them.

The need for UN-HABITAT to focus on a few, rather than a large, unsustainable number of issues was raised by a number of participants. One said that the agency should select a few areas in which it could create genuine teams rather than lonely individuals working without guidance.

One participant raised the example of global campaigns, which he said were the best way of reaching stakeholders and having an impact. They were organized in collaboration with ministries at the national level and focused on a single major event. They were, therefore, an example of where the key partner was the ministry, not the city. Cities were expected to follow up, but that did not always happen unless UN-HABITAT was present to take up the initiative.

A number of examples were given of opportunities for future UN-HABITAT involvement in global issues, such as the cities and climate change initiative, biodiversity, marine conservation and the ecosystems approach to sustainable development. Several participants agreed with the need for a link between the local, regional and global levels. One said that all programmes should be so premised; others cautioned that the time was not ripe to set up new global programmes given huge donor fatigue.

One participant said that UN-HABITAT needed to concentrate on improving capacity comprehensively to understand issues of urban development. Another said that new programmes were already being set up and they should, therefore, be evaluated and assessed according to their usefulness. One said that new global programmes were not needed, but rather a new platform akin to the World Urban Forum, as a new mechanism for negotiating with countries without being prescriptive, and providing policy and direction.

One participant, speaking from experience in Asia and the Pacific, pointed out that more countries were entering the middle-income range and donors were withdrawing from them. He proposed packaging those issues under global programmes to seek funding. Another said that, although some countries were no longer considered developing countries, there remained a high degree of inequality within them, as seen in Latin America. Some countries

would progress more swiftly than others and UN-HABITAT should tailor its responses to the countries that required input.

One participant highlighted the need for more evaluation of lessons learned in the formulation of UN-HABITAT priorities and the reformulation of the focus areas to reflect areas with which technical cooperation was really concerned, such as post-disaster relief climate change and technology.

Summing up the debate, Mr. Biau said that the problem lay primarily in the absence of links between global and regional programmes; it was necessary to regionalize the global work, and some success had been achieved in that area. There would be an organizational review of UN-HABITAT following the twenty-third session of the Governing Council, he said, and that would include a review of focus areas. He expressed appreciation for the timely discussion and the hope that many of the participants would be invited to contribute to the review.

PANEL

5 Technical cooperation and programme administration



Paul Taylor
(moderator)



Participants

Eric Verschuur,
Ingunde Fuehlau,
Mathias Hundsalsz,
Kariba Traoré, Jan
Meelker, Henk
Verbeek.

During the panel discussion on technical cooperation and programme administration, participants considered the following questions:

- a. How could the competitiveness of UN-HABITAT country programme administration be improved vis-à-vis other United Nations agencies such as UNDP and the United Nations Office for Project Services?
- b. How did UN-HABITAT administrative performance compare with the performance of bilateral or multilateral agencies in terms of human and financial resources management?
- c. To move towards "excellence in management" of country activities, which delegation of authority had been enforced and what remained to be done?
- d. To improve administrative efficiency and avoid duplication, which current functions of Programme Support

Division could be transferred to regional offices, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, or the Office of the Executive Director?

- e. Was there a way to speed up UN-HABITAT recruitments in the context of the new Inspira human resources talent management system, which appeared to be even more bureaucratic and cumbersome than the previous system?
- f. How could the dominant United Nations culture in which control came first and action second be changed, and how to move towards post-facto assessments and verification to empower project managers to perform and meet partners' expectations?

Mr. Verschuur said a major frustration in the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division was how to compete with competitors such as UNDP and the Office for Project Services and demonstrate in the field that UN-HABITAT had added

value. As the process of setting up new projects had become extremely complicated with the control element of the Programme Support Division, he questioned whether the Division had made UN-HABITAT activities in the field easier. Some risks were involved in the implementation of projects on the ground, for example, in the area of disaster management, yet the programme apparently preferred to operate on a zero-risk basis.

For UN-HABITAT to be able to compete with other agencies there were a number of prerequisites: trust in regional staff and an appropriate level of decentralization; appropriate tools, instruments and guidelines for country activities, which would not be overly complicated to develop; and some form of dedicated unit of experienced roving staff with the ability to act swiftly and the authority to set up efficient, decentralized teams in the field. The absence of those factors was causing delays in programme implementation and hampering the competitiveness of UN-HABITAT.

Ms. Ingunde Fuehlau said that, like many organizations, UN-HABITAT had a 'divide' between programme and administrative staff and administrative processes tended to hamper the ability of programme staff to set priorities. The Regional and Technical Cooperation Division had not, however, fully exploited its position as a budget holder; figures on turnover, delivery and income were notably absent in the most recent annual report of UN-HABITAT.

She proposed a number of steps to resolve the situation, including a complete report of income and expenditure within the programme with a view to UN-HABITAT taking control of its own budget and being able to track overheads. Efforts could also be made to overcome the organizational divide between UN-HABITAT and the United Nations Office at Nairobi. A review could also be undertaken of rules and procedures, bearing in mind that only financial rules were set in stone and all other sets of rules could be changed to achieve efficiency. She concluded by saying that, even though major organizational change would take time, it was

possible to begin incrementally, with small changes such as streamlining recruitment processes and improving turnaround times.

Mr. Hundsalz highlighted a number of operational matters. Given that the focus of UN-HABITAT work was on the country level and involved local authorities and networks, it was necessary to review those activities in the light of other agencies' activities and to identify the added advantage of UN-Habitat. To that end the delegation of authority to the country level and the strengthening of the programme manager set-up were desirable. He drew a comparison with multilateral agencies such as the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), which did not operate in all developing countries but, in those countries where it did have a presence, it had competent, well-staffed country offices with authority delegated from their headquarters. UN-HABITAT, on the other hand, was largely dependent on UNDP for recruitment and contractual issues, which hampered the improvement of country operations.

He saw no possibility of enhancing management and administrative efficiency without delegated authority for recruitment and procurement. It was timely to consider how the administrative structure could be streamlined, given that there was considerable criticism from Western donor countries of the growing bureaucratic control of United Nations agencies. The new Inspira human resources talent management system introduced by headquarters was another example of a lack of awareness of the realities facing agencies on the ground; it would probably be unable to achieve efficiency in terms of time management.

Mr. Henk Verbeek spoke of his experiences in both technical cooperation and the Programme Support Division. While the division was valuable, there was also a need for checks and balances. It was also important to determine the role of the regional offices vis-à-vis the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division and UN-HABITAT as a whole; staff members from other divisions should be located in regional offices depending on needs such

as climate change or disaster management, as was the case with other agencies. That would help to establish the credentials of UN-Habitat at the country level. As a small organization, UN-HABITAT had to be selective and to strategize. The setting up of the disaster management programme was an example of a good strategic decision.

Turning to other questions, he advocated making the best possible use of the tools available, including Inspira. He also recommended improved staff training to enable UN-HABITAT to be represented by high-quality staff in recruitment and procurement processes. The programme had to take responsibility and play a role in tackling weaknesses and delays in those areas.

Mr. Jan Meelker emphasized the increasing importance of accountability and political pressure to show results in all organizations, reflecting the evident shifts in policies and priorities. Most bureaucracies were imposing additional layers of control, particularly in large organizations, and that was not unique to the United Nations system; recruitment processes were also generally longer in bigger organizations. Devolving more authority to the local level would, however, enhance the efficiency of decision-making. A balance needed to be struck between efficiency in implementation and accountability. He also highlighted the importance of building relationships, both personal and institutional; good communications with partners and donors; clarity on rules and regulations; and consistency in staff.

Mr. Traoré expressed the view that project management should be primarily the responsibility of field staff and appropriate colleagues from regional offices and headquarters. He warned that UN-HABITAT had stagnated with regard to its responsiveness to the situation on the ground in developing countries. Country offices were subject to too many layers of regulation and reporting, having to apply the rules of donors and of UN-HABITAT in addition to complying with political considerations in the host country. Rules on subcontracting were universal, not specific to the United Nations or World

Bank. Countries had adapted to those with the same objectives in view.

He expressed his frustration at his failure to change perceptions about UN-HABITAT rules in Nairobi. The aim of technical cooperation, he said, was to achieve sustainability and the ability of host countries to implement the projects themselves. Time was often lost as a result of mismatched rules and administrative differences. UN-HABITAT should be seen as an enterprise with the ability to make swift decisions and effect timely payment, an ability especially important in infrastructure development projects. Capacity-building for programme managers and local staff was also important to enable them to tackle the complexity of project management and overcome administrative issues. Field staff were more in touch with what was happening on the ground than administrative staff. Other agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund had better capacity to deliver at the country level as their local staff had greater empowerment. UN-HABITAT needed to decentralize to compete.

In the general discussion, a number of participants endorsed the view that project management responsibilities should rest with staff in the field. Others pointed out that opportunities were lost as a result of centralization and administrative delays. Examples were given, such as a project in Indonesia that had collapsed simply because of the time taken to hire one specialist. While checks and balances were necessary, there should be a careful examination of the amount of administrative effort spent on small details, which hampered activities.

One participant said there could be no progress if resources were concentrated on administrative matters. That was not synonymous with accountability, which came only with action. He recommended a deliberate change to make UN-HABITAT more action-oriented, rather than restructuring or superficially amending relations with the United Nations Office at Nairobi.

Another participant called for a suitable balance to be struck between trust and the need to fall in line with UN-HABITAT as a whole, laying greater

emphasis on trust as the means to speed up decision-making and achieve what needed to be done in the field. He gave examples of the time taken for funds to be disbursed, which could be as much as two months in some cases. A commonly heard complaint was that the Programme Support Division was not development-minded.

The need for trust and a reduction in levels of control were repeatedly stressed. While improved auditing was suggested as a solution, it was noted that donors lacked faith in the process within the United Nations. Although it was not an issue that UN-HABITAT could tackle alone, one participant proposed that there were systems of reward and punishment that UN-HABITAT could apply through simple measures such as bonuses and dismissals. In his experience, all project managers had tracking systems to make projects work better; those should be collected and built into technical cooperation.

Another participant decried the loss of the expertise and authority that had previously existed in regional offices. The current levels of control and processes were unnecessary and added no value, he said, calling for a return to delegation of authority to project managers and an end to the need for multiple signatures. Staff in the field could wait months for things to happen, he said.

The oil-for-food programme in Iraq, however, was cited as an example of a centralized programme that

had been effective, thanks to excellent staff in the field who had fought for delegation of authority, although there had not been a commensurate degree of accountability. Delegation and flexibility had to be accompanied by a high degree of responsibility.

One participant identified a number of areas where UN-HABITAT needed to re-evaluate its practices. As others had noted, the organization's administration had grown, particularly with the expansion of the Programme Support Division. UN-HABITAT would do well to examine whether the current arrangement of personnel and the Division met the original objective of achieving economy of scale and enhanced efficiency. To keep pace with the times, UN-HABITAT should reassess the delegation of authority to regional offices; formerly responsibility rested with regional offices and was distinct from the principle of authority. UN-Habitat also appeared no longer to have its own set of rules; in principle the rules of the Secretariat were followed, but procedures were being devised according to needs, resulting in the current state of affairs. UN-HABITAT had the experience to draw on to prepare a manual for itself without the need for an external consultant.

A number of participants emphasized the need for suitable training for project managers and the correct tools to empower staff in the field. Field office experience was also desirable for all project managers recruited.

PANEL

6 Fund-raising successes and difficulties



Toshi Noda
(moderator)



Participants

Disa Weerapana,
Alberto Paranhos,
Jorge Gavidia,
Heinz Kull,
Sudipto Mukerjee.

During the panel discussion on fund mobilization successes and difficulties, participants considered the following questions:

- How sustainable were technical cooperation activities with such a focus on post-disaster and post-crisis activities? Should UN-HABITAT become another humanitarian agency?
- What lessons could be learned from successful fund mobilization in Asia and the Arab States? What lessons could be learned from the difficulties in Latin America?
- How could core resources and management fees be combined to provide more impetus to country activities? Was it advisable to merge all extrabudgetary resources of UN-HABITAT?
- Was the network of regional offices adequate in terms of fund-raising

or should it also expand towards development partners such as the European Commission?

- What lessons could be learned from global multi-agency initiatives such as the Urban Management Programme and the Cities Alliance as far as their attractiveness to the donor community was concerned?

Mr. Toshi Noda, introducing the session, said the portfolio of the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division had risen from USD 38 million in 1990 to USD 184 million in 2010, thanks to dynamic fund-raising at country level and the increasing size of individual projects. That performance was, however, overdependent on crisis and disaster funding, while development assistance was declining and being replaced by budget support.

Mr. Weerapana said it was often not easy for a small agency, such as UN-HABITAT,

to engage unilaterally with government bodies. In addition, the current situation with regard to donor funding was unstable: donors were less willing to mobilize funds for those countries, for example in Asia, which they perceived were climbing the income ladder. On the other hand, new opportunities for donor funding were arising in least developed countries, and UN-HABITAT needed to capitalize on that by tapping into funds for humanitarian projects. The agency also needed to demonstrate willingness to work with non-governmental organizations. With regard to reaching the poor, working with global programmes had promise for fund mobilization, including from countries themselves. In conclusion, he said that when the portfolio moved to disaster mitigation there was considerable advantage in acting swiftly and establishing a presence around which others could build.

Mr. Paranhos spoke of the particular challenges of generating funding in Latin America. Most countries, he said, preferred to sign up for a loan rather than pay for technical expertise. With a smaller agency such as UN-HABITAT, however, they would be prepared to match funding provided the agency could demonstrate efficiency in delivery. Personal relationships between fund-raisers and donors were important in generating funds. In several Latin American countries there were strict laws pertaining to the contributions that municipalities were able to make when matching funding.

Mr. Gavidia said that, given the complexities of working with donors, time spent nurturing relationships with them was worthwhile. It was his opinion that obtaining initial funding was 50 per cent being there at the right time, 40 per cent luck, and 10 per cent being able to argue the case. Once a foothold was gained, however, and a reputation established, further funding was often forthcoming. With regard to humanitarian interventions, he said prevention and mitigation tended to be neglected. Agencies such as UN-HABITAT were too often trapped in 'survival mode', finding it difficult to generate funding for actions that reflected their missions or priorities. The structure of funding was symptomatic, with an uncomfortably high percentage going to

post-disaster activities. Money, he said, was the means of achieving a desired outcome, not an end in itself. It often proved difficult, however, to balance core resources, overheads and other budgetary elements.

Mr. Kull said the rise in funding over the past few decades had been impressive, but also questioned whether the budgetary balance was sound, with such a large percentage of the portfolio dedicated to crisis and disaster funding. The recent global financial crisis posed an additional challenge as many donor countries had become saddled with massive public debt and were wary of committing resources. UN-HABITAT urgently needed to discuss the impacts of those trends on its budget and on the design of future projects. He noted that other agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, often engaged in raising funds through direct public donations, and wondered whether UN-Habitat might consider such an approach. In addition, the agency needed to examine where internal cost cutting might realize savings.

Mr. Sudipto Mukerjee agreed there was a need for a shift to bring UN-HABITAT activities more in line with its mandate. Credibility in delivery was a vital starting point. He expressed concern that in Iraq UN-HABITAT had been too stretched on the ground and unable as a consequence to deliver effectively. Resource mobility was important in positioning the agency strategically within a country programme, thereby putting it in a stronger position to deliver its mandate. Continuous donor education was vital, as in Iraq, where UN-HABITAT had to make the case for housing reform. Too often good quality communication and publicity materials were lacking, limiting the agency's ability to demonstrate that it was delivering good results and effecting positive change.

The discussion which followed focused on relationships between UN-HABITAT and donors. One participant said that the only way to convince donors was by demonstrating physical results and delivering within the expected time frame. It also helped

to give due consideration to donor priorities and tailor programmes accordingly – for example, slum upgrading might need to be packaged as poverty alleviation or livelihood support, according to donor requirements.

One participant said that, following the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, donors were looking more to budgetary support as a means of engaging strategically in a country. UN-HABITAT had not created a product in that environment and needed to be more strategic in how it presented its expertise, for example with regard to urban indicators. Another participant said it was important to bear in mind the global context of the donor-recipient relationship, with, among other problems, oil price rises and civil unrest in many areas. The transport issue would come to the fore, with implications for land-use planning and urban development, and UN-HABITAT had to prepare accordingly.

One contributor said UN-HABITAT involvement in post-conflict situations not only raised questions about budget allocation and priorities in relation to the agency's mandate, but also raised moral questions, for example in politically unstable situations where UN-HABITAT might be perceived as working with corrupt regimes.

One participant said the global cost of slum upgrading was billions of dollars, and UN-HABITAT needed to develop expertise in how to assist countries in mobilizing funds for cities, which was often inadequate compared to health, education and other sectors.

Another participant outlined the measures being taken by the Resource Mobilization Unit, established in 2008, to implement a corporate approach in raising awareness of UN-HABITAT activities, particularly among donors. On the issue of raising money directly from the public, he said that option was being explored, but regulatory hurdles had to be overcome.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Introducing the session, Mr. Mohamed El-Sioufi, the moderator, said that the rapporteurs from the six panels would report back on the outcomes of their discussions, so as to synthesize recommendations that would help UN-HABITAT to shape its future direction and to take advantage of the store of knowledge in the “human library”.

The moderator noted that the value of personal relationships was a constant theme running through many of the panel discussions. Another theme was the appropriateness of the organizational structure of UN-HABITAT to perform its functions effectively, and what changes, for example with regard to the function of regional offices, might be beneficial. Many had also spoken of the time factor and the need to go beyond the project cycle, revisit interventions and evaluate the impact on the ground. He stressed the growing importance of the central component of the mantra “think globally, tailor regionally, act locally”, as a regional approach was increasingly being adopted in such tools as the State of the Cities report. Lastly, he mentioned the need for innovative, proactive funding.

In the ensuing discussion, one participant said that technical cooperation lay at the core of UN-Habitat activities, and was the key to its survival. Further debate on the direction that should be taken with regard to technical cooperation – for example, whether to adopt a centralized or a decentralized approach – was essential. Another mentioned the lack of understanding that often confused relationships between UN-HABITAT and Latin American countries and complicated agreement on funding and resource mobilization.

One participant said that UN-HABITAT had experienced problems in recruiting top-level experts. While progress had been made, for example in engaging more experts from developing countries, it remained difficult to see where a new generation

of experts was going to be found to replace the current generation. Others said that it was not always possible to recruit experts, and much was to be said for engaging young people with energy, drive and the commitment to learn on the job and become experts. One participant said that many who initially felt enthusiastic about working for the United Nations had found the organization 'too bureaucratic' and moved elsewhere, while others merely wanted to gain experience and moved between agencies without making a significant contribution.

One participant said the dichotomy between the global agenda of UN-HABITAT and its engagement in country-level activities that required specific, tailored solutions was relevant to the kind of expertise that UN-HABITAT would recruit. There was a need to internalize all the instances of technical

knowledge that emerged from the field and formed the marketing agenda of UN-HABITAT. Another participant said that there was a need to look at the issue of human resources more creatively and flexibly, perhaps by bringing in more expertise on short-term contracts. Experience in the relevant context was vital. Another said that, rather than UN-HABITAT hiring people when it had funds, consideration should be given to hiring experts to obtain funds, by building programmes and generating donor funding. Secondment, for example from universities, was also suggested as a way to bring in expertise in the short term.

Concluding the discussion, the moderator said that the main outcomes of the meeting would be presented at the twenty-third session of the Governing Council in the form of an information document.



Cheerful mood among participants as the Executive Directors of UN-HABITAT and UNEP addressed the audience.





SUMMARY AND WAY FORWARD³



A ROADMAP FOR UN-HABITAT'S TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Dear colleagues, I wish to congratulate all of you for a job well done. I congratulate all participants for having shared their wisdom in a very professional way and I thank all staff of UN-HABITAT involved in organizing this meeting for having provided all necessary inputs to set in motion our Human Library.

Usually Expert Group Meetings (EGM) are designed to bring to the secretariat the views and experience of outside experts who are not part of the United Nations. Our Human Library Conference was an 'original', as it did not bring outsiders but former EGM professionals from within. It was almost an internal EGM, not really envisaged in our Work-Programme. But I think that this event, probably a first in the entire UN system, achieved a lot. Indeed it achieved more than I expected when we discussed this idea six months ago at our coffee station.

I would like to summarize some of the key recommendations which have emerged from our meeting and will in fact blend this outcome with the recommendations made in recent RTCD retreats, held in July and December 2010 in Nairobi and Naivasha. In that way, I will combine your recommendations as 'elders' with our current internal perspective. Following the EGM discussions, I will group the recommendations in clusters corresponding to the panel structure, identifying only three recommendations

per panel, with some obvious overlaps.

Before moving to Panel 1, a first recommendation would be to establish serious induction seminars for new staff and to organize more structured discussions among professional staff on substantive issues, in the form of periodical workshops.

Under Panel 1 (Relations with other UN agencies) we could highlight three lines of action:

- We have the instruments for inter-agency interactions at country level (UNDAFs, UNCTs, HPMs, HCPDs ...) but we need to refine and focus our own contributions to better integrate urban concerns in generic UNDAF priorities (governance, poverty, basic services). We should focus on 26 ENOF priority countries that we selected last year.
- We need to collaborate and to compete with other UN agencies, some with large country offices and more important resources. Professional excellence is therefore indispensable if we want to be heard and respected. We have to strengthen our technical capacities and expertise, globally, regionally and locally, particularly if we want to access 'One UN' funds as we already do in some countries.
- We have to work with sister UN agencies but also and primarily with governments, local authorities and other partners active at national level. The partnership principle of Istanbul should remain on top of our agenda. It goes much beyond the UN Country Teams.

³ Concluding remarks by Daniel Biau

Under Panel 2 (Relations among UN-HABITAT Divisions) we have noted three practical recommendations:

- UN-HABITAT being essentially a mix of global programmes and country activities, we should better coordinate and synergize these two levels of intervention. While the issue is not normative vs. operational, the ENOF action plan should be taken more seriously to ensure real complementarity between global and country-level activities.
- It would be highly advisable to establish more systematically inter-divisional teams (based on the successful precedents of DMU and PSUP) combining the expertise of Focus Area colleagues with the sub-regional knowledge and contacts of our SHSOs.
- A further step ahead should be for Regional Offices to integrate professionals from other Divisions as it is done in UNEP and was tested by the BP programme and the Water Programme in Latin America and SCP in Asia. This would be a way to change the silo culture still persistent in some parts of the agency.

Under Panel 3 (Impact of Technical Cooperation on national policies) we need to recognize our limitations and publicize our successes. I submit three important ideas:

- We know that our current portfolio is rather unpredictable as it prioritizes post natural disasters and in-crisis countries. In the coming years, we have to move deliberately towards providing technical assistance to national policy reforms, in both the housing and urban development areas. This should become our top priority, i.e. normative support at country level. In fact I propose that RTCD be transformed into the Policy Implementation Division of UN-HABITAT.
- To succeed in this transformation we will have to involve professionals from other Divisions and a variety of partners, including academic and research specialists and local government practitioners. Of course we will also need to rely more and more on national expertise and promote more intense national dialogues (e.g. through National Urban Forums).

- We have to take stock of our accumulated experience at country level, probably on a regional basis, and strengthen (again) our own policy expertise. This is a challenge as new recruitments will be needed, based on different staff profiles.
- Under Panel 4 (Relations between country operations and global programmes) our collective recommendations were not very innovative:
 - We all agreed that monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms have always been underdeveloped at UN-HABITAT, especially due to lack of resources. Indeed Regional Offices have to be better equipped to fulfill these tasks if we want them to be more policy-oriented.
 - I am also convinced that in our globalized world the regional dimension should take more and more importance. This is another weakness of UN-HABITAT as we find it almost impossible to raise funds at regional level. Our Global Programmes and Focus Areas should be more regionalized to be more meaningful. It is primarily at regional and sub-regional levels that policy makers should exchange best practices and policies. The Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF) is an interesting step in that direction.
 - From Global Programmes, our Regional and country teams are expecting knowledge and useful tools. We have to insist on the tools needed by national staff in all areas of the HABITAT Agenda, from GIS to pricing mechanisms, from community contracting to land use planning. To build capacities, through training or learning-by-doing, simple and effective tools are indispensable.

Under Panel 5 (Project and programme administration) the discussions were extremely animated. Many colleagues from PSD attended and were much welcome. Moving beyond our criticism of the increasingly cumbersome bureaucratic procedures.

We could make at least these clear proposals:

- Delegated decentralization of authority remains a must, and should be associated with full responsibility and accountability. Despite MTSIP declared intention to promote 'excellence in

management' progress in this field has been very slow. To compete with other agencies with field operations such as UNDP and UNOPS we should do what they have been doing for years: delegate much more authority to our regional offices and country teams and exert post-facto controls. This is indeed a cultural issue: we should replace the culture of suspicion with the culture of trust.

- We heard loud and clear that, in the UN, only financial rules are cast in stone. The other rules and procedures are agency specific, in our case designed by PSD or OED. Therefore, we could have a lot of flexibility for recruitments and procurement, project approval and reporting, for staff transfers and promotions, etc. We should improve our administrative processes through a proper inter-divisional review.
- Noting that UN-HABITAT is top-heavy and that PSD and UNON are overlapping and duplicating in many areas, an immediate option would be to abolish or radically downsize PSD. The functions of PSD could be redistributed to OED (programme and budget), UNON (recruitment, contracts and procurement, staff administration) and substantive divisions (PMOs). PSD staff could be re-deployed accordingly.

Under Panel 6 (Fund mobilization) we appreciated the continuous growth of RTCD budgets mobilized at country level but noted the geographical disparities, with a very successful ROAP contrasting with other less fortunate regions.

- Being a UN agency we have to focus on vulnerable counties and vulnerable people. Therefore, our priority countries fall into two categories:
 - i. The countries in crisis and in post disaster situations, and
 - ii. The Least Developed Countries.

For the former category, we should continue to mobilize donor funds and confirm our reputation as an efficient reconstruction and recovery agency. For the second category, fund raising is more difficult and rather ad-hoc. 'One UN' funds are an option to

be explored further, but Global Programmes (such as PSUP) are essential. For both types of countries, UN-HABITAT should create a Programme Development Facility to provide seed money for project preparation and evaluation.

- In middle-income and emerging economies, we have to be very selective and work essentially with their own funds. This applies in particular to East Asia, the Arab States, Latin America and Eastern Europe. To be attractive, we need to build our credibility and reputation as the UN policy body or think tank on sustainable urban development. This is a huge challenge for UN-HABITAT and its new ED.
- Finally we should keep our funding performances under permanent review and have a contingency plan or decline scenario updated in each and every biennium. Since 2003, I have proposed to the CPR and GC a reform in the way Regional Offices are funded in order to transform our ROs into teams of regional advisers and move away from the overhead-generation constraints. As for the 2008 global financial crisis, I think that this reform will only be undertaken when we have no other choice. For the time being we should reinforce our policy expertise and increase the visibility of UN-HABITAT at all levels. Fund mobilization cannot succeed without sufficient seniority, substantive knowledge and adequate negotiating skills. This is what we have learnt over the last 25 years.

To conclude, I wish to support a final recommendation related to the continuation of our stock-taking exercise. I am convinced that our three-day meeting was very useful and could be periodically replicated, probably under different formats and with more interactions with present staff members (the 'young generation'). I leave this idea with my successor and with UN-HABITAT Management and I shall be happy to join all of you very soon in the Human Library of UN-HABITAT.

Elaborating on Hampate Ba's famous saying, I would like to suggest that: "In Habitat, an active elder is an open human library!"

ANNEXES

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS



ALBERTO PARANHOS

Alberto Paranhos, the former Director of Planning of Curitiba, was the recognized 'Pillar of ROLAC' for his 18 years with UN-HABITAT.

I am an urban economist with a PhD in Urban Economy and Planning Development in Developing Economies. After 11 years serving as Director of the Planning Institute in the Municipality of Curitiba, Brazil, and seven years as an international consultant with the World Bank assisting local governments prepare and submit bankable urban investment projects, I was invited to join UN-HABITAT and UNDP during the celebration of the World Cities Forum in May, 1992, where I also served as the Executive Secretary reporting to both the International Union of Local Authorities (now UCLG) and United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) Secretariat.

I joined UN-HABITAT in September 1992 as a SHSO and was assigned to TCD Unit IV, later renamed ROLAC when it was moved to Rio de Janeiro. My previous experience working with local governments allowed me to strengthen UN-HABITAT's partnerships with municipalities and other forms of sub-national government. My position in Unit IV, as well as within ROLAC, included assisting sub-national governments improve their performance considering both the quality of the urban planning process and their measurable results.

I also assisted regional bodies such as the Assembly of Housing and Urbanism Ministries (MINURVI) (that inspired similar bodies in Africa and Asia), and the Federation of LAC Cities, Municipalities and Associations (FLACMA), now part of UCLG.

Although I hold Portuguese citizenship, I was born in Brazil. During my time with UN-HABITAT, I used my Brazilian citizenship. This led to a few disagreements with the national government as well as the suspension of a few entitlements. While the overall relationship with Brazilian authorities was friendly, there is an important lesson to be learned here. HSOs should not be fielded in their countries of origin. It must become clear to the country that HSOs are an agency asset for assisting country-members and not a country tool to promote national interests inside the agency.

Several LAC countries and cities are not poor, but rather poorly managed. Yet, they tend to seek UN advice for implementing their own projects and programmes, provided that this advice is free of charge. Many other LAC countries (and cities as well) are poor in both financial and human resources terms. They do need technical, yet politically neutral expertise, but cannot afford it. Finally, bilateral agencies are rearranging themselves around political ideologies and commercial bounds, making TC disappear as a tool to improve the quality of territorial and sectoral management leading to improved quality of life of

all inhabitants, especially the poorer and more vulnerable.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

As far as in-house activities are concerned, I feel that the purpose and mandate of Regional Offices were not clear enough for the agency. Perceptions varied from a representational body to a more complete fully entrusted Office supporting all partners within the region. With very few exceptions, Global Programmes did not understand the value and strategic importance in the expansion of Regional Offices.

Regarding the overall idea of 'Delivering as One' within the UN, it was clear that big agencies will always try to get the best portion of the cake and push away smaller agencies. In addition to being a funding agency and the political representation of the UN System as a whole, UNDP was also authorized to become an implementing agency in 1994. But, the system was severely unbalanced. Several initial exercises were more a partnership for 'Delivering with UNDP' rather than as originally imagined. In cases where UN Resident Coordinators had a real understanding of being representative of the whole system – like in Uruguay, which was unusual – the exercise had several positive points, although the weight of UNDP in comparison with other agencies is always difficult to re-balance. But, there are cases where UNDP staff fully recognizes UN-HABITAT as an important partner and adviser, like in Ecuador, Colombia and Cuba for example.

Finally, regarding the perception from countries and cities – at least within the LAC region – it was unusual to see a country member looking for TC. The most common feature was receiving requests for no-cost expertise or just some funding for the national or sub-national government to implement their own projects. I suspect that titling UN agencies as 'UN Programmes' like UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNEP – along with well known funding agencies like UNICEF, UNCDF, UNFPA – gives government officers the wrong perception that 'programmes' are similar to funds where financial resources can

be obtained. It is different from the UN agencies finishing with 'O' (as in Organisation) like UNESCO, ILO, FAO, ICAO, that have a different kind of internal structure and governing body. I have always been amazed that MINURVI country members, for instance – even though recognizing the importance of this mechanism to share experiences and ideas – never accepted the principle of funding its often inexpensive operations.

It is important to also mention that many LAC countries seem to see UN agencies as "interesting institutions" but not necessarily "desirable". This makes a lot of difference. Although there is respect for the agencies (when technical expertise is really undisputable), university teams and national governments tend to only want a partnership with UN agencies to get a formal approval to their ideas and projects. Moreover, countries seem to consider that this kind of 'clearing house' mandate cannot be charged for, since the governments already contribute to UN general funding. This attitude varies a lot across the region and the distribution of UN funds within the countries is also very uneven.

Additionally, the tentative efforts to raise funds from the private sector – although quite promising in Brazil – are not yet sustainable for the future, unless there is an immediate focus for placed on work generating political visibility and social-economic impact. For this reason, I still recommend exploring a medium or long-term partnership with UNICEF that enjoys private sector support for their mandate. UN-HABITAT would only need to include the territorial dimension to improve and increase this window of opportunity.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

- 'Be selective to be effective' - UN-HABITAT needs to further concentrate activities towards one yet important and impressive theme, such as 'urban sustainability' as its key mandate. While UN reform does not come and agencies continue to step over each other for funds, UN-HABITAT has to keep improving upon its expertise to become undisputable within the UN to raise funds for TC activities.

- Together with UNEP, UN-HABITAT has a clear territorial mandate regarding rural development and food production, which is evident within Target 11 and Goal 7. While other key agencies directly deal with improving or highlighting human being attributes (education, health, employability, sex, gender, etc), target 11 of goal 7 should inspire and guide UN-HABITAT priorities and programmes.
- Lateral movement: it is important for a TC agency to improve and extend the experience and technical expertise of its officers. Therefore, lateral movement, especially among RTCD and Global Programmes, including Regional Offices and HPMs, is a strategic tool and should be strengthened as much as possible.
- Representation within key funding agencies: as a TC agency, UN-HABITAT must maintain a continuous flow of external funding, since country-members still do not understand the importance and value of technical cooperation; they still prefer to get a loan, i.e. a debt, rather than to pay for TC. Therefore, while promoting the many advantages of TC (cost-efficiency, transfer of knowledge, etc), it may be strategic to strengthen or to create specific posts within (or near) the WB, the EU, Regional Banks and other key funding bodies. Those posts would be funded by a fraction of the funds raised with the intermediation of UN-HABITAT Foundation (through overheads).
- Strategic partnership with selected UN agencies: within the spirit of 'Delivering as One', UN-HABITAT needs to explore and strengthen operational partnership with funding agencies such as UNEP, UNICEF, UNFPA. Combining this partnership with joint funding of posts in regional offices will certainly increase and improve UN-HABITAT's presence and importance in the field.
- Finally, UN-HABITAT can also explore being the means through which direct TC among developing countries is carried out. The world is becoming more complex regarding groups of interest among countries, while both developing economies as well as some poor countries have indeed quite good practices and ideas to share and contribute to more developed countries. This should be more evident when related to cities and urban sustainable development. Local governments have difficulty keeping and improving direct external relations, while their global associations are becoming more and more political rather than cooperative. There is a window for opportunity there.



ALI SHABOU

Ali Shabou was Chief of our Arab Information for decades and familiar with the activities of all Middle East countries.

During my 30 years with UN-HABITAT I have performed the duties of Regional Information Officer and then Chief, Regional Information Office in Amman, Jordan. I was also the special representative of the Secretary-General of Habitat II for Arab States, based in Amman and, finally I assumed the duty as Chief, UN-HABITAT Office in Amman with my responsibilities covering, in addition to Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Gulf countries. I have been assigned twice to Nairobi with various functions. My last role in Nairobi before moving to Amman was Advisor to the Director, RTCD.

My duties in Amman focused mainly on advocating UN-HABITAT's global mandate reporting on our best examples of work at the national and local levels for the benefit of Arab States and promoting technical cooperation and operational projects with central and local governments, as well as fundraising for the operations of the Amman office and its advocacy and substantive activities.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

My experiences were in three sectors which are complementary and interdependent: advocacy, technical cooperation and fund-raising:

Advocacy: There is a need for UN-HABITAT to have a corporate image which mirrors the Programme to the world as

a single, integrated entity composed of whatever individual substantive divisions and subdivisions. This requires transparent complementarity between all divisions and subdivisions operating from within a central system, capable of smooth and clear flows of information to different recipients.

From a national perspective, one of the major advocacy assets in UN-HABITAT are its flagship reports and technical publications. These publications document current views and opinions on the different issues of the housing and urban development in various types of economy and societal structures. These publications are widely recognized by academic institutions and professionals, but poorly known in the central and local governments of many countries in the Arab region for lack of sufficient copies of these publications and/or because of sending them to the wrong departments/sections or even wrong individuals in the Government or municipality.

Flagship and technical publications, together with well-drafted promotional materials including easy-browsing and content-rich websites are crucial for the advocacy work of UN-HABITAT worldwide. Clearly, there is a deficiency in our advocacy work in the field and that is mostly because of weak motivation in the field and the type of material staff are receiving and using for the promotion of UN-HABITAT, but more important is the absence at the HQ of a binding strategy on advocacy which could translate the thoughts, trends and directions of the management of UN-HABITAT.

Such clear strategy on advocacy could form an excellent path towards increased and enhanced technical cooperation for both central and local governments.

Technical cooperation: I believe that technical cooperation remains the backbone of all our work. Governments at central and local levels need to show concrete results to their constituencies through implementation of housing and urban development projects. A common problem, however, is limited or lacking financial resources. Thus, cooperation must be based on innovative solutions and genuine partnerships with various actors of civil society. The outcome of such projects should be documented as good practice or as a test ground for a set of normative elements. Needless to say that some projects can also develop a number of normative elements.

To face this complexity in technical cooperation work, UN-HABITAT should adopt, at the HQ level, a set of easy-to-understand guidelines, clearly stating central or local governments requirements and avoiding bureaucratic and lengthy procedures. The guidelines should be clear on each step to be taken by the central or local government for cooperation to materialize, including funding rules and possibility of financial assistance from various donors.

Experience has also shown a coordination deficiency between field offices (Amman Office is an example), RTCD and UN-HABITAT's other substantive branches and sections. This becomes apparent when a request comes, for example, for specific training or for another specific action like, for instance, the establishment of an urban observatory. I have noted clear segregation between and within the divisions and branches which forced me to work mostly with one entity within UN-HABITAT and excluding the others. Once the funds are committed for such project, the financial part of the project is disputed between the concerned branch, the generating entity in the field (i.e. Amman office) and RTCD. This usually results in very weak technical support from headquarters which affects the quality of assistance.

Consequently, there should be a procedure simplifying the coordination process between RTCD and other UN-HABITAT divisions to enhance work, outcomes and visibility. I take the example of a request for establishing urban observatory and hope that the coordination procedure could ultimately suggest, to the requesting entity in the field, the

possibility of including an additional branch or section that can also help in urban policy reform.

Fund Raising: Most fundraising activities are tied to specific projects or activities. Obviously, each case needs special packaging for each potential donor. In the Amman Office, I have been able to raise funds for the operation of the office and to finance technical and other substantive activities. In one case a fairly large amount was raised for a potential project on municipal finance and management, but there was several months of internal conflict between branches and divisions over control of the allocated funds and confusion with the authorities in the country over the funding.

This and similar cases call for more coordination and establishment of a transparent mandate interpretation for funds utilization among divisions and subdivisions, if only to eliminate fighting over turf.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

- Formulate an advocacy strategy that caters for the need of all divisions and subdivisions, capable of reflecting the entire - one UN-HABITAT - to all partners. Such strategy should empower strategic partners to act as UN-HABITAT agents in the field.
- UN-HABITAT cooperation must be based on real innovative solutions and genuine partnership with all actors of civil society. The outcome of such cooperation should be documented as good practice or a test ground for a set of normative elements.
- Technical cooperation should adopt, at the HQ level, a set of easy to understand, step by step, guidelines, clearly stating the requirements for the central or local governments and avoiding to the maximum the bureaucratic and lengthy procedures
- Set a system for full coordination at the headquarters and field levels. The coordination should establish a transparent cross-border mandate to be use as a vehicle among and between the divisions and subdivisions in order to eliminate possible ambition for territorial protection.



ANTONIO YACHAN

Antonio Yachan was a senior HSO in ROAAS for many years and is still very active in Chile as an international consultant

Before taking early retirement in 2006, I worked for different UN agencies, including UNEP (consultant on environment and vernacular housing), UNICEF (fixed term on rural development and rural settlements), UNDP (consultant on capacity building and management), FAO (capacity building for regional planning and management), UNHCR (consultant on post conflict sustainable solutions) and UN-HABITAT.

With UN-HABITAT, in 1998 I joined the Oil for Food Programme in Iraq where I had the opportunity of managing a programme, which in its highest moment had over 500 professionals delivering more than ten million US dollars per month. In 2003 I joined ROAAS as a SHSO covering Lusophone and Anglophone countries.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

After 30 years of experience in Africa and the Middle East there are hundreds of experiences and valuable memories, However if I have to identify the key factors that contribute to improving the lives of the most vulnerable, three aspects can be highlighted: attitude, knowledge and management. These three can be considered as the three pillars of my personal human library.

Attitude: Days after retiring I was asked to identify the most significant aspect I

could contribute for success or failure of a programme. After analyzing different aspects, I concluded that good human relations with the immediate and the larger working team and good relations with partners and counterparts was the most significant aspect to take care of if the aim was the successful implementation of a programme or any endeavour in life. Conflicts and problems are unavoidable; the difference is the attitude towards finding a solution or enhancing the positive side.

Adequate communication, inclusive attitude and proper participation are key factors contributing to good relations between colleagues.

Knowledge: UN-HABITAT is a relatively new and small agency that is working to get human settlements issues on the global agenda. To be recognized, UN-HABITAT has to offer country specific services, responsive to needs.

It is difficult to believe that UN-HABITAT after 35 years of existence does not have an updated guideline for slum upgrading, something that could guide countries in defining a city strategy or assisting governments determining the necessary elements for urban and housing policies. It is absolutely clear that there are no human settlement recipes that can be applied in every context, but this is not an excuse for not been able to provide the basics to assisted countries.

For UN-HABITAT to gain a recognized position among governments and development partners, it has to become the centre of human settlement knowledge in the world and should produce what is not available, continue updating what is most relevant and set up adequate channels of communication.

During my working experience I noticed that the empirical knowledge and experiences of affected communities testified to a great deal of rationality concerning their immediate surroundings, needs and aspirations. That empirical knowledge and experience is highly familiar to the community, it is openly disseminated within their own boundaries and there is willingness to apply such knowledge to solve their problems. However, limitations were identified in bridging between each community's aims and potentialities, and the support provided by governments and external agencies.

A different attitude from governments and the development community is required recognizing that beneficiaries do have knowledge and experience and there is a need to articulate the academic knowledge with locally empirical knowledge and needs. Both, the academic and the empirical, should be source of knowledge for UN-HABITAT.

If UN-HABITAT does not take the lead in producing, systematizing and publicizing knowledge for housing, shelter, slum upgrading, urban governance, urban management, urban economy and other substantive areas, the agency will be excluded and will lose its potential to provide relevant technical assistance to the least developed countries. We must also ensure to maintain the knowledge we've acquired through our work; without keeping it current and updated, the agency risks losing its credibility.

Management: UN agencies in general and UN-HABITAT in particular, are advocating for delegation of authority and decentralization of decisions for better urban governance, housing and shelter programmes as well as for slum upgrading. This is the core message transmitted by our staff to country partners. However, during the past few years, there has been a continuous re-centralization of authority within UN-HABITAT and a similar trend exists with concentration - and duplication - of unnecessary administration that is leading to unbelievable delays in recruitment, approvals, payments etc. Without adequate management, there is no knowledge or attitude that can help in assisting those that needs a better built environment.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

It is obviously challenging to summarize the key recommendations in a few lines, but I would suggest the following: should be considered:

- Attitude and knowledge: Normative and operational divisions in the agency MUST set-up an improved system for working together, complementing each other and not competing as seems to be the pattern today. The production of knowledge (normative division) is necessary for improving the identification and implementation of projects (operational division). On the other hand, empirical information is one of the most valuable sources for producing and updating knowledge. Therefore, a common normative and operational programme is required with joint objectives and priorities.
- Knowledge: UN-HABITAT should become the world forum for producing, discussing and exchanging relevant knowledge for: (i) better urban management for large, medium and emerging cities; and (ii) slum upgrading and prevention. These two, interrelated topics should be the backbone of UN-HABITAT focus on knowledge.
- Some valuable experience exists in-house and could be enhanced initiating a series of exchanges; recognized experiences exist in partner countries and communities for what could be the basis for further exchange of knowledge and experiences. UN-HABITAT could also integrate external knowledge from academia, inclusive of universities and research centers in its work.
- Additionally, based on field priorities, new knowledge and updating existing information should be based on a priority list of topics defined in a participatory way.
- Management and rules: Management should be serving agency's objectives and timeframes and for this, the secretariat rules have to be followed. Whatever has been added to the secretariat rules should be eliminated and whatever is taking the longer path for implementing the secretariat

rules should be modified, using the shortest and simplest method. If there is something that should be studied in UN-HABITAT is how to process projects, approvals, recruitments, payments, agreements and all sort of managerial and administrative procedures in the shortest and most efficient way. UN-HABITAT has to rethink its management, truly responding to the field and the needs and challenges which are demanding and very competitive. Other UN agencies and development institutions have already found more efficient alternatives.

- Management and delegation/decentralization/accountability: The UN system structure can accommodate delegation and decentralization of authority. It is strongly recommended to decentralize technical, managerial and administrative decisions away from the centre.
- Even one day of delay in the field is attributed to UN-HABITAT inefficiency. The present management system is providing the best arguments to governments, alternative UN agencies and others for excluding UN-HABITAT from the development community. It is the Trojan Horse destroying the agency.
- Management and source for salaries: In UN-HABITAT, all staff is supposed to be equal. However, while staff in most divisions have their salaries paid from Regular or Foundation funds, the majority of staff in the Regional Technical Cooperation Division has to produce overheads to pay their salaries and for those who work in the RTCD offices. This fundamental difference has been taken for granted. I would strongly recommend that this practice is changed and the agency pays staff in the same proportion from the different sources of funding available without placing an unfair burden on selected staff.



DAVID KITHAKYE

David Kithakye was a senior HSO in ROAAS for many years and remains very active in Kenya.

UN-HABITAT's unique mandate is captured in the Habitat II themes: "Adequate shelter for all" and "Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanising world". The realization of these themes has defined the work of the Programme since 1996. The challenge of urbanization and its attendant impact on living conditions, experienced globally over the past 50 years, has increased the urgency of the realization of these aims

Since Istanbul UN-HABITAT been going through a series self examinations and reviews of the way it operates. The latest of these is the Medium Term-Strategic Institutional Plan sets out the new direction in addressing current issues – rapid urbanization, the increase of slums in spite of several years of upgrading programmes, lately also climate change and poverty in developing countries, especially in Africa and the countries in which I was involved. Headquarters' review involves the whole staff body and, subsequently, I was involved in all of these reviews at different levels with my contribution mainly on review of the relationships between HQ and the field.

Working in the Regional Technical Cooperation Division brings experience in several countries and different Medium Term-Strategic Institutional Plan situations as one interacts with government officials, communities and development partners. The effectiveness of any human settlements officer in the

field is closely related to the preparations at HQ through the direction and facilitation provided. This is what makes the relationships between the Regional Technical Cooperation Division and other UN-HABITAT divisions very important. I would like to describe what I believe has been a great learning experience for me at HQ and in the field.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

I have had the privilege of engaging with UN-HABITAT since its beginnings in 1978. As an architect-planner with the Nairobi City Council, I was privileged to contribute in the preparations for the Kenyan Government's National Report to the First United Nations Housing Conference. This engagement prepared me for work at the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) after 12 years with the World Bank especially concerning governments and communities, and contributions to the establishment and the running of the Municipal Development Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa – a capacity-building programme for local and authorities and urban development. I was therefore ready for the work in UN-HABITAT at both HQ and in the field.

Experience at headquarters included continuous interaction with professional peers expounding and implementing the Habitat Agenda. These interactions should engage all professionals and capture their individual and collective competencies. Where this aspect of headquarters activities was executed, it effectively produced lasting programmes for headquarters and the field.

Engagement in headquarters activities is important to develop the corporate identity of UN-HABITAT. Activities such as

budgeting should be transparent and participatory. Involvement of programme managers in budgeting will define programme linkages and synergetic relationships. This is also a learning experience in preparation for field work.

Over the past 20 years, highlights included the elaboration of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda which outlined the Campaigns for Urban Governance and for Secure Tenure. The Campaigns were meant to be the vehicle for the realization of the Habitat Agenda. The implementation of the campaigns brought staff members together, both at headquarters and in the field. The elaboration and the implementation of the Urban Management Programme (UMP) and its successor programmes – Sustainable Cities Programme and the Safer Cities Programme is an example of interdivisional engagement. The elaboration and implementation of the Cities Alliance involved all divisions of UN-Habitat, the World Bank and other UN agencies.

Headquarters experience should essentially prepare one for work in the regions, individual countries and communities. Effective work in the field requires a unique combination of understanding headquarters and the realities in the field.

How could I communicate at the country level and to institutions and communities in a manner that would endear them to the critical issues of the Habitat Agenda and at the end of it all leave them empowered to carry on with development of good housing policy, sound infrastructure development and delivery adequate housing for all?

Countries, institutions and the communities all have their own expectations that need to be responded to. My experience is that effective collaboration can only develop from trust between the local level institutions and RTCD. What was expected of me? How did I measure up to the expectations? I have asked myself these questions all the time when I engaged with stakeholders and external support agencies. This was necessary from the initial stages of programme formulation to the completion of the programme. RTCD programmes and approaches should be guided not only by technological solutions

but also by acceptance of the recipient as equal partner.

What about interaction with other external support agencies? Like UN-HABITAT, each one of them has its own mandate and approach to realize the same aims. The South African People's Housing Programme, for instance, which was funded by the Government of South Africa, the Norwegian Government and USAID required rationalising the mandates and requirements of the actors. Learning to respect the governmental statutory position was also important in Nigeria in developing the expansion of the Sustainable Cities Programme and in mobilising local funds for the Dar es Salaam Action Plan for upgrading unplanned and unserved settlements.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Key recommendations I would make to UN-HABITAT colleagues for the future:

- The work of UN-HABITAT should be guided by professionalism at the highest level of integrity and respect. The relationships between various levels – executive directorate, management, seniors and the others are critical in this regard.
- An arrangement should be found to ensure that staff is encouraged and their capacity enhanced to improve delivery. The PAS system should be reviewed to make it less cumbersome and more relevant.
- Professional competence can only be achieved through professional honesty and respect. There should be due respect between divisions and professionals. No single division can deliver UN-HABITAT's mandate on its own.
- Budgets should be tied to activities and not to divisions or branches. The success of a programme should be measured on how well it delivered its responsibility through the involvement of all divisions and as many branches as possible.
- Field operations should be guided by the political and other reality of the country and partners. Humble acceptance that some institutions out

there are better managed than the Agency is necessary so as to enable them to learn.

- All countries deserve to be reached and supported in their efforts to realise the Habitat Agenda. How will the Agency rise to the occasion without discrimination?
- Finally, UN-HABITAT should carefully consider a return to its core business – “Adequate shelter

for all” and Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanising world” as the late Hassan Fathy observed *“a house is the visible symbol of a family’s identity, the most important material possession a man can ever have.”*



DISA WEERAPANA

Disa Weerapana joined Habitat in 1989. He negotiated the opening of ROAP with Toshi Noda and Daniel Biau and was Deputy Director of the Fukuoka Office until 2001.

I joined the then UNCHS in 1989 and held increasingly responsible positions in the Technical Cooperation Division of UNCHS (Habitat) until my retirement in 2001. My first assignment with UN-HABITAT was Coordinator of the Global Support Programme for Shelter, a programme under the Global Strategy for Shelter (GSS) that supported the formulation of enabling shelter strategies in six countries. I was the first Coordinator of the World Bank/UNCHS Joint Programme on Housing and Urban Indicators.

In 1990, I joined the Asia and Pacific Unit of TCD and later became its Acting Coordinator. With the establishment of regional offices in Latin America/Caribbean and Asia/Pacific in 1996, I moved to the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific as its Deputy Director and retired from service in 2001. After my retirement, I also had a brief spell as the first UN-HABITAT Programme Manager in Sri Lanka during a period of uneasy peace between GOSL and the LTTE, and when a tsunami devastated a large section of the residential belt in Sri Lanka.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

During my career as an HSA, I worked with UNDP in different situations. First, as a Sri Lankan senior civil servant in charge of donor negotiations and managing

donor funded projects. Next, as a staff member of UN-HABITAT working from its HQ, the Regional Office, and a UNDP Country Office in the capacity of a consultant.

From these stations, I experienced how the mandate of the UNDP came to be interpreted and reinterpreted over the years due to a constantly changing donor environment, and demands for reform and change, both internal and external, that came with it. Since UNDP was the lead UN agency in Sri Lanka, these changes affected the other UN agencies present. Small technical agencies, such as UN-HABITAT, depended on UNDP for resources and for country representation and were the most affected and under pressure to adapt and change, while keeping the best interests of UN-HABITAT in mind. It was a difficult task because decisions were mostly unilateral, and HQ had little guidance to offer.

Interestingly, the UNDP I saw as a public servant in Sri Lanka in the 1980s was the closest thing to a 'One UN' I have ever seen. We only had the UNDP Country Office to deal with. The UNDP had no pretense of technical competence to manage everything in development, and technical assistance requests from the government were met through the relevant technical agency. More often than not, UNDP even funded the initiative, either partially or fully. The Government negotiated with UNDP which used its discretion in determining priorities and negotiations with the relevant technical agencies. Under this arrangement, large, multi-year technical cooperation projects were implemented in Sri Lanka as UN projects.

When I returned to the country office 15 years later the UN had changed.

There were many UNs - each agency in direct communication with the Government through one or multiple counterpart Ministry/Ministries. In the absence of UNDP funds, there was competition for a share of the available resources. UNDP had lost its leadership in the country and the UN. It was no longer the office of first call by the government.

I have seen UNDP in two extremes. First as a friend and financier, when we could walk into a resident representative's office by appointment, and following a short sales talk around a good idea, walk out with a pledge of half a million dollars. Most country offices did not understand our 'gobbledygook', enabling approach, affordable standards, people-centered development, inclusiveness etc in what they thought was a simple task of producing a house, and asked us very few questions. From these comfortable days came the rough times, such as national execution when we were given just 10 per cent of the budget, but had to bear the full share of the blame for any shortfall. On top of that we had to take the blame from our own bosses for the drastic drop of the overheads we brought home. Next, came a time when UNDP funding dried up and we had to negotiate with donors from a distance and share them with UNDP. And more recently, when UNDP billed us for every little task we asked them.

UNDP competes with all technical agencies in fields like shelter, urban development, humanitarian assistance, livelihoods, disaster mitigation, gender, environment, just about everything, for a bigger share of the limited development resources. Agencies such as UN-HABITAT, without country presence to engage in protracted negotiations with donors, generally lose out in the competition, even in resource-abundant situations such as post-conflict reconstruction and tsunami. Not only do they insist on passing through arrangements with UNDP in a collaboration with any another UN agency, they also elbow out other agencies by claiming in house competencies and expertise to deliver components that legitimately belong to other agencies.

The more serious concern however was not the diluted focus of the UNDP through claims of in

embedded expertise. The concern was that whereas the technical agencies had articulated development philosophies underpinning their interventions, the UNDP had none. As a result, as we observed during post tsunami reconstruction, for instance, contractor-built housing was considered efficient; community participation a waste of time; incremental housing unsightly; and community-led savings and credit a source of corruption - a reversal of principles we had worked for years to promote.

In this scenario, the concept of 'One UN' seeks to promote coherence and effectiveness across various agencies. 'One Leader, One Programme, One Budget and where appropriate, One Office' was a good idea to bring the UN back together to work as a team. How does it work in actual practice? Of its four components, 'One Office' needs time in the non-pilot countries because of logistics. System-wide planning such as CCA and UNDAF seem to work with wide participation and active consultations with the Government. However, bringing the agencies together to agree on a common set of priorities involves time. The planning process is expensive and time consuming consultations, conferences, reviews and retreats. The resources most agencies can pledge over the medium term are largely indicative and unpredictable, and resource gaps during implementation are common.

Although, UNDAF draws its priorities from the national planning frameworks, in reality it is a parallel planning process led by UN agencies. The UNDAF interventions are implemented outside the government mainstream projects and programmes.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Can UN-HABITAT influence the process? Habitat was missing out by not participating in the UNDAF process. However, without country representation, it was difficult.

- With the appointment of HPMs, UN-HABITAT has made significant strides in participating in UNDAF as a member of the UNCT. However we are still behind in mainstreaming the Habitat Agenda in the UNDAF framework. Our inherent weakness

of unpredictable resources to back the ideas is a key factor. The big agencies able to bring their own resources exert a greater influence on the final selection of priorities. Smaller agencies play a subdued role. In most countries housing is still considered a welfare item rather than a key sector of the economy, and marginality of the Ministry of Housing complicates mobilizing government support.

- HPM performance has received positive reviews and their position should be strengthened in UNCT deliberations and to productively engage in the UNDAF process. There is still the issue of the acceptance of HPMs as full members of the UNCT and even when accepted, the eradication of status difference. In large programme countries where the HPM carries responsibilities beyond his/her capacity, support with more staff and budgetary resources is required.
- UN-HABITAT should explore the creation of a core funding for initiating operational activities in countries where potentials exist for funds leveraging. Bringing core funds gives any agency an opportunity to be first in the field. Experience has shown, being on the ground helps to attract donor attention and gets a voice in the negotiations for more funds.
- We should consider what would be a good indicator to measure the impact of our collective efforts? Could it be Millennium Development Goals: Goal 7, target 11?
- What have we achieved in the countries where we have our best operational presence?
- How well have we inserted the right to housing, right to tenure, inclusive cities, and people centered development?
- Are the normative and operational arms of the UN-HABITAT sufficiently linked?
- Can UN-HABITAT claim the progress other agencies have achieved on MDG targets within their mandates?
- How many PRSPs have a chapter on slums? How many countries have a performance target on Goal 7, Target 11 in their national MDG Strategies?



DOUDOU MBYE

Doudou Mbye has worked as a CTA in several reconstruction projects since 1995.

Prior to joining UN Habitat on January 2, 1995 I had been with 2 (two) World Bank financed urban development and management projects and was on the verge of launching the 'public works and employment creation programme' with the Bank when the offer came from UN Habitat RTCD to fill the position of Chief Technical Adviser of a US\$ 1 million project titled 'Rehabilitation de la ville de Kigali'. This project was jointly formulated by UN Habitat & UNDP Kigali to support the recovery process in Rwanda following the genocide that killed almost 800,000 tutsis and moderate hutus. The project entailed a) identification of suitable sites for the resettlement of returnees, b) rehabilitation of several symbolic government buildings, c) procurement of vehicles, office furniture and equipment for key ministries. Within 6 months after launching the project and demonstrating visible results on the ground, UNDP Kigali invited UN Habitat to take over a US\$ 14 million project from another sister UN agency to rehabilitate government buildings at the district level that were damaged during the war, namely, offices and residences for local authorities.

A couple of years after launching the project and setting up the project implementation unit in Kigali and kick starting all the project components I was reassigned to Djibouti to oversee the completion and handing over of the Balbala Social Housing project and related assets to the central government.

On March 2000, I joined UNOPS as a Senior Portfolio Manager at its sub regional office in Abidjan. I handled a portfolio of almost US\$ 47 million in several Anglophone West African countries. In 2001, I was promoted to the position of Deputy Division Chief and the following year as the Chief of the Abidjan Office. With the civil unrest of September 2002 in Cote d'Ivoire, UNOPS was obliged to relocate its offices to Dakar, Senegal at the end of May 2003. The relocation was undertaken with minimal disruption to the office activities by virtue of a well planned and managed relocation exercise.

Between 2004 and 2005 UNOPS underwent a major restructuring that upgraded the UNOPS Dakar Office into a Regional Office for West & Central Africa.

Prior to becoming a Regional Director I was handling a portfolio of projects that were mainly infrastructure type of projects with heavy procurement of good and services components. The clientele I served included the African Development Bank, UNDP, UNCDF and several other UN agencies.

After leaving Djibouti and prior to joining UNOPS I had the opportunity of undertaking a couple of consultancies, namely, a) Identification and formulation of an urban project in DR Congo for UN Habitat and b) mid-term evaluation of 'small markets infrastructure project' jointly implemented by FAO and UNOPS for a US consulting firm.

September 2006 I moved over to Indonesia to bail out UNOPS after a dismal performance in delivering the UNICEF financed post-tsunami schools and health center reconstruction programme. I delivered the programme along with additional health centers and opened the new UNOPS Indonesia Office prior to

returning home to UN Habitat – Iraq Programme to manage the Iraq Programme.

B. HUMAN INTERACTIONS AND LIVING MEMORIES

UN Habitat has a mandate – delivering sustainable shelter solutions – an all embracing and encompassing one. Shelter solutions have widely been subject to a lesser degree of importance by countries because in as much as national governments make allocation for sectors like education, health etc. while placing shelter issues at a lower level of importance. Donors too have shown total unwillingness to finance housing construction in the third world because it is very often regarded as a public good which would in turn increase aid dependency on the side of beneficiaries.

I often ask myself the question - Why is UN Habitat unable to mobilize resources like the UNICEFs, UNHCRs, FAOs etc.? Is UN Habitat not strategic enough in its quest for funding given the positive impact investments on housing would have on an economy. Housing is equally an economic good and should also be seen as having a 'multiplier' effect on housing whose effects would be felt by other sectors of the economy. These are salient questions that puzzle those that value the work of UN Habitat particularly as it pertains to the most needy of societies.

Apart from the administrative hoops field offices have to jump in getting contracts approved, clearing and signing MoUs, it is very gratifying to note that UN Habitat is increasingly thriving to improve its knowledge base on shelter solutions and urban planning. Ultimately this body of knowledge is extended to ENOF (Enhanced Normative & Operational Framework) countries benefitting from UN Habitat technical cooperation programmes.

At the UN Country Team (UNCT) level, UN Habitat ought to be more assertive in terms of pursuing its mandate as opposed to the 'small agency' mentality that tends to keep UN Habitat away from country teams. The mindset that UN Habitat is a 'small agency' does not bode well for teams in the field because it places UN Habitat at a disadvantage. The agency

would then be relegated to a back seat tantamounting to missed opportunities.

Another serious issue that is worth remedying for the operational aspects of UN Habitat is the lack of empowerment to the national staff. There is 'centralized control' at HQ to the extent that teams in the field are somewhat reluctant to take on new business given the anticipated delays in launching and implementing projects.

Most of the issues highlighted above could easily be resolved if the will to take hard decisions exists at the level of UN Habitat senior management otherwise the 'cash cows' of UN Habitat might as well belong to other agencies that have the right tools to deliver programmes in the field.

C. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

The empowerment of offices away from HQ in terms of programme delivery ought to be treated with the utmost urgency possible to increase efficiencies in the field. Delegations of Authority should be commensurate with the resources being managed as well as the authority relative to the seniority of the officials, for example, Regional Directors and Divisional Directors.

A well thought out resource mobilization strategy based on adequate business development intelligence is a sine qua non to the acquisition of new or repeat business. UN Habitat ought to understand and appreciate donor priorities in a world wherein aid is dwindling. With all the regional offices searching for funds being knowledgeable on donor priorities for funding is a head start. To maintain a positive and gainful relationship with donors it is equally important to have a 'client relations manager' who serves as the focal point for donors. The objective is to ensure that there is enough information built on this donor that is readily available to colleagues in all parts of the world to facilitate interaction with such donors. It is also important that donors do not perceive UN Habitat divisions to be competing against one another for the same resources.



EMIEL WEGELIN

Emiel Wegelin had a long and successful career with UN-HABITAT as urban management programme co-ordinator and strategy and policy adviser.

I have worked for Technical Cooperation Division on and off for the past 25 years in both long-term and short-term assignments. The most significant were:

1985-1988: CTA of the UNCHS/UNDP/IBRD-supported technical assistance project for the Integrated Urban Infrastructure Development Programme (IUIDP) in Indonesia. IUIDP aimed to integrate the provision of urban infrastructure physically, financially and institutionally, and to decentralize responsibility for initiation and formulation of projects and programmes from central to local government.

1993-1996: Programme Coordinator, Urban Management Programme (UMP) Phase 2. The UMP was a long term global technical assistance programme to strengthen the contribution that urban areas in developing countries make toward human development. UMP Phase 2 (1992-1996) translated the results of Phase 1 into operational support for policy action planning in programming at national, provincial and city levels. It thematically covered: municipal finance and administration; urban infrastructure management; urban land management; urban environmental management; and urban poverty alleviation.

2005: Aceh Settlements Support Programme (ASSP) Strategy and

Policy Adviser, Indonesia, for UN-HABITAT - intermittent, June-October. The assignment involved policy and strategy advisory support to ASSP (a UN-HABITAT/UNDP support programme to the Government of Indonesia (GoI)'s Aceh rehabilitation and reconstruction strategy), focusing on getting ASSP off the ground and developing its strategy in the local government areas to be covered by ASSP and its partner programmes and agencies, adding support to the reconstruction of Tsunami affected areas.

2005-2006: Team leader, Mid-Term Review of the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP)/Local Agenda 21 (LA21), for UN-HABITAT and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, intermittent, October 2005 – February 2006. The SCP/LA21 programmes were both global support programmes for urban environmental management supported by a range of multi- and bilateral External Support Agencies. The Mid Term Review comprised a forward-looking assessment of SCP/LA21 programme implementation during 2003-2005, with the objective of providing programme direction for the next phase 2006-2008.

2006: Evaluation of UN-HABITAT Programme Managers (HPMs) performance and impact of the HPM system in 35 countries focusing on: a) integrating shelter and urban poverty issues into the UNDAFs and national poverty reduction strategies; b) promoting UN-HABITAT's global and normative mandates; c) supporting operational activities of UN-HABITAT at the national and local levels, while also including an assessment of the administrative and financial arrangements and relationships that condition the HPMs work.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

My two long-term assignments were profoundly formative in many ways:

- Highlighting the imperative for an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach in urban management, working with colleagues from different walks of life, and recognizing one another's roles.
- Recognizing the need for decentralization, both in central-local government relationships and in the management of a complex, geographically spread-out technical cooperation programme and acting on that within the limitations of the programmes' settings.
- A somewhat more negative experience relates to the two programmes both being embedded in a rigid UN procedural system not designed to handle such complex programmes. In both cases internal decentralization with decentralized budget responsibility should have been taken much further, but the procedures at the time did not allow for that. Similarly, in both programmes there was need to balance institutional rivalry between implementing agencies and need to continuously fund-raise and deal with different donor priorities which took a disproportionate amount of time and effort.
- The design and implementation of the Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA), an Asia-wide regional initiative established in 2007 by the Asian Development Bank and the Government of Germany, with additional support of the governments of Sweden, Spain and Austria), which I co-manage as GIZ Programme Coordinator together with my ADB counterpart, has drawn on the organizational design (governance framework) and operational procedures developed in the UMP.
- Despite some of the above criticism, I strongly feel that UN-HABITAT is well-placed to design and implement programmes such as IUIDP and UMP through RTCD. Its staff reflects the multi-disciplinary nature of co-operation activities, although this could be given more emphasis.
- The subsequent three short-term assignments

positively built on the experiences gained in IUIDP and UMP and further articulated UN-HABITAT's potential to respond in an integrated and interdisciplinary manner to urban management and development challenges.

Clearly, the above would not have been possible if there had not been the build-up of teams of colleagues working towards common objectives and in a cooperative spirit. TCD was instrumental in enabling that within its institutional and bureaucratic limitations.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

UN-HABITAT is the only UN agency with the mandate of addressing urban management challenges. Given the complexities, the enormity and the growing significance of such challenges in a rapidly urbanizing world, it is imperative that the mandate is maintained and developed further.

Successful national and global programmes such as IUIDP and UMP suggest that a judicious mixture of normative and operational content is vital in the development of new international support programmes in urban development, while the elements of cross-learning and capacity-building are essential to sustain success.

Financial and institutional sustainability must be addressed head-on in the design stage of new support programmes. This is perhaps the most difficult challenge UN-HABITAT must be prepared to work on in coalition with a range of hard-core stakeholders, who should be identified on the basis of their ability and willingness to sustainably co-finance the programme through established or new legal institutional (national and international) entities. UN-HABITAT needs to develop an internal capacity to deal with such issues.

Fund-raising from a broader range of international sources will always be a complex and time-consuming exercise. This is most effectively done on the basis of an appealing programme or product concept. UN-HABITAT must be ready to invest more in the human resources required to develop such concepts, as this will be the key to institutional survival in a competitive world.



ERIC VERSCHUUR

Eric Verschuur's had a long career with UN-HABITAT, with posts in Nairobi and Rio de Janeiro. He works currently at UNEP.

I have worked for UN-HABITAT for the past 20 years in various capacities, as follows:

(1991-96) RTCD, PMO Latin America and Caribbean Region (Unit IV), Nairobi.

(1996-1997) RTCD, PMO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC), Rio de Janeiro.

(1997-2006) RTCD, PMO Unit I & II merged into Regional Office for Africa and the Arab States (ROAAS), Nairobi.

(2006-2008) RTCD, Senior PMO, RTCD/ROAAS, Nairobi.

(2008-2009) Global Division, Senior PMO GD, Nairobi.

(2009-present) UNEP, Chief, Project Management and Administration Unit, Paris.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

By far the most positive memory from my UN-HABITAT years was the incredibly positive and stimulating environment that existed within the Technical Cooperation Division. This atmosphere - at all levels - of trust, of mutual support, of respect, of solidarity and of friendship was the driving force behind the growth and the success of the division. I used to think that such an atmosphere was normal, but now realize that it is an exception and that we were privileged to have been part of the experience over the years.

This solidarity and trust in the division was crucial as often it did not exist at other levels, where RTCD was considered a 'rogue', irresponsible entity that was taking risks and disregarding all UN rules and regulations. But the facts tell the real story and have demonstrated that the implementation of the project portfolio over the past two decades - involving well over one billion US dollars - has never had any serious irregularity.

The division has indeed always been willing to take calculated risks in order to develop its portfolio, very often in difficult post-conflict/disaster environments, and ensure its sustainability and growth. It should not be forgotten that the division has always been expected to generate the vast majority of its resources, including the salaries of core staff.

The real growth of the division probably started in the mid-90s when the decision was taken to decentralize the technical cooperation division and create regional offices in their respective regions. The process started with the Rio office, responsible for Latin America and the Caribbean, where we not only had to face the physical relocation but also design and negotiate a whole new decentralized administrative structure with an appropriate delegated authority. ROLAC was soon followed by ROAP in Fukuoka and by ROAAS in Nairobi. Those early years were complicated and required a creative approach as the offices had to establish themselves in their regions, develop a project portfolio and face increasing competition from UNDP and UN-OPS. Luckily - thanks to the vision of Jorge Gavidia - the division was able to 'get a foot in the door' of the Iraqi Oil for Food programme, starting from an initial USD six million project to close to USD 800 million, generating

sufficient resources for a number of years. This breathing space gave the division and regions the opportunity to establish themselves and to ensure sustainability through, among other things, the implementation of large projects in a number of post-conflict/disaster countries such as Afghanistan, the Tsunami countries, Rwanda and Somalia.

The division has been sustainable for all these years, despite many difficulties. But questions might be asked. Could we have done better? Have we missed opportunities? Could we have grown more? Could we have been less dependent on post-conflict/disaster emphasis? Do we have the right tools to allow competition with other agencies? Are we able to set up rapidly new operations and are we able to convince our partners that we have the capacity to implement?

The answer is 'yes' to some of these questions, 'no' to others.

UN-HABITAT has, due to its dual, normative and operational, mandate a unique selling point that should have been exploited much more than it has been. This is a clear advantage compared to competitors such as UNDP and UN-OPS. But is UN-HABITAT using this advantage to its full potential? Is Habitat entering or developing new activities at country level with its full normative and operational brainpower, with its full financial capacity? After all, convincing partners or the 'One UN' to allocate resources to our sector is a lot easier when you are able to bring your own 'dowry'. Two years ago, I'm afraid the response to these questions would have been in the negative, but perhaps the MTSIP has been able to support this much needed integrated approach.

Does Habitat have the right decentralized tools, the right institutional set-up to allow rapid development and implementation of large scale projects and programmes? The answer seems again to be 'no' as a recent example demonstrates that only the technical assistance component of a large programme is being entrusted to Habitat while the bulk of the 'physical' implementation (the part where we should be earning our bread and butter)

is being implemented by UNDP and/or UN-OPS. Yes, UNDP has the country presence and very often the RC has the administrative set-up at country level to quickly initiate new activities, has the coordination role and UNOPS has the tools and a much stronger marketing. But Habitat has the technical know-how and the proven experience in some parts of the world that unfortunately is not yet replicable.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Assuming UN-HABITAT wants to expand its presence and portfolio at country level and assuming it also wants to be able to play a major role in post-conflict/disaster operations, it would seem crucial to develop its capacity in the following areas that have all been mentioned during the MTSIP process but have not yet necessarily been implemented. What does it miss? What should it have?

- Let's start with trust and accountability. Controls are obviously required in any organization but not to the extent that the control mechanisms become a bottleneck for the development and implementation of programmes. This is currently still the case in UN-HABITAT and a long road is required to decentralize/delegate to the right operational level.
- Habitat misses the capacity to demonstrate its normative edge at country level whenever an opportunity arises. Staff from other divisions (or even from other regions) are rarely able to be redeployed rapidly (language skills, time constraints, workload, willingness to go to difficult environments, internal politics)
- Habitat does not (or not sufficiently) pool its resources to develop a joint programme at country level.
- Habitat has rarely been able to invest seed capital in new (emergency) operations
- Willingness to take a certain level of risk (ensuring year contracts for staff without necessarily having concluded all agreements with potential donors) and to provide bridging funds

- A dedicated technical and administrative support unit (with immediate access to and support from the highest level of the organization)
- has to be established/reinforced for start-up of emergency operations and eventually, if required, for continuous support throughout the implementation of the project/programme. This should include a pool of experts and PMO's able to move at short notice (recruit on temporary appointments, advertise generic JO as DPKO), appropriate immediate access to CITRIX, immediate delegation of authority for procurement , local recruitments, signature of cooperation agreements, opening of local imprest account, etc.
- Authorizing 'special' procurement rules to match those of competitors in emergency operations, ensuring preferential treatment at UNON whenever required (as was done during Oil for Food)

Moving along these lines should hopefully facilitate the future development and implementation of country level activities and ensure the future growth of UN-HABITAT to meet the challenges of an increasingly urbanizing and vulnerable world.



FAROUK TEBBAL

Farouk Tebbal, former cabinet Minister in Algeria, joined UN-HABITAT in 2000 working mainly in the area of housing policy and slum upgrading.

I worked for UN-HABITAT for nearly eight years. Five of these were spent as Chief of the Shelter Branch and the rest on secondment to the Cities Alliance in Washington, D.C. where I coordinated the activities of the Slum Upgrading section. I joined the UN system after a long career as a civil servant in my country, Algeria, working in construction regulations and dealing with reforms to urban and land legislation complying with the changing political system from a centrally-planned to a market-oriented economy, including implementation of large scale social housing programmes for the lower-income segment of population. Therefore, I joined UN-HABITAT with practical first-hand experience.

As chief of Shelter Branch, I was in charge of coordinating three sections (Water and Sanitation, Housing Policy, Land and Tenure), as well as managing the global campaign for Secure Tenure (GCST). However important changes were decided by management that significantly affected the capacity of the branch. Staff and scope of work was sharply reduced, and the branch structure disturbed especially as the WS section was removed to become an autonomous entity, one that completely stopped its contacts with the Shelter branch at a time when its support to the campaign was needed most. Along with the supervision of the Land and Tenure section, that developed with substantial

funding, and the Housing Policy section, that lacked financial resources, I devoted a large amount of time to the preparation and launch of the GCST in about 15 countries, using analytical resources from the two sections as well as from external resources. The campaign was funded mostly by the Belgian government and entailed:

- discussing with regional offices opportunities of campaign activities and identifying recipient countries for the campaign.
- assessing through regional offices country problems and issues related to secure tenure and identification of potential policy reforms and stakeholders involved in the process.
- using the launch of the campaign as a highly visible event to ensure that governments are officially committed to accept and implement policy reforms and action plans.

Launches took place in several countries in Asia (Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia), Africa (South Africa, Namibia, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Uganda) and Latin America (Brazil, Jamaica, Cuba, Mexico). It should be noted that the GCST worked hand in hand, from an early stage, with Global Urban Governance Campaign. This dual approach proved to be very relevant given the complementary nature of the two campaigns. I was also involved in the Eastern and Southern Africa slum upgrading initiative.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

As mentioned, managing the Branch and the GCST, entailed a number of interactions within and outside the Branch.

Within the Branch, management of a relatively small team did not entail micro management and support was essentially of an advisory and coordination nature to streamline the activities of the sections within the GCST:

- The Housing Policy contributed essentially to the Housing Rights Programme in close coordination with the UN system, but had only indirect impact on the GCST, given the lack of human and financial resources.
- The Land and Tenure section had few staff but was comfortably funded, essentially by the Swedish government. However, as much as the input of this section was needed for the campaign, and given that the fund was earmarked, the section was largely focused on setting up of the Global Land Tool Network, expected to give UN-HABITAT high visibility.

Outside the Branch, interactions took place with most of the Global Division programmes as well as Regional offices under DRTC, including:

- The Governance Campaign, given its link to the GCST. Preparation and launch of the two campaigns were conducted jointly. GCST contributed some financial resources to the Governance Campaign in a few countries. While demonstrating a coordinated UN-HABITAT approach at country level, the two campaigns failed to develop joint normative tools, probably because of the lack of finance at a time when strong practice and experience was developed. Indeed, by the end of 2005, funding for the two campaigns came to an end and, unfortunately, at a time when the campaigns started to show results at national and global level (e.g. the setting up of a global entity, the Advisory Group against Forced Evictions). This situation prompted the merging of the two campaigns in the Global Campaign for Sustainable Urbanisation, as an outcome of the MTISP process.
- The regional offices, through the GCST, applied knowledge of the local situation and strong networks developed at national level by DRTC staff, reinforcing the link between the operational

and analytical roles of the Campaigns' managers. As an example, the very successful campaign in the Philippines was the result of the Asia office senior task officer, the local representative (who eventually became HPM and then full staff) and the two campaign managers in the headquarters and their colleagues. This scenario was not always as successful in all countries as the "sensitivity" to the campaigns was not equally shared in house. Another striking example is the impact that the Branch and RTCD achieved in Morocco where the Campaigns' launch triggered a wide range of policy reforms and programmes in line with the advocacy principles of UN-HABITAT.

- Several other units such as:

The Global Urban Observatory, essentially on issues related to the MDGs (measuring progress, defining objectives, etc.). Gender unit (including gender in the advocacy and normative activity of GCST), the Training and Capacity Building Unit for the preparation of tools related to the campaign. Slum Upgrading Fund, and Youth. I also joined the Cities Alliance in September 2006.

The coordination efforts have not always been up to our expectations as the struggle for funding diverted the attention of senior staff. The following describes an example of an embarrassing situation related to this issue of coordination:

A presentation of activities made by senior staff and heads of programmes was made to major donor delegation (Dutch). Almost none of the presenters demonstrated any coordination/interrelation with other units or programmes. Needless to say that this fact did not go unnoticed to the delegation which made a clear and loud comment about this 'shortcoming'.

It is important to also note that coordination of activities by division was poor, entailing micro-management by top management, often disrupting activities.

Some rewarding situations need to be recalled such as working with community representatives, either in Nairobi (Mungano wanavijiji, Shelter Forum) or in

other countries, and at regional and international level (SDI).

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

From my experience within the UN system, I suggest the following:

- Recruitment of staff should take into account the need to have a good mix of 'field people' You get more credibility when asking country or city officials to exert accountability, transparency, if they know that you also have been exposed to their situation.
- Conversely, junior staff should have the opportunity to work in the field with partner agencies.
- Funding has always been the achilles' heel of the Programme as earmarked funds depend on the will and whim of the donors. In 2005, the GCST explored the option of sharing part of the expected Belgian fund with the LA21 programme before the new government decided to fund only environment related activities and all the funds were reversed to the LA 21 programme without a chance to share it with GCST! Therefore UN-HABITAT should have some latitude in the use and allocation of soft earmarked funds.
- To ensure that the scarce human and financial resources are used efficiently, UN-HABITAT should consider having two types of cooperation at country level.
- A few well targeted countries where UN-HABITAT will give intensive and long term support (first desk countries).
- And countries (desk two) that may benefit from advisory support and guidance until they demonstrate a will to reform their policies, making them eligible for first desk status.



HEINZ KULL

Heinz Kull began in Myanmar and Haiti. He became Chief of the Africa Unit and co-leader of the Disaster Management Unit in 1994. Then he was the first Director of PSD. He lives in Berlin.

I am a civil engineer and urban planner, educated in Germany, but influenced by an early and longer term working experience in French consulting companies in Paris. It was there that I first established working contact with the then so-called developing world, in particular Africa and Asia.

After an assignment with the “Fonds Européen de Développement” concerning infrastructure development in Côte d’Ivoire, I joined the Berlin Technical University as a lecturer in the field of “Planning and Building in Developing Countries”.

During 1981, I undertook my first advisory mission with UN-HABITAT to Madagascar: Tananarivo Development Strategy.

Two UN-HABITAT assignments as Chief Technical Advisor, in Myanmar and Haiti respectively, followed, dealing with master plan studies in Yangon, Myanmar, and secondary cities development in Haiti.

In 1989, I joined UN-HABITAT Headquarters Nairobi, where I successively served as Human Settlements Advisor, Coordinator of the Francophone Africa, Arab States and Europe Unit, and parallel to that I was the Coordinator of the newly created Disaster Management Unit. Next, I became Head of the Planning and Coordination Office and, finally, Director

of the Programme Support Division.

In summary, I have served UN-HABITAT at various functions over a period of approximately two decades under three different Executive Directors, a major restructuring exercise and a fundamental shift from developing activities to an increased importance of the so-called “relief to development continuum”, a shift that had a particularly strong impact on the agency’s operational activities and its financial set-up.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING

Lessons learnt at the Technical Cooperation Division: The operational approach of UN-HABITAT’s TCD in developing joint activities with a recipient country started with a project/programme idea whereby, after the assessment of a given situation and possible improvement measures, a certain number of objectives, results and activities had to be identified, including required budgetary provisions, work plans etc. Due to the fact that these projects/programmes were to be financed by external donors, a compromise had to be found between the specific interests of the recipient government, the donor and our own agency. Considering the often very different views of the partners involved on outputs to be achieved, on staffing or training needs etc, the final project/programme design was the result of sometimes lengthy negotiations where institutional influence, means and also personal affinities carried weight.

For many years, activities of TCD had been guided by the need to generate sufficient overheads to contribute to the financing of its three regional units. On the one hand this led to the presence of very dedicated human settlements advisors for whom no effort was too

big to identify, design and execute new projects/programmes. On the other hand, there was not much time to think beyond projects/programmes, their financial volume and the next TCD Quarterly Report, where the relative success of the various Human Settlements Advisors was expressed in terms of project numbers and financial volumes.

The then existing projects/programmes concerned housing policies, urban design, urban safety, construction of urban infrastructure, land development, housing design and construction, housing finance, community finance, institutional set-ups, employment creation and income generation, community participation and its organization, reconstruction of war-torn societies and those hit by natural disasters, etc - whatever thematic issue falling under UN-HABITAT's mandate was taken up and translated into – very often – meaningful ventures.

But while we were introducing these undertakings for the benefit of at least fragments of the initially identified target groups, we had to take note of the fact that the sheer number of those living under precarious housing conditions grew seemingly inevitably in volume.

UN-HABITAT's restructuring process, undertaken in the mid 1990s, tried to reorient our efforts in a more focused way but could not provide an answer to above mentioned dilemma nor prevent that more and more UN agencies established their visible presence in the housing sector, UNDP and UNHCR in particular.

National housing policies: There is much evidence that "UN-HABITAT's technical cooperation has, in several countries, resulted in new national policies on housing and urban development." This is particularly true with regard to housing policies where there have been numerous projects/programmes supporting the formulation and adoption of national housing policies - a great achievement in itself.

However, if these undertakings have been generally successful at the institutional level (formulation and adoption, training of staff, etc) their direct impact on the improvement of housing conditions is sometimes

questioned by UN-HABITAT governing bodies (CPR and GC), some Habitat staff and also by potential beneficiary groups. In fact, although we witnessed that in many countries new policies were effectively followed by such as facilitated access to land, stable financial mechanisms and, in a few countries, improved supply of building materials - there were also countries that were lagging and where it took time to realize that.

The general lesson has been that once UN-HABITAT technical cooperation projects were completed, government agencies and private sector units often encountered serious problems to ensure larger scale replication of initially jointly executed housing and infrastructure operations.

It is therefore suggested not only to measure the success of UN-HABITAT-facilitated new housing policies by the number of countries where these have been introduced, but also by the volume of concrete follow-up operations they generated. Monitoring of projects' success would therefore not end with their final evaluation but go well beyond that and leading, if necessary, to further technical assistance.

Evaluations: Within UN-HABITAT's monitoring mandate, evaluation of projects/programmes was not highly considered among the staff. The understanding that evaluations are not just a time consuming burden or a given prerequisite of the UN machinery - but are in fact a very positive management tool - may have developed since. However, the temptation may still be there to circumvent this instrument by drafting the Terms of Reference of evaluations in such a way that sensitive issues are excluded or by modifying over time and for no acceptable reason project/programme objectives and results, work plans etc.

Likewise the fact that a certain number of countries try to nominate only candidates of specific ethnic background for studies abroad and other capacity building measures should be met.

It is therefore suggested that no effort should be spared to maintain UN-HABITAT's proven record with regard to transparency and accordance to rules and regulations.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Fund-raising by other agencies: When attending a concert of the “Berliner Philharmoniker” you will find at the entrance of the concert hall a signboard inviting you to donate to UNICEF and UNICEF flyers are freely available. At many grocery shops you are invited to buy as much vegetables as possible as it serves a good cause – for every one Euro spent, three cents will go to FAO. WHO, FAO and UNICEF are active all year round with reminders to support their activities regularly updated. A year ago, when Haiti was part of the daily TV coverage, these agencies’ activities as well as their respective bank account numbers were repeatedly screened to all household

I suggest we examine fund-raising approaches used by other agencies to check their suitability for UN-HABITAT.

New challenges for UN-HABITAT: The effects of the recent financial crisis, the emergence of new powers in Asia and Latin America, an ever growing gap between the rich and the poor in almost every country, the lack of evident answers to rising public debt, unemployment and shortcomings in the health and education sectors have undermined many citizens’ trust in governments and the stability of their political system. This situation will have its

impact on UN-HABITAT, in budgetary terms but also in terms of priorities and design of future policies/programmes.

I suggested that TCD (jointly with other interested staff) takes up these matters and their possible effect on the agency to be prepared for new developments. ‘Scenario thinking’ is required, very similar to that in the early 1990s, when funding shifted almost overnight from development aid to emergency aid.

External advisory group to the ED: This HLC may result in a huge number of suggestions and recommendations. They will have to be structured, packaged and evaluated to operationalize them for the purpose of the agency.

This exercise can of course been done in-house. However, an external, independent look at these issues may be beneficial.

I suggest that we explore how the agency can benefit from the institutional knowledge and experience of retired and former staff members. A first practical test in that sense could be undertaken by an external assessment of the HLC results. This would not prevent the agency from doing its own in-house assessment.



JAN MEELKER

Jan Meelker has worked for UN-HABITAT and other UN agencies in various locations around Africa and other parts of the world

I worked for UN-HABITAT between 1990 and 1994 as Programme Management Officer (PMO), TCD, Asia & Pacific Unit; Regional Programme Officer, TCD, Asia & Pacific Unit and Human Settlements Programme Advisor (HSPA), Dhaka, Bangladesh

Other organisations I worked with included: UNDP/UNIDO in Zaire (DRC); DRA, a Dutch consortium in Rwanda; UNDP in Lao PDR; Dutch MFA (DGIS) in Benin; the European Commission in Jerusalem/ Palestine and Cyprus; UNOPS/ UNDP in Cyprus; and NV, Netherlands Development Organisation in Tanzania.

Activities carried out: In collaboration with HSA Dinky von Einsiedel, I worked on the 'Regional Staff Exchange on Urban Management in Asia' programme in which nine countries participated (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand). Each participating country had a country coordinator and a high level official from the relevant Ministry (Planning/ Housing). The management and coordination of the programme was done from HQ in cooperation with these coordinators.

The objective of the programme was to exchange urban management knowledge and experience (peer-to-peer) and establish regional technical networks. Participating countries took turns hosting these meetings for periods lasting anywhere between four weeks

to three months, averaging around 40 participants.

During this period, I also was responsible for backstopping and replacing the PMO in West Africa and Arab States during his absence.

The Regional Staff exchange programme concluded and I worked on the set-up/ management of the Regional Coalition of Housing Finance Institutions where institutions from India, Republic of Korea and the Philippines participated.

I was project manager for the UN/ FINNIDA funded project 'Reconstruction of Rural Housing in Flood Affected Areas', where I provided technical guidance to GoB (central and local governments), consultants and 19 participating NGOs/ Community Based Organisations on low-cost disaster resistant housing and (revolving) loan issues, institution building, policy issues, gender, financial management, budgeting and procurement of equipment. I participated in programme/project reviews/ donor meetings. From 1993 until 1994, I was a project manager for the following projects: 'support for urban management and municipal services programmes' and 'support for area development and Shelter programmes', both UN-HABITAT/ UNDP/ World Bank projects.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

From a management and coordination perspective, the 'Regional Staff Exchange on Urban Management in Asia' was a complex programme, it was also a highly successful programme as it clearly reached its objectives. The on the ground 'peer-to-peer' learning approach was highly appreciated by the participants and informal networks were established

and used after the programme ended. It provided valuable insights on urban management issues in the different countries. An additional value of the programme was that it brought together three levels of participants from each country (policy, management and practitioners) who normally never met. The programme therefore enhanced relevant in-country communication.

However, organizing the exchange sessions was complicated in the sense of timing and getting the appropriate participants as well as in timely arranging travel, DSA, venues and last minute changes often took place. A great deal of flexibility and creativity were required. For example, there was an occasion in Kuala Lumpur when I had to go to the bank and withdraw money for the venue and participants' DSA's and walk back to the venue with over 40,000 ringgit in cash in my pockets. From an administrative perspective UN-HABITAT procedures did not hamper progress and even last minute changes could be accommodated with some effort.

Due to the success and appreciation of the programme, additional funding was made available by UNDP. In the end, the programme's success contributed to the shift in overall UMP management from UNDP to UN-HABITAT.

Bangladesh 'Reconstruction of Rural Housing in Flood Affected Areas' was a large emergency programme set up after the devastating floods and cyclones of 1991/92 which caused great damage and suffering in the country. The idea was to set-up disaster resistant housing for the poor, basically consisting of a strong concrete frame with wall of choice of the different communities. Some choose bamboo or a combination of mud bricks and bamboo, while others opted for corrugated iron sheets, which made the houses feel like greenhouses with temperatures well over 40 degrees C.

The beneficiaries paid for the houses through a revolving loan facility which include a part for income generating activities (the Grameen Bank model). Construction and loan management was done by 19 different NGO's in different parts of the countries. For the technical advisory part of the

construction and loan management monitoring a Greek consultancy firm was contracted. The overall planning, management and oversight was the responsibility of the HSPA as well as liaising with the UNDP Office. In addition to UN-HABITAT procedures this project fell also under UNDP financial procedures and management lines, which sometimes caused delays. In the beginning of the project two million US dollars was given to Grameen Bank, who at the time of financial reporting was unable to account for this grant as 'it had become part of their 'general loan portfolio'.

Though the project achieved its objectives with regard to number of houses constructed and number of loans issued and recuperated, at times relations with UNDP were difficult. This was partly due to the UN-HABITAT management structure where an expert consultant came in for one month every quarter, even though the overall planning, management and oversight was the responsibility of the HSPA as was liaising with the UNDP Office. This led to a lack of clarity as far as lines of communication and responsibilities were concerned, thereby affecting relations.

Some interesting outcomes of the project were that NGOs who were rooted in the areas of operation enjoyed much higher lower (?one or the other) loan repayment rates than NGOs who came from outside the area. Also, where women were the loan takers, the group collateral system worked better, repayment rates were significantly higher and the money was better used for the intended purpose.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

During my tenure with UN-HABITAT, administrative procedures were not too cumbersome. Also, being based in Nairobi, I had an added advantage with direct access to the administration. But, when stationed in Dhaka, this became more difficult and approval processes became lengthier.

From experiences with other organisations and donors, I can say that administrative procedures in general became heavier over time with more steps for final approval of expenditures. Implementers

and funders are under increasing pressure to be accountable to their constituents, which almost inevitably leads to more layers of control, slowing down implementation. The paradox, however, is that there is also increasing pressure to show quick results. Project/programme managers especially are caught between two fires: the pressure of complying with cumbersome administrative procedures on one hand and the pressure to show results on the other.

In my present position in Tanzania we solved this by agreeing with the donor on a broad (semi-annual) work-plan describing only the outcomes and a general budget with only the main budget line headings beforehand, giving me as project manager

the flexibility to go ahead with implementation of activities and shift within budget headings, if needed. Preapproval is only needed when shifts from one budget line to another is necessary. Detailed expenditures were accounted for in the financial reports and approved 'a posteriori'. This approach works very well and avoids unnecessary delays in daily implementation.

It is important that a workable balance is found, satisfying accountability requirements as well as timely achievement of results, which often depends on the momentum and good relations with counterparts.



JAN MEEUWISSEN

Jan Meeuwissen started at UNCHS (Habitat) 29 years ago in Lagos. He is our longest serving manager, the de facto deputy of Toshi Noda in ROAP.

I joined UNCHS in 1982 as an Associate Expert in Architecture and Urban Planning in a project implementing the Master Plan for Metropolitan Lagos, Nigeria. Earlier, I had worked as a volunteer for a UNCHS project in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in 1979-80. I also worked over five years in Habitat technical cooperation projects in Bhutan and Sierra Leone before joining Headquarters in 1988 in Nairobi, where I coordinated the UNCHS/Danida Community Development Programme for nine years.

This Programme with activities in Africa, Asia and Latin America provided a unique blend of innovation, research, policy development, advocacy and pilot operational activities. The knowledge and experience gained from this programme has formed the basis for many successful projects in Asia during my 13-year tenure at the Fukuoka Office, which I helped establish in 1997.

The success of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is well-known and I believe I contributed significantly to the achievements of this Office, not only by resource mobilization for and management of its large project portfolio, but more importantly by analyzing trends and introducing innovative approaches such as a poverty reduction strategy, community contracts and a systematic community-based methodology for post-disaster and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction projects. To date, I am still

working in the Fukuoka Office as a Senior Human Settlements Officer.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

The changing role of UNDP has caused most strain in my relationship with that agency over the past 15 years. While UNDP's role was clear before that time, as the coordinator and funding agency of development activities of the UN system, the decision to implement their own projects was the beginning of a highly competitive rather than a partner relationship. It also created the need for the establishment of a new coordinating body in the UN system, the UNDG. However, as this body is administered by UNDP, its full independence as a truly neutral inter-agency body still needs to be achieved. In the meantime, we're faced with a situation that personalities in the post of UNRC and UNDP Country Director will determine the relationship with UN-HABITAT in that country.

As I have worked both in RTCD as in what was then the Research and Development Division, now split in Global Division and Monitoring & Research Division, I understand the work ethics and priorities as well as the normative aspects. This has enabled me to maintain good relations with the various branches and their staff. The largest gap I see is that the divisions have too little interaction and consequently, the Global and M&R Division do not benefit from the experience and knowledge built up in RTCD. Therefore, the normative products of UN-HABITAT, such as the capacity building materials, documentation collected and policies prepared, are only partially reflecting the rich experience of RTCD. I also believe that the staff of the normative divisions is insufficiently aware

of the normative activities undertaken through the operational projects. ENOF is designed to change that, but in reality this is not yet working.

The impact of UN-HABITAT Technical Cooperation on national policy reforms is one of the most underestimated achievements of RTCD. For projects which are designed as normative projects it is probably understood, but many other projects have influenced government policies. Even the post-conflict and post disaster projects have made a noticeable impact on national policies. In the Asia-Pacific region, I can quote the examples of the National Solidarity Programme in Afghanistan, which has made a community-led approach the norm for Afghan development programmes, or the post-earthquake programme in Pakistan, which introduced an owner-driven approach for the housing reconstruction programme. Also, the Governments of Sri Lanka and Indonesia adopted more owner-driven approaches for their housing reconstruction programmes after the success of the UN-HABITAT-initiated programmes in these countries. In essence, the lesson is that good examples with practical experience will be followed, rather than introducing top-down academic policies, which often have not been tested.

The regional office in Asia and the Pacific has very good experience in exchanging innovative approaches between the countries in the region. The office has functioned as a catalyst to identify good practices in some countries and introduce them in others. In the development sphere, a systematic approach for slum improvement linked with poverty reduction, which was initially developed in Sri Lanka under the Community Development Programme, has been introduced in a number of other countries in the region very successfully. Years later, when the project portfolio of ROAP shifted from development to humanitarian activities, this community-based approach was adapted to a post-conflict and post-disaster situation and again proved to be very successful.

While ROAP has good relations with most global programmes, some of these persistently ignore the regional office and, at times, cause embarrassing situations at the country level.

Project and programme administration is by far the weakest area of UN-HABITAT. Since the time that all projects were administered by UNDP at country level fifteen years ago and today, hardly any progress has been made to establish workable operational procedures for project implementation. A strong centralistic regime has been enforced, which does not take into account the realities in the field. New legal instruments have been devised, which are very cumbersome and delegation of authority is extremely limited. This is further aggravated by a financial and administrative management information system, which is archaic and again heavily centralised. The system barely works for development projects, let alone for emergency assistance, which is a nightmare in the present circumstances.

Only the creativity of ROAP staff in engaging project personnel and creating new instruments (such as community contracts and payments to beneficiaries, which are merely tolerated, but not fully accepted), has kept project administration manageable. It is amazing that UN-HABITAT after all these years still can't recruit its own national project staff on Service Contracts. ROAP alone has over 2000 of them and had to come up with ingenious ways to recruit them through third parties.

The growth of the project portfolio of the ROAP-Fukuoka has been steady with a spectacular increase as from 2005 when it got involved in helping people to rebuild their housing after the Indian Ocean tsunami and the earthquake in Pakistan. At the end of 1997, the year ROAP was established, the Fukuoka Office had 19 projects with a total budget of US\$ 31.8 million.

The flip side of this spectacular growth is that it is depending heavily on post-conflict and post-disaster

projects. The development oriented projects are small in size and more difficult to find funds.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

UN-HABITAT is one of the UN agencies which makes a difference in the daily life of people. This is mainly because of the operational projects and programmes in the countries we serve. As there are still millions of people living in slums or lost their homes due to conflict or disaster, the UN-HABITAT operational activities should continue.

There is the need to improve the relation between the global programmes and the regional and country activities in order to make UN-HABITAT more effective. The implementation of ENOF must succeed.

The present financial and administrative arrangements are not conducive for efficient and effective project and programme implementation. A serious review of the operational modalities, including legal instruments

and human resource management, is required. At this point in time, just tinkering and further centralising is inadequate. A major overhaul is already overdue.

Financial sources for the funding of development activities are decreasingly channelled through the UN system. Therefore innovative ways to attract finances for operational projects must be found to continue at the present level of operations. One of the ways is to be represented stronger at the regional and country level in order to be closer to the sources of finance.

UN-HABITAT must make a difference in the life of people living in slums and assist those who have lost their homes in conflicts or disasters. Urban planning, housing policies, land administration, infrastructure strategies, financial models and capacity building will help, but action is required. In my vision, UN-HABITAT should inspire that action by providing leadership in the human settlements sector by word and deed.



JAY MOOR

Jay Moor started in 1990 in the Asia Unit. He created the GUO, moved to the indicators programme and initiated the State of the World's Cities Report series. He lives in Montana, USA.

Because the United Nations embraces a set of universal ideals that are applied for the betterment of all humanity, I regard working for the UN as the epitome of public professionalism. It has been my privilege to be engaged in that work from 1990 to 2005.

My pre-UN career spanned 25 years as an architect, urban-regional planner and public policy analyst. During the mid-1970s in Asia, I worked as a city planner, sub-contractor to the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning, before it became UNCHS. In the early 1980s, I was regional planner on a UN-HABITAT project in Montenegro.

In 1990, I was hired by UN-HABITAT and deployed out of Nairobi to a dozen Asian countries, backstopping a variety of development projects. I found UN-HABITAT to be politically weak but symbolically muscular. TCD was caught in a 'consultant-for-hire' mode, deferring to donor interest to obtain overheads. As a result TCD was hardly infusing national policy with UN ideals.

I oversaw projects, working with national and international professionals, community organizers and governments in Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand to improve urban slums and help governments respond to urban poverty. Despite many successes,

our projects made hardly a dent in the vast needs. Many governments only talked about a national urban strategy; funding was unsustainable; partners were fickle; competition was ruthless; and lack of accountable and transparent governance distorted project benefits.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING

The 1990s featured a series of extraordinary UN conferences. In 1994, I volunteered for the Secretariat of Habitat II, the second global conference on human settlements. I wrote the first draft of the *Habitat Agenda*, setting down essential principles. Since the 1976 Habitat conference, city planning had evolved to encompass civic engagement and community-based development. These were given prominence in the first draft of the *Habitat Agenda*. Good governance - an unutterable phrase among national governments - was also included. Subsequent debate resulted in the retention of the phrase in its constituent parts: openness, accountability and transparency.

The *Habitat Agenda* provided a mandate to monitor urban conditions and trends, at all levels. UN-HABITAT was charged with managing global M&E and, soon after the conference, I was asked to create the Global Urban Observatory (GUO). I integrated the global Urban Indicators Programme (UIP) and the GUO as a single capacity-building programme to help local authorities, through Local Urban Observatories (LUOs), collect and analyse a set of urban indicators that would help describe internal urban inequities. A City Development Index (CDI) of easy-to-collect indicators was intended as the basis for periodic *State of the Cities* reports at the local and national levels to

help governments and citizens identify priorities for policy and action. Indicators and the CDI would also become mechanisms for measuring global progress toward the goals of the *Habitat Agenda*.

During the late 1990s, the GUO focus altered. Rather than capacity building for local data generation, analysis, and reporting, it was decided to create a global database using national urban data to feed UN-HABITAT's global reports. In 2001, I managed the first *State of the World's Cities* report and produced the first strategic vision statement for UN-HABITAT, which argued for urban slum upgrading as the principal mission of UN-HABITAT.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Many of UN-HABITAT's problems have their origins within the United Nations system. UN-HABITAT was born from a 1976 global conference with some of the world's great futurists in attendance. Understanding that global urbanization would accelerate, participants supported the creation of an agency for cities. UN-HABITAT was conceived in a still-hostile environment of rural interests. Most developing countries had not yet urbanized and could not bring themselves politically to support an agenda beyond shelter. Donors too were reluctant to push UN-HABITAT beyond its old shelter mandate. Moreover, the UN included agencies that also claimed cities and felt that UN-HABITAT was too small to be effective. Habitat II and UN-HABITAT's subsequent elevation in status to a UN Programme changed some of that.

UN-HABITAT cannot be effective if it must fight for position. Since Habitat II, UN-HABITAT's reputation has grown despite its lack of strategic perspective, insufficient urban expertise and inability to follow up. It is internally split into entities with redundancy, competition and areas of neglect. External programmes and projects, like those of the Cities Alliance, control superior resources and move independently into UN-HABITAT's substantive territory.

The number one task is to make UN-HABITAT *the* champion for cities. Convince the S-G of Habitat's

indisputable role as The City Agency with convening and coordinating authority. Argue that the city is not just another sector of national development, but the place where all development aspects comes together. Advocate strongly for cities as:

- drivers of economic development
- vehicles for social betterment
- population absorbers
- cultural touchstones
- keys to environmental sustainability and
- the future of humanity.

Resist UN-HABITAT becoming just a shelter agency. Hire urbanists and planners as advocates for strong planning. Nearly all MDGs come together in urban slums and by focusing development on improving the lives of slum dwellers, member states will be more effective in meeting all the MDGs.

Technical Cooperation and *One UN*: Competition for funds and status within the UN system at the country level have created roadblocks to technical cooperation. The Resident Coordinator system and the UNDAF were to coordinate development assistance. It appears that these have been relabeled *One UN* and *Country Programme*, respectively, with UNDP as coordinator. Cities are still regarded as just one of many sectors. Unless UNDP steers to comprehensive development through regional socio-economic and geographic analysis, *One UN* will lead to less than optimal sectoral results. If cities are central to national socio-economic development, UN-HABITAT should be included in overall national policy planning. UN-HABITAT must lobby for this approach to national development assistance and staff-up accordingly.

City Monitoring and Reporting: After two editions of the *State of African Cities* report, the weakness in relying on national statistics and national surveys has been revealed: We are running out of data. UN-HABITAT may find it politically expedient to avoid independent generation of urban data within countries, but as a practical matter it eventually becomes necessary. Clearly, reporting on the state

of any city requires uncovering and comparing intra-city conditions and trends. Sub-city comparisons help establish the relative magnitude of problems, set priorities for action and determine effectiveness of policies and programmes.

UN-HABITAT should redesign and apply the City Development Index (CDI) as this index can raise awareness of urban issues; be used for national, city and sub-city comparisons; correlate strongly with both good governance and poverty; and elevate cities in national development policy.

There are local institutions throughout the developing world with analytic abilities, or the potential to acquire them. Under the *Habitat Agenda's* monitoring and reporting mandate, UN-HABITAT should return to a capacity building and support mode for monitoring and reporting on local urban conditions and trends using a small, universal set of urban indicators, modified for local conditions.

Strategic Planning and Urban Cybernetics: Our world is entering a phase of profound change and instability. Oil-based economies are facing structural inflation with transport, construction and farming increasingly expensive. Commodity and food prices are surging, especially in developing countries. Wealthier countries are accelerating their economic colonization of LDCs to capture critical commodities and food security. Climate change makes economies less dependable and economic forecasting less reliable. Where political stability depends upon economic stability, massive discontent and periodic eruptions of anger and violence may become the norm.

The "market" has been notoriously bad at anticipating global risk because of its reliance on upon mass optimism. Through corruption of governments, control of media and co-opting of economists, markets sweep aside objective points of view because these often challenge existing power and its self-serving policies. Potential problems are ignored or disguised as inconsequential – until it's too late and crises ensue. Most of this plays out in the city, the bellwether of systemic change.

UN development assistance priorities ought to be based on strategic analyses of regional and global conditions and trends, independent of those produced by powerful financial interests. UN assessments must be as wide-ranging as possible and should incorporate alternative assumptions, objective data, indicators, and other information. The UN has the authority to convene the best strategic thinkers to explore the probable future. UN-HABITAT can play a key role, helping to build local capacity for generating the kinds of information needed for global analyses, national policies, and local actions.

Cybernetics – the process of feedback, analysis and policy response – is an essential management tool. Because of rapid global change, UN-HABITAT technical cooperation in urban management should be enhanced to help anticipate incipient conditions, design responsive policies, set priorities for allocating resources, and take necessary pre-emptive and mitigating actions.

Habitat III: If it is held, Habitat III, in 2016, would be where a new global plan of action, agendas and mandates will be agreed. Delegates to the 2012 WUF should help draft the conference agenda. Designate UN-HABITAT as the Secretariat, mandating inputs from the 2014 WUF, and integrating the 2016 WUF as the civil society component of Habitat III.

UN-HABITAT should soon thereafter issue guidelines for collecting data for local and national reporting on progress in implementing the *Habitat Agenda* and the MDGs. RTCD should be included in Habitat III in a useful and compensated role, and all activities involving UN-HABITAT should be fully funded.

Habitat II saved UN-HABITAT. But, it also bankrupted the agency. If there is merit in a third global conference on human settlements, UN-HABITAT should begin this year, 2011, to gather political and financial support, including a host country with means.



JEAN MARC ROSSIGNOL

Mon parcours avec ONU-Habitat (CNUEH-Habitat à l'époque) a commencé en 1982 à Bujumbura au Burundi comme VNU dans le cadre du projet « Développement intégré de l'Habitat social » (quartier Musaga). Mes principales fonctions ont consisté au suivi des travaux de construction des équipements et infrastructures de base du projet (centre de santé, bornes fontaines, blocs latrines, centre communautaires, écoles) et de réaménagement du quartier, ainsi qu'au suivi et à l'encadrement du programme pilote de construction de 25 habitations économiques (en briques adobes) avec la participation des bénéficiaires organisés sous forme coopérative.

Ma contribution au « projet Musaga » s'est poursuivie en 1984 avec le statut d'expert sur un projet plus ambitieux puisque portant sur l'extension du quartier Musaga sur 60 ha (infrastructures et équipements de base) et la construction assistée de 700 maisons économiques.

J'ai par la suite occupé le poste de Conseiller technique principal du Projet d'appui à l'établissement public (ECOSAT) créé à partir des deux projets de développement urbains (Banque mondiale et CNUEH-Habitat) réalisés sur Bujumbura

Je quittais le Burundi en 1990 pour rejoindre pour deux ans un nouveau poste de CTP à Dakar dans le cadre du projet « Appui technique et logistique au BASHO » (Bureau d'assistance aux collectivités pour l'habitat social).

Après une parenthèse de sept ans au cours desquels je réalisais néanmoins plusieurs missions court terme pour Habitat dans différents pays d'Afrique,

j'acceptais en 1999, le poste de responsable de l'exécution du programme de reconstruction, de réhabilitation et de réinstallation des populations déplacées pour la Province d'Erbil (Kurdistan irakien) dans le cadre du programme des Nations Unies « Pétrole contre nourriture ».

Mon dernier poste long terme avec ONU-Habitat date de 2005-2006 en qualité de conseiller au Ministère des Infrastructures à Kigali – Rwanda sur un programme visant l'établissement d'une politique d'urbanisation et la formulation d'un programme de renforcement des capacités institutionnelles tant au niveau central que décentralisé.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

Mon expérience avec le CNUEH-Habitat puis ONU-Habitat au cours des quatorze années passées sur des postes longues durées et au travers des différentes missions que j'ai réalisées pour l'agence ont été riches en terme d'expérience tant professionnelle qu'humaine.

Les différents postes que j'ai occupés sur le terrain m'ont permis d'acquérir une bonne expérience et expertise en matière de programmes et d'opérations de développement urbain social au sein d'équipe multidisciplinaire.

Les projets pilotes pour la plupart, auxquels j'ai eu la chance et le plaisir de participer, ont en outre permis de tester et démontrer la faisabilité et l'efficacité des programmes de restructuration et d'amélioration des quartiers précaires et des opérations de développement de nouveaux quartiers sur des standards adaptés aux capacités financières des bénéficiaires (Musaga/Burundi). Tant au Burundi, qu'au Sénégal, la possibilité de faire participer et contribuer

financièrement les populations cibles à faibles revenus a été démontrée, au travers de dispositifs de « location-vente » (Musaga) ou coopératif (Sénégal). Les taux de recouvrement des prêts (3.500 dossiers de prêts individuels) atteignaient les 80% à l'ECOSAT. Ces opérations ont également démontré qu'il était possible d'aménager des quartiers offrant une mixité sociale sur la base du principe de péréquation des coûts (subvention des parcelles sociales par les classes plus aisées).

Le transfert de connaissances qui s'opérait dans le cadre de ces projets et le renforcement institutionnel auquel ils ont contribué, ont été très positifs. L'établissement public chargé de l'aménagement de terrains et de la promotion de la construction (ECOSAT) et le fonds de promotion de l'habitat urbain (FPHU) créés entre 1988 et 1989 sont toujours en place plus de vingt ans ainsi qu'une bonne partie du personnel initial (ECOSAT), même s'ils ont malgré tout soufferts des années de crise que le Burundi a traversé.

Les rwandais réfugiés au Burundi qui avaient connu le projet d'habitat social Musaga et Jabe avaient la volonté de reproduire ce type d'approche au Rwanda lorsqu'ils sont rentrés au pays après les événements de 1994. Sous la pression de la demande et suite à certains choix des autorités locales, ce transfert ne s'est pas fait dans les quartiers précaires et les nouveaux quartiers de Kigali hormis et en partie seulement dans le cadre de l'aménagement du quartier Kimironko par ONU-Habitat dans les années 2000 (ce quartier fait encore référence aujourd'hui au Rwanda en terme de mixité sociale).

Ces projets ne se sont pas toujours réalisés facilement et les résultats ne sont pas toujours apparus aux échéances prévues initialement (Cas des coopératives d'habitat au Sénégal). Mais c'est avec beaucoup de satisfaction que j'ai eu l'occasion de visiter plusieurs années après les quartiers réalisés dans le cadre des projets auxquels j'avais participé activement et de constater les résultats atteints et l'évolution de ces derniers.

La reconnaissance des bénéficiaires a également été pour moi au cours de ces années l'une de mes principales satisfactions.

Outre la nouvelle expertise acquise dans chaque affectation, les différentes postes que j'ai occupés ont été pour moi l'occasion de travailler dans un contexte très enrichissant tant sur le plan personnel et relationnel que culturel. La découverte des pays et cultures dans lesquels j'ai séjourné n'aurait pas été possible de la même manière dans un autre contexte. Que ce soit au Burundi, au Sénégal ou au Kurdistan. Je conserve d'ailleurs de solides attaches dans ces différents pays.

Un des points importants pour moi dans mes relations professionnelles avec le CNUEH-Habitat puis l'agence ONU-Habitat réside dans le caractère convivial et amical qui a toujours caractérisé les rapports que j'ai eu avec les différents responsables ou autres membres de l'équipe du siège à Nairobi que ce soit dans le département technique ou l'administration.

Je pense que la taille de l'agence plus petite que d'autres agences onusiennes, constitue un atout dans les relations humaines et qu'il est plus facile dans ce contexte de rencontrer les gens et de les connaître.

PERSPECTIVES

Durant ces dix huit dernières années, mon parcours professionnel m'a conduit à intervenir avec ONU-Habitat mais également dans d'autres cadres et avec d'autres organisations (ex Caisse Française de Coopération, Banque mondiale). Ces expériences ont été différentes et l'expertise acquise avec Habitat m'a toujours été fort utile dans ces autres interventions.

Ma dernière intervention avec Habitat remonte à 2005, et je suis aujourd'hui établi au Rwanda à titre privé comme architecte-urbaniste. Je ne suis donc pas pour le moment impliqué directement dans les programmes de l'agence et faute de temps, je ne suis que d'assez loin l'évolution de ses activités.

Mon expérience professionnelle de ces dernières années m'amène cependant au constat que ONU-Habitat a encore un rôle important à jouer dans plusieurs domaines et notamment :

- les politiques de développement urbain
- la restructuration des quartiers précaires et la tenure foncière
- la mixité sociale dans le développement urbain
- les politiques de développement urbain et les moyens de viabiliser de nouveaux quartiers pour les populations à faibles revenus
- la mise en place auprès et l'adoption par les autorités locales d'outils de planification et de gestion urbaine adaptés à leurs besoins.

Si je fais référence au cas du Rwanda, Habitat a eu un rôle important dans la formulation et l'adoption

d'une nouvelle politique de développement urbain (politique d'urbanisation) tenant compte des réalités du terrain et des défis à relever pour faire baisser la pression humaine sur le foncier rural.

L'appui apporté par l'agence a également largement contribué à l'adoption d'une législation foncière et d'une loi sur les expropriations beaucoup plus équitables pour les populations.

La mise en œuvre de ces nouvelles politiques et législations rencontrent néanmoins sur le terrain des obstacles, réticences et autres difficultés qui ne sont pas encore surmontées...



JORGE GAVIDIA

Jorge Gavidia started in RDD. He was co-leader of DMU, managed our Iraq programme and became the second Director of ROLAC in 2002-2007. He lives in Helsinki.

I joined the Building and Infrastructure Technology Section, Research and Development Division, of UNHCS in 1982. From then until 2007 I had the opportunity to work in different units. This involved both normative tasks and field operations which allowed me to gain a wide view of UN-HABITAT activities. Undertaking various management tasks with increasing responsibility also facilitated understanding of the challenges faced when attempting to achieve substantive objectives within the administrative and management structures of the time.

I feel that my last two assignments as Chief of the Disaster, Post Conflict and Safety Section / Risk and Disaster Management Programme, and Director of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) may have had a greater influence on me, but my comments are the result of my overall experience with the agency and its mission.

There is no doubt UN-HABITAT has accumulated over the years a varied experience in implementing country-level, regional and global programmes. Implementation has sometimes been interpreted as the compartmentalized preserve of four different organizational units of the agency: the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division (RRTC) for country-level operations; and the Shelter and Sustainable Human Settlements

Development Division (SSHSD), the Monitoring and Research Division (MRD), and the Financing Human Settlements Division (FHSD) for regional/global programmes for normative, monitoring and research tasks.

However, as the activities and reach of UN-HABITAT evolved, a series of initiatives were launched to develop regional and global programmes from RTCD as well as regional/global programmes with a country-operational content from SSHSD/MRD/FHSD, but with mixed results.

The Cities Alliance and Risk and Disaster Management Programme are some examples of the first. Water and Sanitation, Sustainable Cities, Indicators, Best Practices, and Safer Cities programmes are examples of the latter.

Achieving synergies between these activities has often been interpreted as, or limited to, improving coordination between divisions and has frequently been clouded by intra-institutional competition for resources and recognition.

Some of the characteristics and operational attributes of country-level, regional and global programmes can be decisive in promoting or discouraging synergies.

COUNTRY-LEVEL OPERATIONS:

- Ad-hoc paucity in the demand for technical cooperation.
- RTCD need for constant assessment of potential or latent demand for technical cooperation and formulation of project proposals.
- Shorter periods of implementation (2-3 years), which can take the form of a quasi 'country programme' when extended.

- Source of funding is increasingly the national counterpart or third parties with fixed policy objectives and conditions.
- Increasing demand for reduction of agency support costs, arguing that these should be the agency's counterpart contribution.
- Activities tend to be country (or project) specific responding to particular country needs.
- Limited scope for introducing learning processes targeted to a wider audience, or scaling up beyond the country level (limited normative feedback).
- Unpredictable funding, rendering project self-contained within the budget and implementation period.
- Ad hoc management, defined by specific project arrangements and implementing partner-manager.
- No fixed implementation model responding to project-specific demands and negotiations;
- Variable intensity of the technical input provided by UN-HABITAT, subject to a large extent to the capacity and vocation of the backstopping officer.

REGIONAL AND GLOBAL PROGRAMMES:

- Existence of a perceived, or assessed demand for knowledge development and thematic technical support.
- Normally supply-driven processes of programme formulation, even if consultations are made with stakeholders and potential users of the knowledge and technical inputs to be provided.
- Normally include country activities on research/knowledge acquisition, capacity development; and field application. In certain cases "field application" takes the form of quasi conventional technical cooperation.
- Source of funding is mainly from third parties/donors and programme activities and conditions tend to discourage resources to support UN-HABITAT core activities and normally require (human and management) resources from UN-

HABITAT.

- Activities of regional/global tend to have predefined policy, technical, research or implementation approaches and can be less responsive to specific country demands, and limit the scope for cooperation with other programmes or country-level operations, unless pre-defined in the programme design
- Include activities for developing learning processes targeted to a supra-national audience, and envisage scaling up beyond country level
- While programme activities are normally predetermined, they do have certain flexibility in the implementation of their components, including field applications, within the agreed budget and implementation period.
- More centralized, homogeneous management for all activities in response to programme objectives.
- Greater intensity of the technical input provided by UN-HABITAT.

ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED:

There were some aspects in the management of UN-HABITAT activities that impacted on how synergies were achieved between its functional units.

- Cooperation among programmes and within country-level operations was generally ad hoc, based on individual initiatives, rather than systematic application of corporate policy.
- The engagement was at times opportunistic, based on a positive environment for fund mobilization rather than institutional objectives. The latter, in essence is not necessarily a negative approach and could be applied as part of a global institutional strategy.
- Programmes were often developed at the initiative of individual officers or units. Significant institutional support followed only if the initiative proved successful in fund raising. This created a bias away from programmes resulting from institutional strategy. Individual initiative should be

promoted, supported and rewarded, but within an institutional strategy.

- In the absence of a corporate strategy to develop and implement programmes, these were left to their own resources, tending to wither away when funding diminished.
- Functional units had sometimes decidedly different visions on substantive issues, country level conditions, implementing partners, national policy context, and implementation modalities. In the absence of a common institutional strategy this often led to outright lack of cooperation and missed opportunities.
- Institutional mandate, management structure, operational and financial procedures, and availability of project pre-investment resources were not appropriate for projects that required rapid administrative response.
- There was no policy for continued updating and development of in-house knowledge. In an urbanizing world where countries develop national capacities and resources, demands for know-how and inputs become more specialized and state of the art. The agency has the mission to respond to the demands of the most needy countries, but without knowledge development it could run the risk of becoming marginalized and technically outdated.
- Finally, UN-HABITAT developed a management culture where cooperation and positive competition was not promoted. Rather, institutional fragmentation, negative competition and unclear performance recognition and rewards took hold.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

To steer UN-HABITAT into the next years as a relevant international actor in human settlements issues is not an easy task given the multiple restrictions to change. There are no quick fixes.

The concepts I present are general in nature. Some require gradual implementation, most demand persistent management commitment to bring all the staff of the agency to a common view and fully motivate them for their achievement:

- Within the mandate of the agency, to *“promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all”*, define few core issues on which the efforts of the agency should focus. Target qualified staff and regular and extra-budgetary resources on those issues.
- Other issues important to the mission of the agency should be developed in partnerships with other institutions which should take the operational lead. When an opportunistic engagement in activities becomes necessary, ensure that full agency back-up is available. The agency should focus its limited resources and not disperse them.
- While the Governing Council and the World Urban Forum are key instances for review of activities and the UN-HABITAT Agenda, their formats are not conducive to in-depth review of agency goals, impact of activities, and assessment of emerging issues. A small group of thinkers and experts on human settlements and development should be established to advise the agency annually.
- The agency should become globally relevant on global human settlements issues and not simply for a diminishing population share to increase its credibility in tackling local issues;
- Establish a common operational platform for the support and implementation of activities: regional/global programmes, country level operations; M&E, knowledge dissemination and networking.
- Establish a professional, unified, fund-raising and donor relations facility.
- Introduce a management culture based on performance, continuous learning, and merit-based recruitment and promotion.



KARIBA TRAORÉ

Il a obtenu un doctorat d'ingénieur à la faculté de constructions civiles de Bucarest (Roumanie), après un parcours universitaire à l'Ecole Nationale d'ingénieurs de Bamako.

A. ACTIVITÉS À ONU-HABITAT

De Janvier 2008 - Octobre 2009: Conseiller technique principal au Bureau Régional pour l'Afrique et les Pays Arabes (Nairobi) en charge des pays suivants : Djibouti, République Démocratique du Congo, République du Congo, Rwanda, Tchad, Burkina Faso, Guinée, Mauritanie.

De Septembre 1990 - Décembre 2007: Conseiller Technique Principal (CTP) dans différents pays : Haïti, Djibouti, Rwanda, Burundi, Tchad.

HAÏTI :

Projet d'amélioration des conditions de vie dans 5 villes (la capitale Port-au-Prince et 4 villes secondaires). Projet arrêté après réalisation de la phase préparatoire (études d'exécution pour quelques infrastructures dans chacune des villes Port-au-Prince, Hinche, Gonaïves et Port de Paix) et démarrage de quelques travaux (Port-au-Prince, Hinche, Gonaïves). Le document de projet, l'époque, était beaucoup plus orienté vers la description et l'énoncé des activités à entreprendre. Les études préliminaires et techniques détaillées constituaient la première phase du projet.

DJIBOUTI :

Ce projet d'habitat social de Djibouti visait faire accéder à la propriété foncière et au

logement, une partie de la population à faibles revenus avec comme objectifs:

- améliorer les conditions de vie de la population à bas revenus de Djibouti en leur offrant des structures d'accueil adéquates;
- promouvoir l'établissement et la pérennisation des institutions au niveau du District de Djibouti nécessaires pour un programme permanent d'habitat social;
- participer à la création d'emplois et le développement des entreprises artisanales ainsi que l'émergence d'une industrie locale de construction;
- promouvoir la définition des standards d'équipement et de construction accessibles aux ménages à bas revenus.

RÉSULTATS OBTENUS

- Projet d'aménagement d'un site particulièrement difficile, la plupart des fouilles pour les caniveaux, les canalisations d'eau et les latrines ont été réalisées à l'explosif par des températures moyennes de 50° C à l'ombre.
- la viabilisation de 37 hectares au Nord-Ouest de Balbala dont 16,2 hectares cessibles;
- le lotissement d'un total de 1390 parcelles sur ces terrains, dont 770 parcelles de 105 m² équipées de fosses sanitaires, de soubassement de murs mitoyens, 450 parcelles de 120 m² et 170 parcelles de 160 m²;
- la construction d'un millier de logements pour des ménages ayant un revenu mensuel au plus égal à de 25 000 avec d'effort admissible de 30% maximum.

BURUNDI :

La crise qui a frappé le Burundi depuis 1993 est venue amplifier les déficits des deux provinces en matière d'infrastructures collectives. L'objectif global du projet était d'améliorer les conditions socio-économiques des populations de Karuzi et de Cankuzo:

- améliorer l'accès aux infrastructures et services répondant aux besoins prioritaires en matière de : éducation, santé, alimentation en eau potable, pistes rurales et infrastructures économiques et productives ;
- mettre en place des mécanismes de gestion et d'entretien des infrastructures et équipements ;
- améliorer les mécanismes de planification, de coordination et de suivi.

Les résultats obtenus ont été

- la réalisation d'infrastructures (3 centres de santé, 3 écoles primaires;
- le renforcement des capacités de gestion et d'organisation des Administrations communales.
- le renforcement des capacités de planification, de coordination et de suivi par les Cabinets des Gouverneurs et les Antennes provinciales du Plan, l'appui au suivi des organisations communautaires (comités, associations, etc.).

DIFFICULTÉS RENCONTRÉES

Les difficultés majeures de ce projet sont les conséquences des divergences de fond entre les parties, sur la méthodologie de la mise en œuvre du projet:

Pour le Gouvernement, il fallait tout de suite commencer par la réalisation d'infrastructures.

Pour le FENU, il s'agissait initialement de consommer rapidement le reliquat des fonds de l'ancien Projet « ACU ». Cette vision du Projet a ensuite évolué suite à la revue des mandats du FENU, qui voudrait voir le Projet, s'orienter vers une approche plus nette de décentralisation.

Pour le PNUD, l'intérêt dans ce projet visait les axes ci-après :

- l'assistance au Gouvernement pour la réalisation des investissements du FENU ;
- la lutte contre la pauvreté ;
- la fixation des populations dans leurs terroirs (les rapatriés ou les déplacés) ;
- la bonne gouvernance.

Rwanda : Projet de réinstallation après le génocide de 1994.

En avril 1995, comme conséquence à la perspective du retour massif des réfugiés (environ 700 000 personnes étaient attendues), le Gouvernement du Rwanda le PNUD ont entrepris la mise en place d'infrastructures d'accueil en vue de leur réinstallation. Le "Programme Prioritaire de Réinstallation d'Urgence" qui en résulté, a été conçu comme une trame d'interventions afin de constituer un mécanisme pour faciliter la mobilisation de fonds. Deux axes d'intervention ont été retenus:

- la création urgente et accélérée d'un volume important de parcelles viabilisées pour l'habitat dotées d'équipements communautaires de base et la mise en place d'un processus dynamique de production de logements (aménagement, viabilisation et équipement des trames d'accueil et réhabilitation de l'environnement).
- l'appui institutionnel pour l'élaboration d'une stratégie nationale de l'habitat et formation en service des cadres nationaux des structures gouvernementales en matière de planification urbaine, de mise en place de processus de mobilisation de ressources pour l'aménagement de terrains et la production de logements.

Les activités se sont développées dans les villes de Kigali (Gisozi, Kagugu, Gaculiro et Kimironko) et de Butare (Tumba, Rango, Nkubi et Sahera).

Difficultés rencontrées et recommandations:

- la mise en place des fonds ne s'est pas fait au rythme des besoins en financement.

- le délai d'attribution des marchés par le National Tender Board est trop long.
- les différents changements de tutelle du projet n'ont pas permis la cohérence souhaitée dans les interventions de l'Administration.
- la faible performance des bureaux d'études locaux et des entreprises.
- dans le court terme, il a été suggéré d'entreprendre des actions en vue de mobiliser des fonds pour le financement du reliquat de travaux de voirie.
- la mise en place projet d'assistance technique (renforcement de capacités au MINITERE) en vue de l'identification et de l'élaboration des documents de requêtes de financement.
- pour le long terme, il a été demandé au Gouvernement et au PNUD de définir un cadre de coopération en vue de soutenir les deux campagnes mondiales de l'agenda HABITAT à savoir: la bonne gouvernance urbaine et la sécurité de la tenure (sécurité de la propriété foncière).
- réhabilitant les quartiers à habitat précaire pour y garantir la sécurité de la tenure ;
- dotant les plus grands centres urbains de plan stratégique de développement urbain ;
- mettant en place deux organismes personnalisés, l'un devant s'occuper de l'équipement des terrains urbains et l'autre du financement de l'habitat social;
- contribuant à la formation du personnel du MATUH et des autres institutions impliquées dans le projet afin de garantir la répliquabilité des opérations d'habitat social.

Le projet a contribué aux réalisations suivantes :

- les études de viabilisation du site de la Patte d'oie à N'Djaména et d'un autre site à Doba dans la région pétrolière, au sud du Tchad;
- les études de restructuration du quartier tramé de Madjorio à N'Djaména;
- les études de drainage de d'environ 950 hectares au Nord-Est de N'Djaména;
- les travaux de viabilisation et de construction de 70 logements pilotes (Patte d'oie);
- les études d'un lotissement de 2 200 hectares au Nord de N'Djaména ;
- le renforcement des capacités des experts nationaux et du MATUH,
- la création d'une agence de promotion immobilière (SOPROFIM) ;
- la sélection des ménages pour l'attribution des parcelles sur la base de critères d'éligibilité et des critères de priorité.

Au titre des difficultés rencontrées par le projet on peut citer entre autres:

TCHAD :

Pour faire face à ses nombreux défis de développement et de lutte contre la pauvreté en particulier, le Gouvernement du Tchad a entrepris un vaste programme de développement urbain et d'amélioration de l'habitat par lequel il s'est engagé à investir, sur la période de 2004 à 2013, d'importantes ressources provenant en grande majorité de ses ressources pétrolières. Le projet de Développement urbain et d'amélioration de l'habitat (DURAH) est l'un des tout premiers projets d'envergure de ce vaste programme. Il a été conçu avec l'ambition de jeter les bases d'une solution opérationnelle et durable à la problématique de l'accès d'une frange importante de la population, notamment celle à faibles revenus, au logement et aux infrastructures de base en:

- mettant à leur disposition des parcelles assainies ;
- mettant en place un système de financement adéquat pour la construction de leurs logements ;
- un environnement national marqué par une administration très difficile et par des périodes récurrentes d'insécurité pour cause d'affrontements armés ;
- des lourdeurs et lenteurs dans les prises de décisions par les autorités compétentes (Gouvernement, PNUD et ONU-HABITAT);

- des retards récurrents et considérables dans le versement des contributions du,
- le faible niveau d'expertise de certains membres du personnel ;

Les leçons à tirer sont les suivantes :

- l'envergure des projets et programmes devrait être ramenée à des niveaux compatibles avec les moyens raisonnablement mobilisables.
- l'Agence devrait éviter une implication trop importante dans la gestion des ressources fournies par le Gouvernement,
- dans les projets exécutés par l'Agence, seules ses procédures de passation de contrats (Procédures des Nations Unies) devraient être applicables.

RÉPONSES AUX QUESTIONS POSES SUR LE PANEL 3

1. ONU-HABITAT doit s'impliquer dans la programmation au niveau pays, aussi bien au niveau du Gouvernement qu'à celui du système des Nations Unies. Cette activité doit être basée sur une bonne connaissance des objectifs et des programmes des autres partenaires au développement du pays.
2. Pour que le développement des capacités ait une valeur ajoutée aux réformes politiques au niveau pays, il faudrait qu'ONU-HABITAT dispose des stratégies claires de mise en œuvre des domaines clefs de son mandat.
3. Le Projet d'habitat social à Balbala (Djibouti) a été succès aussi bien dans sa mise en œuvre que dans ses résultats. Le Gouvernement, muni de l'expérience du projet, a créé un organisme national pour la mise en œuvre de sa politique d'habitat social. Les bénéficiaires cibles du projet ont été respectés à plus de 80% et le taux de remboursement avoisinait les 90%.
- le projet de réinstallation du Rwanda a été un facteur déterminant dans le processus d'opérationnalisation du National Tender Board. Il a également permis d'une part, la réinstallation immédiate de plus de 30 000 retournés et d'autre par de fournir des éléments de base pour le développement et l'extension de la ville de Kigali. En outre, certains bureaux d'études et entreprises de construction ont acquis un certain professionnalisme.
- en ce qui concerne le Tchad, l'intervention d'ONU-HABITAT a permis relecture des textes réglementant les opérations d'urbanisme, la construction et la gestion domaniale et foncière. L'aménagement du site de la Patte d'Oie a été un catalyseur pour la compréhension de la notion de viabilisation de parcelles. La construction de logements témoins sur des parcelles de 250 m² a été une innovation.
- au Burundi le professionnalisme dans le processus de construction des équipements solaires et sanitaires ont amené les Autorités locales et le PNUD a confier à ONU-HABITAT la construction de plusieurs autres équipements.
4. La formulation de politiques est par essence une activité normative qui n'est pas perçue par les pays comme base des interventions physiques qui ont plus de visibilité pour la propagande des décideurs politiques. Ainsi, il devient très difficile au niveau pays de mobiliser les partenaires, en particulier les nationaux, pour trouver un financement pour les aspects normatifs des activités d'ONU-HABITAT.
5. Pour mieux articuler ses futures activités, ONU-HABITAT devrait (a) mobiliser des ressources financières propres pour les domaines de concentration de son mandat, (b) insérer le MTSIP dans le processus du UNDAF (c) faire en sorte que la prise en compte du HCPD soit effective dans le plan de travail du Gouvernement du pays concerné



MARK HILDEBRAND

Mark Hildebrand started in Chad in 1976, then joined the Africa Section and coordinated the APA Unit (Asia, Pacific and LAC) during 1983-89. He was Chief, TCD until 1994, then Director of Programme Coordination. He initiated, the UMP and was the first manager of the Cities Alliance in 1999-2006.

My first UN assignment began in 1976 with the UN Centre for Housing Building and Planning, UN-HABITAT's predecessor organization. I reported directly to the UN Centre for Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT) in 1978 when its headquarters was established in Nairobi. Positions and activities carried out included:

1976-1979 - N'Djamena, Chad: Rural School Construction Project. Chief Technical Advisor, building 360 primary school classrooms in rural settlements nationwide. Leveraged UN Capital Development Fund resources with World Bank education project funding in what became the country's largest construction project.

1979-1983 - Human Settlements Advisor, Africa Section, Technical Cooperation Division (TCD), identified, negotiated and backstopped Habitat's Technical Cooperation projects in East and Southern Africa, including the technical cooperation components of the World Bank's first urban project in Madagascar; setting up an Emergency Reconstruction and Development Authority in Uganda to expedite the reconstruction of Masaka and Mbarara, badly damaged in the fighting which led to the downfall of

Idi Amin; and the first UN project in independent Zimbabwe (ZIM/80/001), leveraging UNDP funding to mobilize USAID capital funding for self-help housing in Gutu and Kwe-Kwe;

1983-1989 - Coordinator Asia, Pacific and Americas Unit of TCD, managing a three-fold increase in delivery while developing large scale projects in:

- Dhaka, Bangladesh, that helped to prepare and support implementation of the World Bank's and Asian Development Bank's first urban projects in Bangladesh.
- Indonesia's National Urban Development Strategy (NUDS) and Integrated Urban Infrastructure Development Programme (IUIDP) that helped to decentralize flows of Government's budgets and World Bank investments for infrastructure to provincial and local authorities.
- Supported the transition in Sri Lanka from the 'hundred-thousand houses programme' to the 'million houses programme' and the concomitant major shift in Government's role from the direct provision of housing to enabling low income communities to upgrade their own housing and living conditions.
- Played lead role in initiating and preparing the 1996 meeting of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) which was its first meeting focused on urban development
- Worked in partnership with colleagues from the World Bank and UNDP to design, establish and jointly manage the Urban Management Program (UMP), negotiating additional financial contributions from a number

of bilateral donors for Habitat's first global programme focused on urban development.

1989-1994 - Chief TCD, providing leadership in pursuing joint programming and new alliances focused on urban development with both multi-lateral and bilateral development agencies, doubling the technical cooperation resources managed by UN-HABITAT (with budgets totaling over USD180 million), supporting the establishment of new initiatives including the Sustainable Cities Programme with UNEP, and pursuing efforts to achieve and monitor achieving the goals of Agenda 21's Chapter 7 on Human Settlements.

1994-1999 - Director of Programme Coordination for Habitat's three substantive programme divisions – TCD, RDD and IAVD. Played a key role in successful efforts to focus the Habitat II conference on cities and to engage with what were then the four major global organizations of cities, supporting their efforts to form an alliance (the G4+) so that mayors and other local government leaders could for the first time actively participate in a UN global conference. Managed the UN secretariat for what became known as "The City Summit" held in Istanbul in 1996, bringing together over 15,000 participants from 171 countries. I led efforts to produce Habitat's first annual report.

1999-2006 - Manager of the Cities Alliance, providing leadership in conceiving, establishing and managing the Cities Alliance as a global coalition of cities and their development partners committed to scaling up successful approaches to urban poverty reduction. I initiated discussions to create the Alliance, negotiated its charter, and its approval by all G-7 governments, along with the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, UN-HABITAT, the World Bank, and the world's major associations of cities. I established Alliance partnerships with developing countries and cities to prepare city development strategies that link their economic growth and poverty reduction objectives, and improve their ability to attract long-term capital investments for infrastructure and services. Led preparation of the Alliance's Cities without Slums

action plan, subsequently adopted at the UN by the world's heads of state in the Millennium Declaration in September 2000. I also expanded Alliance membership to include Brazil, Nigeria, South Africa, UNEP and the Asian Development Bank and led successful efforts to mobilize over USD 80 million for the Cities Alliance Trust Fund and managed grants with over 160 cities worldwide, linked to over USD 6 billion in investments.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING

Technical cooperation resources often have their greatest potential impact on improving human settlement conditions when they are focused on local authorities and their partnerships with communities. Conversely where resources are captured by central government ministries and do not reach local government and low income communities, efforts to improve human settlements conditions are compromised as is accountability, since mayors and local leaders typically have the greatest and most direct accountability for improving human settlement conditions.

The positive impacts of sound policy advice and reforms are greatly enhanced where technical cooperation projects are linked to capital investments, even more so when these are local investment resources.

Self-reliance and development starts with people and their communities and government built housing most often creates dependency, undermining individual accountability, local initiative, local investments and sustainability.

Well over 30 years of human settlement pilot projects, demonstrating the same lessons over and over again and often pursued separately in the same city by multiple donors, have become part of the problem, since for the most part they have not been replicated citywide or nationwide and therefore have seldom achieved scale commensurate with the challenge.

Systematically engaging local universities, local polytechnics and local professionals, along with

local authorities in all aspects of the design and implementation of technical cooperation activities builds local capacity and strengthens self-reliance as opposed to perpetuating aid- dependency.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Obviously there is no room for complacency or self-congratulatory sentiments since, by and large and with only few exceptions, at the end of most technical cooperation projects the problems we have helped governments face were bigger than when we started.

Especially now at the time of new leadership at UN-HABITAT, this is an important opportunity to fundamentally and critically examine present and likely future demand, as well as alternative mechanisms, for both the funding and delivery of technical cooperation.

How can Habitat best leverage its capacity and resources to help governments provide the right incentives and infrastructure to enable self-sustaining initiatives to work at scale?



MATHIAS HUNDSALZ

Mathias Hundsalz was Chief, RDD, until 1999 and a negotiator of the Habitat Agenda in Istanbul. He started in the field in Uganda and Burkina Faso, and went back to RTCD at the end of his career. More recently he evaluated the first generation of the Habitat country programmes Documents (HCPDs).

My experiences with the United Nations date back to the 70s, before UN-HABITAT was established. I was recruited in 1972 as associate expert in the now defunct Office of Technical Cooperation of the UN Secretariat, with a technical cooperation assignment in Uganda, followed by Burkina Faso (1973-1976).

From 1976 until 1978, I worked as Social Affairs Officer with the Centre for Housing Building and Planning, which was then transformed into UNCHS, rendering me an HSO. In Nairobi, I undertook various assignments from R&D and TCD, until I took early retirement in 2002. My last position was Acting Director, RTCD, after having served as Head of the former RDD until 1999 when the post was abolished.

This long involvement with UN-HABITAT and its predecessors had allowed me to be part of many institutional developments and substantive achievements, including the Global Shelter Strategy, the IYSH, Habitat II, or the Global Reports on Human Settlements and a long series of substantive publications. I was also involved with other assignments, such as the drafting of reports to Habitat's governing bodies, Medium Term Plans or two-year work programmes.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

My early years working in Uganda and Burkina Faso made me realize that personal achievements and accomplishments remain limited. Despite good or even excellent project results, if measured through conventional development yardsticks (houses built, people trained, building loans extended, technical services provided) the overall impact on human and institutional development (poverty reduction, sustainability, social justice) remains very small, particularly in the long run.

But aside from this acceptance of the limitations of the life of a 'UN bureaucrat', the working years in UN-HABITAT are very valuable because of the number of people with whom I worked as colleagues, be they bosses, peers or persons under my supervision. Considering the wide range of backgrounds, it might be considered an achievement that working together on a commonly defined and agreed cause is possible at all.

Several supervisors gave me substantive direction and opened my eyes to the importance of the subject, be it for operational work or research and development. One of them was Guy Lemarchands, my project manager in Burkina Faso, who provided lots of encouragement when I experimented with early concepts of sites and services and urban upgrading. In New York, I owed a lot to my supervisors Rafael Mora Rubio (Chief of the Housing Section in CHBP) and to Wilson Garces (Chief of the R&D branch of CHBP), who had an impact on me changing gradually from a chaotic student to a serious UN bureaucrat. In Nairobi, the then Chief of the RDD, Bruce Hyland, understood

his job as exercising compulsive editing of what the young staff members of RDD were drafting as inputs to technical publications, Everybody feared his comments on the routing slips with which he returned the (often inadequate) drafts, like “I have never read such rubbish”; “I gave up on page 3”; or “Please translate into English”; what encouragement for an aspiring young professional!

Consider yourself lucky, if you have a decent supervisor. If not, a young professional needs quite some tolerance and perseverance to work in UN-HABITAT. Otherwise, another career should be considered.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

The history and present prospects of collaboration and cooperation between the agency's divisions is characterized, to some extent, by the personalities of their respective divisional leadership. This is quite normal for any organization. Some difference can be made by the agency's overall leadership, with respect to a preference for the style of encouraging and guiding a corporate team spirit, or rather working through a 'kitchen cabinet' in a non-transparent top-down style. The recent past of the agency appears to be characterized by programmes, divisions and programmes competing for funding from donors countries and interdivisional collaboration and cooperation remain at the level of task forces with good agendas but limited results.

The agency requires a deputy with operational and normative human settlements experience to give direction to interdivisional cooperation.

The artificial distinction between normative and operational activities has characterized UN-HABITAT since its very beginning. It has never been fully understood, particularly not at the field level, or in countries at national and local levels. As the old RDD took up operational activities in the 1980s, TCD started programmes with normative content like urban management and sustainable cities. The distinction remains artificial as a tool of the UN development jargon – useful in dialogue with donors, but it requires determined efforts to make

it operational through interdivisional teamwork. Recently, efforts have been made to show its assumed inter-linkages and integrative qualities through the ENOF.

Setting up ENOF as an interdivisional task force is not enough. Programme managers have to define joint work objectives and expected results in their respective programmes and be willing to allocate parts of their resources to joint-programming which can demonstrate real achievements of integrating normative and operational work. Otherwise, it remains just another bureaucratic exercise.

There is no systematic procedure of feeding results, lessons learnt and best practice from operational project activities into the normative work of the agency; they remain hidden in technical cooperation reports which nobody ever looks at. The Global Report rarely reflects on the agency's lessons learnt from projects. Project managers and HPMs do not benefit systematically from Habitat's normative work. Managers of global programmes often prefer to set up their own networks of country activities. Rather than work with RTCD and their HPMs.

There are some good examples of global programme managers working with RTCD and country HPMs which can serve to demonstrate the real life advantages of integrating normative and operational work through ENOF. If such examples can serve to be the norm in interdivisional work, it may be the time to rethink (again!) the current structure of divisions, and make them more integrative along the lines of ENOF.

There are serious political and systemic limitations to the relevance and usefulness of trying to formulate and present yet another set of 'key recommendations' to the present and future Habitat managers. The shelves of offices are full with well-meaning recommendations, generated by committed human settlements workers at hundreds of workshops, expert group meetings and through consultancy reports.

There is nothing wrong with most of these recommendations, whether they are rather general or very specific on particular topics.

The problem of not being implemented or even ignored is largely connected to the human factor and institutional limitations of a UN bureaucracy more focused on control than on creativity and impact. Cases in point are the continuing recommendations to set up 'mechanisms and procedures' to achieve certain objectives. We all know of those cases where such administrative and coordination mechanisms have been set up through interdivisional task forces etc, while the expected benefits do not emerge. Similarly, the ubiquitous call for 'teamwork' cannot be challenged, and there is basically nothing wrong with the concept of teamwork which is thought to achieve more coordinated and sustainable results through a participative process. However, productive teamwork remains rare, as long as the institutional incentive of the UN for achieving results through teamwork remains limited. Staff members are judged on their individual performance, be

it on professional substance or bureaucratic and institutional shrewdness, which restrains such teamwork ingredients like sharing information, shared responsibility and open debate.

In consequence, I shall refrain from making another set of recommendations, like calling for more and better coordination, teamwork and institutional mechanisms. Having observed the more recent years of UN-HABITAT from the position of retiree with a long institutional memory, I want to make the point that the organization needs a revitalized spirit of shared vision and responsibility. It appears from many conversations with former colleagues who are presently in different positions in the hierarchy, that such spirit has somewhat gone astray, also because the previous leadership of UN-HABITAT did little to encourage transparency, participation and openness among the divisions.



OLE LYSE

Ole Lyse was the key pillar of SCP, he worked with ROAAS in several African countries and now lives happily in Kenya.

I am a civil engineer and I worked for UN-HABITAT from 1992 to 2007 in the field of infrastructure engineering design, local government/municipal engineering, international development cooperation, rural development planning and UN technical cooperation.

As Chief, Urban Environment Section/ Programme coordinator, I was a senior member of the Urban Development Branch (UDB) team, managing its Urban Environment Section which included coordination and supervision of the UN-HABITAT/UNEP joint global Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP), the LA21 Programme initiatives and general urban environment matters, intra-agency and with global partners such as UNEP and ICLEI.

The main thrust of the initiatives was to assist cities with more sustainable urban planning and good governance approaches. The vehicle for this was for the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP) - a long term joint UN-HABITAT/UNEP global facility for implementation of sustainable urban development approaches, and in the LA21 Programme.

INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

Key Lessons: The SCP/LA21 city projects were, by and large, positive experiences, and the UN-HABITAT cooperation was well received by city authorities. Perhaps the initial interest was not directly out

of 'environmental' concerns, but more that authorities were interested in an urban planning and management approach which could help dialogue and engagement with stakeholders and in turn restore reputation and credibility. A routine action-oriented mechanism, to engage with citizens, academic expertise, private sector and NGOs through a participatory and consultative process, was attractive as a way to increase both human and financial resources to deal with overwhelming problems, especially with regard to poor basic urban services and sustainable urban mobility.

Many cities were 'buried' with day-to-day crisis management with little time or resources to be forward looking, even with short-term development planning. Cities also found the process particularly useful to help address at least part of the 'urban-poverty nexus', like improving access to basic urban services and better social inclusion in decision making. The GIS-based tool 'environmental management information system' (EMIS) was popular among planners to help identify both best suitable and most sensitive land use. Engagement through UN-HABITAT cooperation agreements with international support organisations like the Dutch IHS, and with local/national urban institutions on EPM capacity-building, tools review, curricula development and documentation of experiences, was another very important and valuable element.

At the end of 2006 the urban environment section operated these initiatives with 64 cities in 21 countries, which was only possible through effective inter-branch/divisional collaboration within UN-HABITAT. First and foremost with RTCD regional offices right from joint resource mobilisation (often fitting into UNDPCCF),

formulations, technical assistance/ backstopping at country level, normative global support through EPM/SCP tools and capacity building anchored with urban institutions – national or in the regions, to evaluations. Particularly ROAP support to developing the final global EPM/SCP process baseline curriculum and training modules based on Asia experiences was of utmost importance. The network of ‘SCP-city’ partners and institutions also conveniently built into various other regional TCD initiatives, often facilitated thru bringing all SCP partners together in occasional regional and global meetings.

With TCBB: very constructive advice and joint efforts in capacity building, work with urban training institutions included formed joint platform for training of elected leaders.

The global campaigns: supported and engaged SCP city and national partners in launches and national follow up; helped to disseminate/operationalise the joint PUDM tools (participatory urban decision making).

Intended relations with, for example, WSIB, to link EPM process and technical interventions in water and sanitation initiatives, especially the Lake Victoria WATSAN; and with GUO on developing a guideline for urban practitioners on environment-poverty links/indicators/ MDG relevance were, at the time, not very successful.

The level of ‘in-house’ collaboration is a constant debate. Collaboration is neither consistent nor necessarily always useful. Importantly it should respond to a two-way relevance. Sometimes it is actually enforced for primarily ‘political’ reasons. For it to be successful it requires individual willingness and commitment. When relevant it is of course valuable and even crucial sometimes (like the above SCP example), but it always raises issues around staff time, resources, recognition, team interest and coordination, all of which should best be clarified in advance.

In this experience, various external partners also played an important role.

Firstly the long-term cooperation with UNEP. The agencies’ respective strengths are largely

complementary, combining global/national normative environmental mandate with local operational (i.a. water, sanitation, waste, air quality, industry). Urban linkages and local action on global environmental topics (climate change, biodiversity, coastal area mgmt, rivers, transport), GEO for cities, joint efforts in Cities Alliance, joint tools, joint events (SCP/LA21 global meetings, WUF, CSD, GCs), monthly joint operation & coordination meetings - were all good lessons, adding value and portrayed a “One United Nations” to partners.

Others were more through parallel collaboration, such as:

- ILO: offered cities participation in ‘decent jobs and better services’ regional training workshops, skills, and employment programmes at country level.
- UNDP-PPPUE: cities in global learning network, and could seek innovative partnership grants.
- InWEnt (German NGO): offered long term training, joint proposals e.g. on documentation and knowledge management database, regional networks.
- ICLEI (global network of local authorities): linked partner cities to environmental awareness initiatives, and collaboration through an MoU on local action on global environmental topics.

Though this type of collaboration gave no direct financial support to UN-HABITAT, it surely added value and strengths to what the programme could facilitate to the participating cities.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Accepting “The Urban Poverty – Environment” Nexus and its implications for environmental planning & management is important. Urban poor and marginalised groups are often the most affected by environmental degradation, yet overwhelmingly excluded in decision-making affecting access to and use of environmental resources, levels and standards of environmental services. Environmental institutional arrangements and legislation needs to recognise and help to change this.

A global routine mechanism and approach is required to promote building local capacity for global environmental topics and agendas – contributing local experiences and know-how, priorities and concerns to the formulation of global principles and norms.

An ecosystems approach to more “sustainable urbanisation” is needed. Cities need to better situate themselves in wider ecosystems management. How for example can urban planning practices better recognise and adapt and respond to the increasing “footprint” paradigm – city expansion and use of environmental resources, both for consumption and for disposal.

From EPM capacity development experience, it is found that a ‘programme’ approach is a good vehicle for promoting and operationalise an advocacy initiative, and for seeking collaboration. Should be long-term and wide-ranging containing a number of mutually supporting elements such as:

- Build upon a generic concept (commonly accepted basic principles for long term objective).
- Include an implementation process at municipal (local) level.
- Promote meaningful stakeholder involvement.
- Importance of replication and upscaling capacity and mechanisms.
- Importance of a national capacity-building infrastructure that also facilitates international/ sub-regional support to reach national/ local levels.
- Facilitate networking for exchange of experiences- documentation- learning relationships and interactions by all partners at all levels.
- Development of and use of demand-led tools.
- Incorporate a modular system for inducing the capacity-building elements and tools.
- Engage national and sub-regional urban development institutions on training, courses, documentation, tool adaptations, translations, curricula development and research.



ROBERTO OTTOLENGHI

Roberto Ottolenghi started in RDD, where he was the active promoter of regionalisation and founder/director of ROLAC in Rio in 1996. Since 2002 he is a senior consultant, often working for UN-HABITAT.

I spent 21 years in UN-HABITAT (1981-2002) after which I took early retirement and become a consultant. Since then I have worked each year for UN-HABITAT and other agencies, which means that I have 30 years of uninterrupted collaboration with UN-HABITAT.

I initially joined the Research and Development Division - the predecessor of the present Global Division - where I spent six years as a Human Settlements Officer in charge of Pilot Projects in Slum and Squatter upgrading. This allowed for a perfect blend between normative research and operational activities. Land sharing in Bangkok and the pilot projects in Sri Lanka, which would soon expand into a major scaling-up under the One Million Houses Programme, were the highlights of those years.

In 1987, I joined the Technical Cooperation Division in the Asia, Europe and Latin America Branch and was immediately assigned, as HSA, to Latin America and the Caribbean. My challenge was to try to demonstrate that the LAC region could provide sufficient project opportunities to justify a TCD-branch in its own right. In 1989, the then Executive Director, Dr. Arcot Ramachandran, decided to establish a separate Unit for the LAC Region and I was asked to head it.

We were able to establish UN-HABITAT as a major player in the LAC region and built a sizeable portfolio - mainly through third party and national cost-sharing funds to make up for dwindling UNDP resources. But the strains and inefficiencies deriving from managing LAC from Nairobi (and the damage to our legitimacy as recipient of national funds) prompted me, in 1993, to advocate for regional decentralization. This was supported by two successive EDs (Elizabeth Dowdeswell and Wally N'Dow) who asked me to head a task force on the subject, and by the TCD Chief, Mark Hildebrand. It was a difficult job, full of pitfalls and not immune from opposition, though the initiative rapidly elicited strong interest not only in LAC but also in Asia.

The LAC Unit moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1996. That was the watershed which later allowed, in a much easier way, the opening of other regional offices. In my view, this enabled Habitat to operate more in line with the expectations of its national partners and more responsive to the demands of a much changed multilateral environment

When I felt it was time for me to go, Anna Tibaijuka asked me to first come back to Nairobi to head RTCD, which I did in 2002. It was a nice way to conclude my UN-HABITAT experience, at that point much changed from my early days in 1981.

HUMAN INTERACTIONS AND LIVING MEMORIES

When I look back, there is inevitably a feeling of missed opportunities due to institutional drawbacks, heavy bureaucratic demands and constantly shifting ground. After all, we have had six different Executive Directors between 1993 and 2000. But, I feel that what

we achieved has been noteworthy and sustainable. Strategies we introduced have become mainstream, while staff we trained have gone up the ranks and have not forgotten. The balance sheet is clearly positive and significantly so.

It is not possible to list a comprehensive set of examples (I have by worked in more than 60 countries), but just a few may give a sense of what I mean:

- After more than 30 years, I went back to the first Sri Lankan squatter settlement (Wanatomulla) we helped upgrade from 1982. I was not sure I was in the right place, but I was: a former swampy ground covered by shacks is now a formal area of town where people-driven housing consolidation has gone a really long way (and this was not an isolated case, it was replicated and scaled up).
- In Haiti, the reformed Governance mechanisms we helped introduce in the early 90's (fiscal reform and revenue raising, land management etc.) have not been undone by the endless series of political and natural calamities that have hit the country and the strong municipal system we helped create is now perhaps the best guarantee for a brighter future.
- In Colombia, we helped rescue finance institutions which were on the brink of bankruptcy and turned them into functioning and efficient entities till today.
- In Guatemala, the indigenous communities we helped resettle in the late 90's after long years of exile are now safe and established. Yet, the Agency has learned a great deal more in terms of crisis recovery and resettlement strategies from those early days in which that type of project was the exception rather than the norm it has become now.
- In crisis situations (conflict or natural calamities), from the initial engagements onward, there has been a progressive build-up of knowledge that now allows Habitat to 'go normative' and show the way toward to recovery, by addressing structural reform needs in the midst of operations

which the international community all too often approaches almost exclusively in its humanitarian dimension.

- When (R)TCD began to focus directly on local authorities (and advocate among donors for support mechanisms to this effect), the formula was not just innovative, it was almost untried in the UN system. Until then, rigid UN-Government counterpart arrangement requirements channeled 90 per cent of multilateral resources to Central Government. Quite differently from today.
- Another panel I am to be involved in is on the relationship between country-level and regional/global activities. Internal collaboration has often been uneasy, but I am persuaded that, when we managed to make it work, the quality of our operations and our impact on policy change was much enhanced.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

The world of development cooperation has dramatically changed. Less money and donor interest in a multilateral role for development projects (multilateral banks, bilateral agencies, private firms have clearly upstaged the UN). No longer does anyone need generic providers of technical assistance. A UN agency's worth is its ability to promote structural change. To this end, Habitat should step up its advocacy and constantly refine its tools designed to make genuine difference (legal reforms, land policies and administration, urban management, housing sector reforms, land and housing rights, vulnerability reduction etc). Only that will guarantee Habitat's continued presence on the development map, in operational terms.

In crisis situations, Habitat has become infinitely more clear about its mandate and in its effectiveness. There is no point trying to match the humanitarian agencies in front-line delivery. Reconstruction and recovery are still a largely gray area where Habitat's structural constraints (lack of country offices and seed capital) acted as drawbacks. The more recent good normative work and advocacy within IASC and among donors has helped and is key to making

Habitat's role more central and better recognized by donors.

Global Programmes can be seen as the (tiny) seed-capital for establishing a country presence and lead to operational activities and/or support ongoing ones in a focused way. There, increasing synergy between Global and RTCD and, individually between each RO and each global programme is the only way, a key challenge for Habitat's management.

Regionalization has, in my view, changed much for the better Habitat's standing in the Global map and has worked well. Concerns in some quarters about decentralizing administrative authority have not

been proven right (OIOS positive audits of Regional Offices testify to that). Operational activities have become more efficient, helping Habitat face competition, while normative and operational have blended much better. Delegation of authority should be strengthened and not feared. Regional offices are key opportunities for mainstreaming Habitat's work in the regions. In that respect, lessening ROs' high dependence on overheads could only help the agency as a whole. To this day, my biggest satisfaction, when I look back, is seeing that Rio and Fukuoka still exist and knowing that I can claim a chunk of the credit for bringing them to life.



SEYDOU SY SALL

Former Minister of Housing in Senegal and Project Director at UN-HABITAT.

Nous avons le plaisir de nous dresser à vous pour témoigner devant cette assemblée de l'expérience du Sénégal avec ONU Habitat. Nous sommes d'autant plus heureux d'en parler que celle-ci est considérée comme fructueuse et exemplaire.

Il faut savoir que la coopération entre ONU Habitat et le Sénégal plonge ses racines dans une histoire profonde, depuis la création du Centre des Nations Unies pour les Établissements humains (CNUEH) après la mémorable Conférence de Vancouver sur les Établissements humains en 1976. En effet, sitôt cinq années après cette rencontre, le Sénégal bénéficia de l'appui du CNUEH sur un projet de promotion de la terre stabilisée. Ce projet permit de mieux connaître les propriétés et les qualités de ce matériau, de vulgariser son utilisation à travers le pays.

Ce projet jettera en même temps les bases de la création d'outils pour l'appui à l'habitat coopératif et le financement du logement social. En effet, devant le déclin de la promotion immobilière publique, suite au retrait de la Caisse française de Coopération Économique du financement de l'habitat, on assista au Sénégal à la résurgence de l'habitat coopératif. Les premières qui en naîtront s'appuyaient sur les services du Ministère du Développement Rural, en charge à l'époque de l'assistance du mouvement coopératif rural. Les coopératives d'habitat s'adressaient aux architectes pour l'élaboration de leur projet architectural.

Cet appui, quoique précieux, ne couvrait que partiellement les services dont les coopératives avaient besoin. Ce qui était déterminant dans leur projet restait non couvert, à savoir : l'animation de l'assemblée des coopératives, la recherche du terrain d'assiette, la mobilisation de l'épargne en vue de la constitution de l'apport personnel, la confection du plan de financement, la mobilisation du financement.

Sous l'impulsion de Monsieur Daniel Biau, un projet d'appui au BAHSO, qui venait d'être créé dans la mouvance du projet « Habitat Social », fut lancé grâce à un appui de ONU Habitat. Ce projet bénéficia d'emblée du financement conjoint du PNUD et de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne. Paul Walter Bouda, architecte, qui fut responsable à la Division de la coopération technique de ONU-Habitat joua un rôle décisif dans l'implication de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne.

La détermination du Conseiller technique principal, en l'occurrence l'architecte Jean Marc Rossignol, envoyé par ONU-Habitat, devant une équipe nationale, enthousiaste et dynamique permit d'aboutir à des résultats appréciables, dont la réalisation de cinq projets de logements coopératifs pilotes à Dakar, Guédiawaye et Thiès, la création effective d'un fond roulant de renforcement de l'apport personnel des coopératives d'habitat, le renforcement des capacités d'une trentaine d'agents de l'État dans les techniques d'appui à l'habitat coopératif, la consolidation du BAHSO et la création d'Unions régionales de coopératives d'habitat et d'une Union nationale des coopératives d'habitat.

Les performances de l'habitat coopératif sont illustrées par quelques statistiques clés : près de 300 coopératives d'habitat

regroupant plus de 50000 membres ont été créées dans la mouvance du Projet, leur épargne dans les banques s'élève présentement à près de 30 milliards de francs CFA, soit 60 millions USD.

Si l'habitat coopératif occupe aujourd'hui une place centrale dans la politique du logement social, le Sénégal le doit pour beaucoup à l'appui de ONU Habitat.

Mais il fallait, dans l'objectif de réduire davantage les coûts du logement coopératif et le délai de sa réalisation, mettre à la disposition des coopératives d'habitat du foncier préalablement titré, aménagé et équipé. C'est en réponse à cette demande pressante que l'État entreprit l'aménagement de vastes opérations foncières à Dakar, à Rufisque et dans beaucoup de villes secondaires de l'intérieur du pays. Un programme national d'une grande envergure, visant la réalisation, sur un horizon d'une décennie de 50000 parcelles viabilisées, fut lancé à partir de l'année 2002. La plupart des parcelles, particulièrement celles de Dakar, de Thiès et de Kaolack, ont déjà été livrées. La ZAC (Zone d'aménagement concerté) de Mbao, à Pikine, est devenue une ville. La ZAC de Nguinth, à Thiès, la ZAC de Kounoune, à Rufisque et la ZAC de Kaolack, offrent les mêmes promesses. L'introduction de ce mode d'aménagement participatif et progressif dans la stratégie nationale du logement découle du développement du mouvement coopératif.

L'habitat coopératif est donc devenu une identité dans notre coopération avec ONU Habitat. Cette expérience a essaimé et beaucoup de pays francophones d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre s'en inspirent dans l'élaboration ou la révision de leur stratégie nationale de logement social.

Deuxième élément, l'appui de ONU Habitat à la gestion urbaine fait que notre relation avec cet organisme est devenue une pratique. Autour de cette thématique et grâce à son appui diligent, de nombreux projets ont été entrepris.

Il faut se souvenir qu'au lendemain de la tenue par ONU-Habitat de la journée mondiale de l'habitat à Dakar, au mois d'Octobre 1994, dont le succès

rayonne encore sur notre pays, le Sénégal souhaitait mettre en place un observatoire sur des indicateurs urbains de logement. La contribution de ONU Habitat favorisa le lancement immédiat de quelques études sur cette question, lesquelles se consolidèrent dans un observatoire. S'appuyant sur ces informations, quelques villes du Sénégal dont Dakar, Louga, Kaolack, Kanel sollicitèrent l'assistance de ONU-Habitat pour l'élaboration de leurs profil urbain. Chacune de ces villes est aujourd'hui en possession de cet instrument qui permet la mise en place d'une politique urbaine efficace, reposant sur l'identification des besoins réels et des priorités ainsi que sur l'engagement de la responsabilité de toutes les parties prenantes dans la ville. Les enseignements tirés des profils urbains de ces quatre villes et l'expertise accumulée lors des études, constituent aujourd'hui des acquis inestimables, sur lesquels tous les gestionnaires des villes peuvent adosser leurs interventions.

Les hasards de la vie firent que, après mon passage comme Directeur national du projet d'appui au BAHSO et un interlude au PNUD, comme expert dans un programme sur les changements climatiques, j'étais appelé à la tête du ministère de l'Urbanisme et de l'aménagement du Territoire, en Mai 2001, une année après l'adoption par l'ONU de la déclaration sur les Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement (OMD). Le Département s'adressa à ONU-Habitat en vue d'un appui dans l'élaboration d'un programme sur la résorption des bidonvilles et taudis ainsi que dans la définition d'une stratégie pour le développement de la métropole dakaroise. Après mon départ du Ministère, une nouvelle vie professionnelle de consultant s'ouvrit à moi. Ainsi ma collaboration actuellement avec ONU-Habitat repose sur des missions de consultant en Afrique, sur la formulation de stratégies de logement ou sur l'évaluation d'opérations ou de politiques d'habitat.

Appréciant à titre de consultant la stratégie de développement urbain du grand Dakar, nous pourrions dire que ce projet ayant l'allure d'un programme est une réflexion prospective portant sur la conception du territoire métropolitain dakarois

pour anticiper les mutations à venir en améliorant ses conditions économiques et sociales.

Son objectif est de contribuer à la redéfinition d'un territoire métropolitain cohérent planifié. Il comporte plusieurs thématiques et des sous-thèmes, dont le foncier et le développement spatial, l'environnement, la mobilité urbaine, les services sociaux de base, l'économie locale, la gouvernance métropolitaine, à l'intérieur desquels, des projets sont identifiés. Une constatation double peut d'emblée être tirée de la coopération avec ONU-Habitat dans ce travail : c'est le volet sur l'économie qui confère aux politiques urbaines locales son caractère stratégique et développant et que, pour réussir dans cette entreprise, il faut s'appuyer sur des leviers efficaces en matière de gouvernance. De nombreux projets sont issus de cette stratégie, dont la volonté pour la Ville de Dakar de création d'un nouveau pôle urbain dénommé DKL (Derklé, Khar Yalla et Libertés) au centre géographique du territoire urbain.

Enfin, le dernier élément et non le moindre qui prouvera que, entre le Sénégal et cet organisme, la relation est un projet ambitieux, c'est l'élaboration par le Gouvernement, grâce à un soutien précieux de ONU Habitat, d'un vaste programme sur la résorption des taudis et bidonvilles, dénommé « villes sans bidonvilles au Sénégal ». Il s'agit d'un programme national de réhabilitation des quartiers précaires dans toutes les villes sénégalaises. L'objectif est d'aller au-delà des opérations isolées de restructuration foncière pour s'inscrire dans un cadre stratégique permettant de traiter les quartiers spontanés sur toute l'étendue du territoire national. A l'horizon 2020, la population concernée par ce programme est évaluée à 1,8 million d'habitants pour une superficie de 5 855 hectares. La Fondation Droit à la Ville est le maître d'ouvrage délégué de ce

programme. L'ensemble des partenaires ciblés sont : l'Etat du Sénégal, les communes, Cities Alliance (ONU Habitat, Banque Mondiale), la KfW et la GTZ, l'Union européenne, le secteur privé,

En conclusion, nous pouvons réaffirmer que, grâce à l'assistance d'Onu Habitat, l'habitat coopératif est devenu une réalité au Sénégal. Notre pays compte à ce jour plus de 300 coopératives d'habitat regroupant près de 50 000 membres. Cette expérience fructueuse avec ONU-Habitat a placé, sur cette question, le Sénégal dans une position de référence au sein de l'espace africain. De même, le Sénégal s'est doté d'un observatoire sur les indicateurs urbains de logement, suite à la tenue en octobre 1994 à Dakar de la journée mondiale de l'habitat. Il nous faut insister sur le rôle déterminant de Monsieur Daniel Biau, directeur de la coopération technique d'ONU Habitat, qui n'a menagé aucun effort pour l'organisation de cet événement dans notre capitale. Enfin, grâce au soutien précieux d'ONU Habitat, le Sénégal à l'ambition de réhabiliter les quartiers précaires de toutes ses villes à travers un ambitieux programme dénommé « ville sans bidonvilles au Sénégal ».

Ayant collaboré successivement en tant que fonctionnaire, puis ministre en charge de l'Urbanisme du Sénégal et enfin consultant avec ONU Habitat, nous croyons être bien placé pour constater cette fructueuse coopération entre cet organisme et mon pays. Nous voudrions saisir l'opportunité pour rendre un vibrant hommage à Monsieur Daniel Biau, à Daniel, sans qui ces résultats n'auraient pu être aussi satisfaisants. A l'occasion de son départ pour la retraite après de bons et loyaux services à ONU Habitat, nous lui souhaitons plein succès dans cette nouvelle vie.



SUDIPTO MUKERJEE

Sudipto Mukerjee was the Chef Technical Advisor (CTA) of the Iraq Programme. He is now working with UNDP.

I am the former head of UN-HABITAT Iraq Programme. An Architect Town Planner with nearly two decades of management experience in International Development, I started my professional career with the Government of India and later worked with the UK Department for International Development. I am presently the Head of the Economic Recovery and Poverty Alleviation Programme of UNDP Iraq.

As we all know, Iraq is a country emerging from decades of wars and persistent political and socio-economic impediments. The UN has been a witness to the country's instability and has partnered with successive governments and the wider international community in numerous endeavours aimed at moving from situations of emergency and humanitarian to recovery and development.

During this transition, positioning UN-HABITAT as both a humanitarian and development partner was crucial to maintain credibility as well as in sustaining the strategic space to operate in Iraq in line with its mandate. At the same time, constrained by its own internal operational limitations that inhibited rapid response, UN-HABITAT's access to humanitarian funds was sub-optimal.

The humanitarian post conflict and recovery conditions that Iraq faced were the main driver of the abundant ODA flows to UN agencies. UN-HABITAT successfully advocated for the shelter

sector's importance in the transition period and positioned itself as a solid partner in the recovery process. At the same time, this did not adequately translate into sectoral allocations and the Shelter sector received less than 2 percent of the total ITF contributions.

UN-HABITAT was effective in positioning itself strategically within the UN Iraq Country Team leading on a number of UNCT wide initiatives that included the formulation of a number of strategy and programme documents (such as the Common Country Assessment and the UNDAF) and coordination of the thematic groups on Shelter and Infrastructure.

UN- Habitat Iraq has so far operated under two exceptionally lavish funding regimes, 1) Oil for Food, and 2) the ITF (total resources USD 1.4 billion) a has remained a purely project-funded operation.

At present, the ITF has been fully programmed and contribution from donors is closed. UNCT in Iraq is struggling to establish a successor UNDAF Trust Fund, but the donor appetite for contribution is practically nil. The lack of donor support results not just because of the global economic recession, but also the perception that the Iraqi government has enough spare resources to finance its own national reforms and development programmes.

Like most other UN Iraq agencies, UN-HABITAT relied almost entirely over the past few years on the ITF and secured USD 90 million. A substantial part of that amount came as earmarked Japanese contribution, facilitated by the Regional Office at Fukuoka. With easy funds available through the ITF, it did not pay sufficient attention to establishing effective partnerships with bilateral donors.

All UN Iraq agencies presently face major resource mobilization challenges that include: a) the closure of the ITF; b) a rapid decline in donor interest to fund a middle income country; and c) overall reduction in ODA following the global financial crisis. On the other hand, in the short term, the Government of Iraq may not be in a position to fund the UN's development cooperation efforts as it not only faces a serious cash flow problem, but also has legal and mindset impediments. UN-HABITAT also faces a unique challenge as housing is generally perceived by most donors as a 'private good' which should not be funded through international development.

The ITF modality enabled UN-HABITAT to circumvent the problem of donors' lack of interest through the possibility of using ITF un-earmarked funds, in addition to engaging in joint programmes with other UN agencies under other ITF priority sectors. With the ITF no longer available as a source of funding, UN-HABITAT will need to revisit its resource mobilization strategy.

With the overall reduction in funding, competition for funds is likely to increase and agencies with better delivery capacities will potentially have better access to limited donor funds. To that end, UN-HABITAT's delivery capabilities are impaired by an operational set up that is somewhat inflexible and unable to respond rapidly.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Developing a Resource Mobilization Strategy that is grounded in the current ODA reality should be a strategic priority. Such a strategy should go beyond specifying a role only that of the country office and should include strategic support from headquarters and regional offices in areas of donor intelligence, networking with donors, facilitating experience sharing between country offices and also providing resources to seed activities that can leverage external funding.

This strategy should be able to successfully market UN-HABITAT's knowledge and experience in emergency, post-conflict recovery and development and accordingly position itself as a strong

humanitarian, recovery and development partner. More focused efforts in the following areas should improve resource mobilization prospects:

UN-HABITAT will also need to continue efforts to strategically position itself within the UNCT to enable them to have a seat at the policy table, influence the resident coordinator and mission leadership and improve its access to key donors and government counterparts.

UN-HABITAT will also need to maintain credibility through effective delivery. Successful resource mobilization depends first and foremost upon the ability of the agency to show results and catalyze transformational change. To this end, there may be a need to strengthen capacities in HQ divisions and in UNON to support the country office in enhancing efficiencies in delivery. Greater delegation of procurement and human resources management authority to the country office are also necessary.

Resource mobilization efforts should include strengthening existing partnerships and forging new ones. The most critical one is that with the principal clients to ensure synchronization between their and UN-HABITAT's priorities. This will not only improve prospects for cost sharing, coordinated programming but can also help in joining up efforts in approaching other donor partners. In addition, partnerships with donors and sister agencies will need to be strengthened.

With donors, effective planning, management and maintenance of relations are critical. This will need a more effective use of donor intelligence tools. The Iraq Office had developed a useful database on donors, but fell short of keeping it updated and using it to inform resource mobilization efforts. There are also a number of good materials and guiding documents on resource mobilization prepared by UNDG, DOCO and others, which UN-HABITAT should try to use. Finally, it should also be noted that the donors in Baghdad are a closed community and having credibility with one donor can help in forging relations with others.

With other UN agencies, efforts must be made towards developing and strengthening partnerships

with larger agencies such as UNDP, which have already well established relations with donors will need to continue. UN-HABITAT should also advocate for increased joint programming and more 'joined-up' efforts in resource mobilization paving way for cooperation rather than competition over the fast dwindling donor resources.

With the shift of donor priorities from funding large infrastructure works to more upstream policy, advisory and capacity building, UN-HABITAT must work to repackage its experience in implementing rehabilitation projects to provide technical assistance and capacity building for project management, environment friendly designs and technologies, procurement of works, asset management etc.

UN-HABITAT will need to look at more non-conventional funding sources and approaches. Non-conventional sources could include the emerging private sector in Iraq through their CSR funds, regional donors and global thematic funds.

Other innovative approaches could include approaching some donors for funding staff positions that will allow UN-HABITAT to play its policy advisory and advocacy roles in a sustainable way.

Finally, an initiative does not need to be single donor funded. Breaking down the projects into components can help them to be financed by different donors.



SYLVIE LACROUX

Sylvie Lacroux was section chief in RDD, then became CTA in Burkina Faso, later heading our Geneva Liaison Office. She is now Deputy Mayor of Ferney Voltaire.

My UN-HABITAT experience over 22 years was divided into five periods, as follows:

1985-1990 - I was based at UN-HABITAT headquarters under the Research and Development Division (RDD) undertaking research and advisory services, contributing policy guidelines, documenting best practices and preparing training materials.

1991 and 1992 - I was posted with TCD in Burkina Faso as CTA of the Urban Management Project covering 12 secondary cities. The project focused on providing capacity building and support towards the construction sector, including the small entrepreneurial sector. The project developed in an adverse national context of structural adjustment with investments by the World Bank in the capital Ouagadougou and the economic centre Bobodioulasso.

1993 until mid-2001 – I was at headquarters, successively heading the Shelter and Community Services Section supervising the operational Global Programme on Community Services implemented in Bolivia & Costa Rica, in Ghana & Zambia and in Sri Lanka and the Land and Tenure Section, in charge of the Campaign on Security of Tenure and Land Management.

Mid-2001 until 2005 - I was posted in Geneva with the OED. I served as Director

of the Liaison and Information Office in Europe with representation towards UN bodies in Geneva, focusing on UN interagency coordination in humanitarian affairs and human rights.

2006 and 2007 - I held two external research consultancies over a period of six months each with the Monitoring & Evaluation Division/Global Urban Observatory (GUO): “Qualitative study on the Legal and Institutional Framework (LIFI) Governing Security of Tenure” in Casablanca, Morocco and in Dakar, Senegal. The consultancies were meant to test the UN-HABITAT monitoring strategy at country and city level and develop an index on security of tenure.

My contribution to Technical Cooperation activities varied in nature and intensity over the assignments:

Period 1 with RDD was not particularly related to TCD with the exception of a few advisory services provided mostly at regional/sub-regional level.

Period 2 was performed directly under TCD. While I was a CTA in Burkina Faso, the regional office for Africa had not been opened. At the time, a regional Urban Management Programme (UMP-Africa) for Africa based in Ghana had just begun and discussions to open an office in Abidjan/Côte d’Ivoire to cover the Africa’s Francophone sub-region were underway.

Period 3 was a time when the agency went through major restructuring and activities shifted to promoting two Global Campaigns on Secure Tenure and Urban Governance (later combined) to be launched and developed at regional and country level. Interaction with the newly formed RTCD increased as well as with the newly established regional offices. This period also witnessed an increase in

the interaction between normative and operational work within the Agency.

In period 5, the two consultancies I held applied to countries actively involved with UN-HABITAT. Implementation was carried out with national and local institution contributions. An Index on Security of Tenure was prepared by a panel of local experts guided by the international consultant.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

Lessons learnt from the Burkina Faso country project experience:

- It is important to build local capacity in urban management with emphasis on offering training sessions for technical staff and for local elected authorities. Capacity building is the best guarantee for reducing external assistance.
- It is important to link the onsite project training with the national and sub regional training institutions, such as the engineering and architectural technical and higher schools existing in the sub region.
- Networking at the sub-regional level is essential to exchange experiences and to confront successes and failures with peers. The UMP sub-regional office for Western Africa played this role and also facilitated a joint effort with the French bilateral cooperation active in the sub region.
- It is important to have decentralized cooperation (city to city, sub national region to other regions, institution to institution such as school, hospital etc.). The Burkina Faso Habitat Project (1991-1992) reinforced the importance of local self-development when the central government failed at playing the role of facilitation.
- There was positive and successful ILO-Habitat interagency collaboration in the area of labour intensive services and infrastructure delivery at local level but failure in building a meaningful collaboration with FAO/IFAD on planning for rural-urban interaction.
- There were meaningful contributions made towards the preparation of a national decentralization reform (Ley of 1992). The World Bank impacts were critical: major investments were made in urban infrastructure in the two main cities: Ouagadougou and Bobodiolasso. These investments were conditioned by a structural adjustment reform limiting the effectiveness of the decentralization reform.

Lessons learnt from the development of the Geneva Office functions:

- The Agency became a full-pledged programme in 2002. As part of the "One UN" at global level, Habitat is becoming more active and visible in the Humanitarian Sector, taking part in the Humanitarian consolidated appeals, in the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Task Force, in operational activities handled from Geneva under the coordination of OCHA, at field level under UN Humanitarian coordinator and UNDG for the phases of rehabilitation and reconstruction. UN-HABITAT was called to guide the shelter cluster together with UNDP, UNHCR, IFCR with increasing involvement with relevant international NGOs both at global level of coordination and at field level.
- MoUs with UN Agencies were systematically renewed within the UN-system strategic Framework. This was done under an excellent spirit of collaboration but required a regular monitoring mechanism, lacking in Habitat at that time
- Global programmes benefited from the UN coordination platform offered in Geneva by strengthening their partnership with other UN Agencies and global organizations including those from civil society. That was the overall case of the Disaster Management Programme, and to a lesser extent, the joint UNHABITAT-UNHCHR Programme on housing rights, the Water and Sanitation Programme.
- With renewed effort, some results were achieved by integrating the Habitat Agenda implementation

within the activities of the UNECE/Committee on Human Settlements (Regular participation to the respective intergovernmental sessions, issuance of policy guidelines and harmonization of methodology for developing Country Profiles). Technical cooperation was significantly developed in the region with UN-HABITAT leading to the establishment of subregional offices in eastern and central Europe and the CIS Central-Asian sub region.

- Some progress was made in attracting Western European countries to join the multilateral activities in the region (Italy, Germany, the Nordic Countries in the Balkans sub region). EU support for the region was not easily accessible.
- Insufficient support provided to the Right to Housing UN Rapporteur

Lessons learnt from the consultancy work provided under GUO:

- While the methodology developed by GUO to produce national and local data was relevant, its application in the field failed due to poor coordination at HQ and field level. HPMs were not yet fully operational at the time so the national panels were not organized and lacked the relevant local partners. Neither national nor local urban observatories were in place in the two countries where a test was meant to be undertaken.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

- Facilitate the rotation of UN-HABITAT staff from HQ to regional offices and vice versa.

- Enhance the level of responsibility of the Geneva Office Director to a D1 position to match other UN Agencies and Habitat's New York Office.
- Strengthen the implementation of interagency global programmes by providing the framework for field projects (No global programme without field implementation).
- Reinforce HQ interagency monitoring mechanisms.
- Ensure a strong training and capacity-building component in each field project, a necessary component for building national capacity and sustainability of development
- Analyze the long productive experience of the Training Unit at HQ, evaluate the full adequacy of training material and tools and their appropriate dissemination and use by national institutions at regional level.
- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation component in each field activity.
- Develop decentralized cooperation: North/South and mostly South/South.
- Provide adequate support to the country missions of the Rapporteur on Right to Housing.
- Establish national and local urban observatories before testing GUO methodology.
- Strengthen HS-Network to supply the UN-HABITAT Human Library.



TATIANA ROSKOSHNAYA

Tatiana Roskoshnaya managed UN-HABITAT's Russian and Eastern European portfolio from 2002 to 2010. She now lives in St Petersburg.

I worked for UN-HABITAT for over seven years, from 2002 until my retirement in the beginning of 2010. My activities were very much orientated on the region of countries with economies in transition. When I started, RTCD activities in the region were limited to some very small projects in Russia, funded by the Government of the Russian Federation. Other operational activities took place in Kosovo, supervised by the Global Division. The large Serbian project had not yet been launched and negotiations with the donor (Italy) were still ongoing. Quite a number of activities carried out by UN-HABITAT in the region during the 1990s had no continuation and, as a result, valuable experience gained by the countries during the transitional period was not properly shared.

Knowing the needs of the countries of the region, I did my best to find ways to support them. This was not so easy and required good working contacts with the countries. That is why building relations was among the first priorities. Launching operational activities was even more challenging, however UN-HABITAT made considerable progress in this area.

HUMAN INTERACTION AND LIVING MEMORIES

Cooperation with transition economy countries started two decades ago. The main priorities were urban and territorial planning, governance improvement,

housing policies and reform including housing rights, access to basic services and efficient decentralisation through strengthened local authorities and institutional capacity building. Other cooperation areas include sustainable financing, public/private partnership (particularly in urban infrastructure development), and identifying urban trends through Local and National Observatories network.

Some countries are very poor with per head income of two dollars or less per day. They are not listed among the LDCs and donors rarely sponsor UN-HABITAT activities at the regional level, but UN-HABITAT assistance is needed and could make dramatic differences. With UN-HABITAT presence, activities would also contribute to enriching best practices and add to further knowledge management, including Global campaigns.

Cooperation Framework and Funding: Unfortunately UN-HABITAT presence in the region is very limited and often it cannot react timely. Only three countries in the region support UN-HABITAT activities and to change this, some seed funds needs top be made available to arising situations. However, with limited regular budget and earmarked contributions UN-HABITAT activities in the region are under-funded.

UN-HABITAT has long term Agreements of Cooperation with Poland and the Russian Federation. The agreement with Poland is related to a UN-HABITAT office in Warsaw since 2005. According to this Agreement Poland provides support to the office. The agreement of Cooperation with the Russian Federation is over 20 years old, inherited from the Soviet era and adjusted to the new political realities at the beginning of 1990s, and further

developed in the new millennium. In 2006, the updated agreement was signed in Nairobi for the next five years with a possibility of its extension.

Establishing national-level contacts is an issue of prime importance, but not sufficient for launching joint activities. A lot of effort must go into enlightening national officials about UN-HABITAT, its mandate and activities, and the benefits countries and cities might enjoy. Under conditions of frequent change it is very difficult to provide continuity, both in terms of activities and contacts. On the other hand, firm professional contacts and achieved understandings might live much longer. At present, UN-HABITAT is much better known among the countries of the region and there are good grounds to further develop activities, build on what was done, add value and look into the future.

The One UN approach is implemented only in one country of the region. In the majority of countries there are the same UN country teams. Although UN-HABITAT has contacts with some of them, to be an active member UN-HABITAT has to have a more regular presence in the countries and contribute to joint activities. One of the lessons learned is that it is very difficult to be an active member and advise in our areas of expertise without a presence on the ground. Some UN agencies are reducing their presence in a number of countries of the region. For example, UNDP has left Poland and the countries that became EU members (apart from Slovakia where they continue to have a regional office). They are also reducing their presence in the Russian Federation, which may result into new possibilities for UN-HABITAT.

Intergovernmental agencies prefer to work directly in the countries and being able to demonstrate their capacity and relevance. UN-HABITAT's mandate and experience might be helpful in persuading donors to consider UN-HABITAT as a serious partner capable of adding value to joint activities.

Recently, a series of new initiatives have emerged and gained importance in the region. These include cooperation through the Committee for Cooperation in Construction of CIS – a new and very promising

development. Among others, the Eurasian branch of UCLG has risen in importance. It covers the countries of the former Soviet Union except for the new members of the EU (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and Moldova (although Moldova representatives attend all meetings) plus Mongolia. Total number of members (cities and organisations of cities) is over 100. The headquarters of the Branch are in Kazan.

National partners are represented by numerous NGOs, organisations of cities, public organisations, researches and academia. It is worth to make efforts to bring them closer in discussing urban development issues through National Urban Forums which might become a missing platform for more frequent contacts, sharing experiences and exchanging opinions, joint elaboration of recommendations etc. My post and my activities were very much regionally orientated. This work is to be done in close cooperation with UN-HABITAT representatives in the region.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

I would suggest:

- The region of countries with economies in transition should not be overlooked and become equal partners in global and regional UN-HABITAT campaigns, programmes and projects working through offices in the region.
- All offices in the region are to be better provided with UN-HABITAT information and publications.
- Create a platform for regular exchange of experiences/lessons learnt and search for efficient decisions to improve current situation.
- Encourage countries to establish National Habitat Forums to address sustainable urbanisation issues.
- Address joint identification of priorities.
- Establish regional workshops to facilitate the development of key policies, such as participatory slum upgrading, improvement of local government, gender mainstreaming in human settlements, urban environmental improvement, and the development of capacity building tools.

- Fund raising issue remains an urgent matter, joint efforts are vital: under present conditions, available financial support is very limited. Thus new innovative approaches need to be developed and implemented.
- Inviting countries to more closely cooperate, including through sharing experiences both through thematic regional meetings and through publications, including *Urban World* in Russian;
- *Urban World* might provide the very platform to discuss urgent matters of urban development in the region and sharing experiences;
- Cooperation of UN-HABITAT with NGOs and civil society works only when governments do not object. Some NGOs are strong and well-advanced with clear understanding of the importance of and their role in addressing urbanization and urban development issues. At the same time, there are considerable differences in attitudes of governments towards NGOs.
- Both regional and bilateral cooperation are to be developed through regional programmes/projects.
- In many countries of the region the professional level of local or municipal civil servants remains extraordinary low and training activities facilitating capacity building would be very welcome.
- Cooperate with universities (many introduced special courses and specializations related to urban development issues) assisting them to include into their courses and programmes developed by UN-HABITAT and its partners innovative approaches.

SPECIAL MOTION³



It is a great honour, on behalf all my colleagues, to introduce a special motion and make a statement of appreciation to Daniel Biau, or as he might properly be described - 'UN Man'. For Daniel can proudly be considered one of the founders of our organization and his retirement after almost a quarter century of service is a watershed moment for us.

Under your guidance and leadership, we conducted the first 'Human Library Conference', gathering over 25 retired UN-HABITAT elders, who contributed their resources and valuable time to come to Nairobi to share with us their impressive knowledge and insightful expertise. As a wise man once said: "The present needs the past to move into the future".

Daniel, by your unmatched contribution to UN Habitat, you have constantly reminded us of the need for real changes to transformation our agency in order to stay relevant, resourced and focused in responding to the challenges of a new urban agenda.

On behalf of all regional and office directors around the World, from Amman to Rio and Cairo, from New York to Bangkok, from Geneva to Brussels, from Nairobi to Fukuoka and from all the Habitat programme managers and thousands of field staff, I would like to

thank you most sincerely for the volume and quality of your most impressive contribution to our work.

Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, in the tradition of the French Academy, I want to make the "L'Eloge" and pay tribute to an exceptional man, a civil engineer and urban sociologist a philosopher of contemporary urban planning and governance, a manager and a visionary of our time, a fond lover of urban bridges as links and continuum of urban landscapes, a man who, for almost a quarter of a century has devoted his time and his life to the continued success of our organization.

I mentioned earlier that Daniel might called 'UN Man', but to be more correct he should be called 'UN-HABITAT Man'. For who else do you know who, when joining our organization, transformed the gate to his home by fashioning it in the design of the UN-HABITAT emblem!

A French citizen by birth, Daniel is truly an African by heart and mind. But that is perhaps hardly surprising as he came to the continent early in his life, living with his parents, from the age of 6 to 9, in the Malian city of Gao. The city has since made him an honorary citizen in recognition of the great work he performed in West Africa.

He and his lovely wife Regine also spent their honeymoon in West Africa – in the South Senegal region of Casamance.

³By Alioune Badiane, Director, ROAAS

Daniel, thank you for your leadership and vision and thank you for always leading by example. By your personal standing, your professionalism and sense of justice and by your guidance in inspiring, directing and managing RTCD, and earlier on as Deputy Director of UN-HABITAT, you have helped in making us proud, committed and determined to carry forward your mission.

As you are joining the prestigious, select and privileged Club of Elders, I wish you and Regine and your family the best of success and happiness and hope to welcome you often to our homes and offices when you revisit Kenya.

Long life, good health and bonne chance!

The main objective of the Human Library Conference was to provide an opportunity to draw lessons from 25 years of UN-Habitat's technical and regional cooperation, as well as to explore new perspectives to guide the future work of the Agency particularly in developing countries.

UN-Habitat's technical cooperation is not only about operations and on the ground project activities. There are many elements of policy, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation at country level which should be supported by sufficient human and financial resources from both development partners and beneficiary countries.

UN-Habitat being essentially a mix of global programmes and country activities, there is a need to better coordinate and articulate these two levels of intervention. The issue is not the question of normative vs. operational, but rather the need for ensuring real complementarity between global and country-level activities.

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