



# UN-HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

GLOBAL REPORT ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS 2009



## CASE STUDIES

### THE URBAN PLANNING PROCESS

#### IMPACT OF COLONIAL URBAN PLANNING UPON THE STRUCTURE AND GROWTH OF AFRICAN CITIES

Colonialism, which in most of Africa lasted from the late 19th century until at least the early 1960s, influenced the structure and pattern of African urban growth in a number of ways. Several of today's more prominent African cities – Abidjan, Johannesburg and Nairobi – simply did not exist before colonial rule. They were founded and developed during colonial times as centres of commerce and administrative activity. More generally, however, colonialism led to the formation of an urban system that displaced the traditional networks of trade and influence that had developed over many centuries. The new system reflected colonial economic priorities, which emphasized the exploitation of Africa's mineral resources, primary agricultural production (including plantations), as well as transport and communication activities. These new patterns of commerce and trade, in turn, led to higher levels and new patterns of migration as Africans sought work in mines, plantations and newly developing urban areas. Colonial urbanization also affected the physical structure and layout of many cities. Perhaps the most obvious characteristic of colonial urban planning was the portioning of urban space into two highly distinct zones: a 'European' space that enjoyed a high level of urban infrastructure and services, and an 'indigenous' space that was marginally serviced. The relative indifference to the needs of the African majority is said to be a characteristic of urban planning that was rooted in the very fabric of the colonial state. *Source: National Research Council (2003 p101)*

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PLANNING: PARTICIPATORY PLANNING FROM THE BOTTOM UP

This approach to participation is based on the involvement of users in the design and planning of their environments. An example from Sri Lanka describes how the initiators of a community-building effort avoided 'pre-emptive community building', but instead searched for a catalyst to set off a process of community formation. Their starting point was to focus on a bus stop, and routing a bus service into an informal settlement rather than skirting around it. They located the bus stop at an intersection, close to some standpipes where women and children gathered, and prepared plans for some trees and streetlights. Over time, an informal market emerged at this point; people began to travel into the settlement to buy fresh foods, the local university provided a mobile dental clinic there; a 'taxi rank' for delivery bicycles was set up; and a recycling centre was built. A locally-elected council emerged to develop a community enterprise revolving fund, in partnership with the local authority to secure new schools and fire- and flood-prevention measures. Hence, community-building emerged from within and was consequently sustainable and enduring. *Source: Hamdi, 2004*

#### GENDER-AWARE URBAN PLANNING

In 2005, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions launched the publication *Virtual Town for Equality*. This publication highlights gender-aware planning initiatives taking place in various European towns. Some examples are briefly described below.

Norway has integrated women within municipal life by taking into account their needs and issues in urban planning. This has included increasing women's participation in municipal consultations, education in town planning, training on processes that culminate in city plans, and the use of gender disaggregated data, among other initiatives.

Berlin, Germany, has developed guidelines for city and town planning as well as land-use classification plans that take gender into account. The city of Ulm, Germany, after conducting a neighbourhood survey, has developed an outdoor playground adapted to the needs of girls and boys, in terms of games, equipment and building material. Dudelange, Luxembourg, set up an information booth for women to offer consultations and advice on administrative procedures in the municipality. In Bristol, the United Kingdom, single women with children are given preferential treatment in allocation of social housing. The city of Hanover, Germany, has incorporated gender issues into policies, programmes and projects where urban policy is concerned, especially public transport. Helsinki, Finland, has introduced a policy where people travelling with young children in baby buggies travel free, encouraging parents to use public transport. *Source: UN-HABITAT, 2008b*

## PLANNING SUSTAINABLE CITIES

## MODES OF DECISION-MAKING FOR PLANNING, CURITIBA, BRAZIL

During a period of authoritarian government in Brazil, the appointment of a particularly well qualified and forward-looking mayor in Curitiba (who was later re-elected several times) led to the development of new approaches to urban planning and implementation that have been internationally recognized. To guide discussions on the municipal master plan (Plano Diretor), first an advisory commission and then an independent public institution, the Institute of Urban Planning and Research of Curitiba (Instituto de Pesquisa e Planejamento Urbano de Curitiba), was created. This entity, set up in 1965, was able to overcome bureaucratic inertia by including representatives of all relevant government departments on its council. Although initial plan preparation did not provide opportunities for wide citizen participation, members of the economic elite were consulted and benefited from the plan. The continuing existence of this planning agency, backed by successive mayors and governors, ensured effective plan implementation. However, it has not been possible to institute effective government and planning for the Curitiba Metropolitan Region, in which rival municipalities continue to resist any loss of their decision-making power to the metropolitan body composed of their mayors. The municipality has, over the years, devised innovative ways of involving citizens in managing and improving the city. Never the less, relatively weak civil society organization and limited accountability have resulted in failure to acknowledge many persistent problems, particularly those facing lower income residents. *Source: Irazábal, 2006*

## EMPOWERMENT OF THE POOR FOR PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

In at least 11 nations, federations of organizations of the urban poor are engaged in initiatives to upgrade informal settlements, develop affordable new housing and improve infrastructure and services. They also support members to develop more stable livelihoods and work with city governments to show how redevelopment can avoid evictions and minimize relocations. The federations are made up of large numbers of savings groups, in which women are active participants. The groups are formed and managed by urban poor groups themselves, with non-governmental organization (NGO) support. The largest federation is the National Slum Dwellers' Federation in India, which has over 700,000 members. All of the federations work with government, especially local government, in order to scale up their initiatives. Once formed into a federation, a revolving loan fund is often established, in which members' savings are complemented by contributions from governments and external agencies. *Source: Patel and Mitlin, 2004; Boonyabantha, 2005; D'Cruz and Satterthwaite, 2005*

## THE CITY STATUTE, BRAZIL

The enactment of the City Statute of Brazil in 2001 represented a groundbreaking development with regards to the creation of an inclusive local decision-making framework for cities. The statute consolidates the role of municipalities in the development of policies and responses to address multiple challenges of urbanization in Brazil. Mandated by the national constitution and the Cities Statute, municipalities in Brazil with a population of more than 20,000 are expected to adopt a master or comprehensive planning approach.

The City Statute in Brazil has been further promoted with the formation of the Ministry of Cities in 2003. This institution works with states, municipalities, civil society organizations and the private sector in the areas of housing, environmental sanitation, transport and mobility and other related urban programmes.

In 2004, a Cities' Council was created to add a further instrument for democratic management of the National Urban Development Policy. This is a collegiate body of a deliberative and advisory nature, which guides the formulation and implementation of the National Urban Development Policy and other policies and planning processes. Currently, the council is comprised of 86 members (49 civil society and 37 government representatives), with 9 observers representing state governments, each of which has also been mandated to establish Cities Councils. *Source: Irazábal, 2008a*

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