



Dialogue on Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): Slum Upgrading and Affordable Housing

Tuesday 20 June 2006

Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre Ballroom C

The Dialogue will be structured in three segments:

- (i) security of tenure and provision of land;
- (ii) inclusive slum upgrading processes and
- (iii) financing slum upgrading, affordable housing, and proactive programmes to avoid formation of new slums.

It will address the following challenges and opportunities for implementation of the MDGs:

- Urban settlements and poverty related issues are critical to meeting all the MDGs.
- Implementation must not only consider existing slums but also the need to prevent the formation of new ones by offering adequate alternatives.
- Developing countries require financial assistance to fund slum upgrading and urban development programmes.
- Promoting the leading role of local authorities.
- Empowering the urban poor and encouraging an inclusive and participatory approach.
- Enabling security of tenure and access to affordable land in suitable locations.

The Dialogue will start with an excerpt from the award winning 1990 movie "On Borrowed land" which documents the struggle of a squatter community in Manila, Philippines, against their forced eviction from a site that was slated for commercial development by foreign investors. It will end with a short video showing how slum dwellers in Manila, affiliated to the Homeless People Federation of the Philippines, organize themselves through micro-savings that enable them to buy, develop land and resettle.

Background

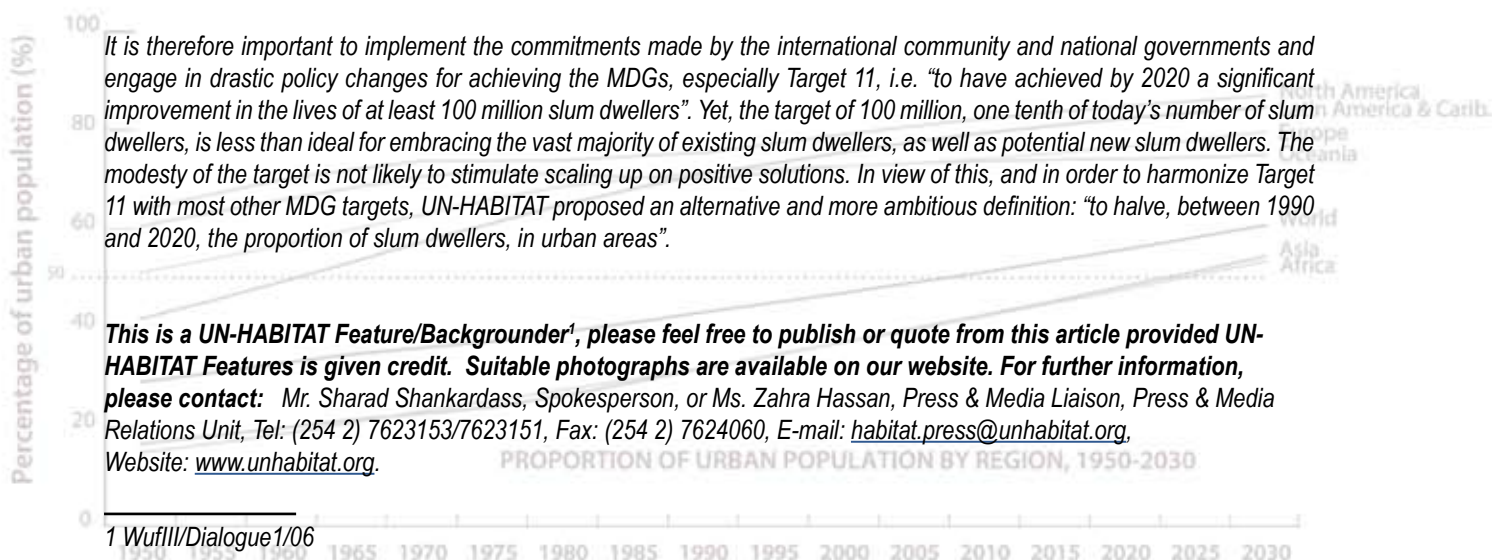
For the first time in human history, the majority of the world's population will live in urban areas. Today, 30 years after Vancouver I, the world urban population is much worse off, with almost one third of the urban population living in "inhuman settlements". The world urbanization scenario over the next thirty years indicates that virtually all of the world's population growth will take place in towns and cities. The largest influx will take place in countries in the South where already 1 billion people - one third of the urban population - are slum dwellers. In some regions such as Sub Saharan Africa, about 2/3 of the urban population lives in slums today!

Slum dwellers generally suffer from lack of safe water and adequate sanitation, overcrowding and poor housing, insecure tenure and exposure to eviction and demolition. If current policies do not change drastically, an increasing number of the world's poor will settle in slums and informal settlements. If we continue with business as usual, the slum population is expected to double to 2 billion by 2030.

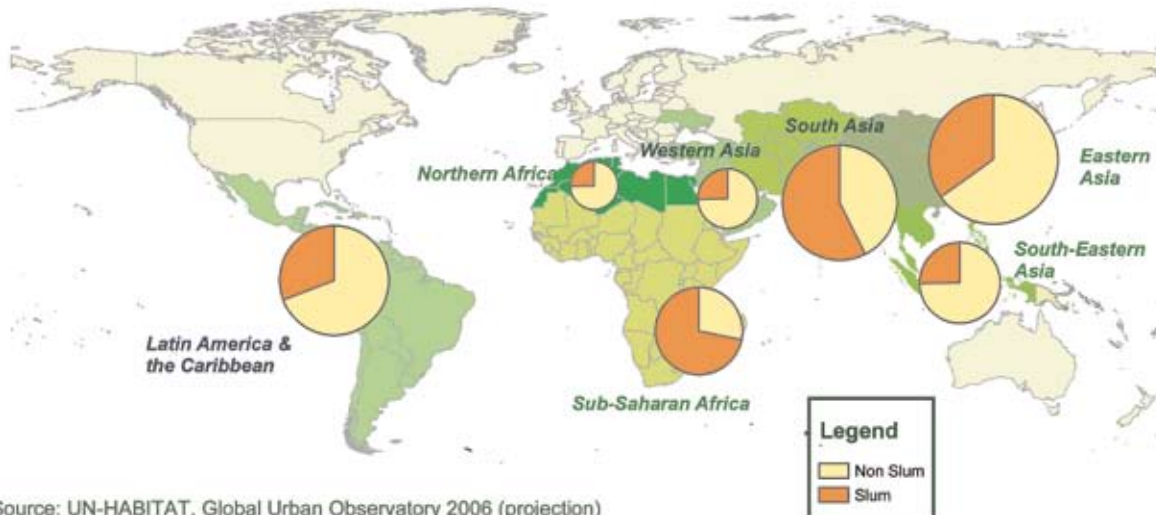
It is therefore important to implement the commitments made by the international community and national governments and engage in drastic policy changes for achieving the MDGs, especially Target 11, i.e. "to have achieved by 2020 a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers". Yet, the target of 100 million, one tenth of today's number of slum dwellers, is less than ideal for embracing the vast majority of existing slum dwellers, as well as potential new slum dwellers. The modesty of the target is not likely to stimulate scaling up on positive solutions. In view of this, and in order to harmonize Target 11 with most other MDG targets, UN-HABITAT proposed an alternative and more ambitious definition: "to halve, between 1990 and 2020, the proportion of slum dwellers, in urban areas".

This is a UN-HABITAT Feature/Backgrounder¹, please feel free to publish or quote from this article provided UN-HABITAT Features is given credit. Suitable photographs are available on our website. For further information, please contact: Mr. Sharad Shankardass, Spokesperson, or Ms. Zahra Hassan, Press & Media Liaison, Press & Media Relations Unit, Tel: (254 2) 7623153/7623151, Fax: (254 2) 7624060, E-mail: habitat.press@unhabitat.org, Website: www.unhabitat.org.

PROPORTION OF URBAN POPULATION BY REGION, 1950-2030



Urban Slum Population of the Developing World (2005)

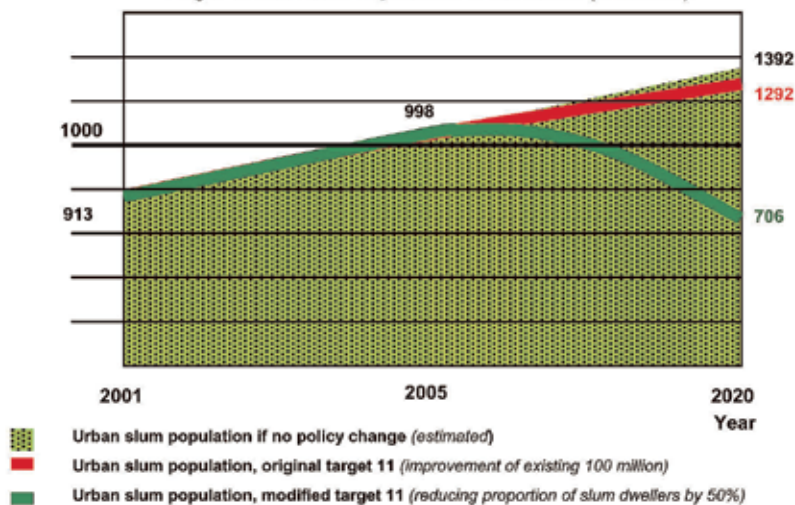


Source: UN-HABITAT, Global Urban Observatory 2006 (projection)

The World's Slum Population by Region 1990-2020 (in millions)						
	1990	2000	2005	2020 Scenario I: No intervention	2020 Scenario II: After achieving MDG Target 11, i.e. improving the lives of 100 Million slum dwellers	2020 Scenario III: After reducing proportion of slum dwellers by 50% between 1990 and 2020
WORLD	715	913	998	1392	1292	706
Developed regions	42	45	47	52	47,5	26
EURASIA (Countries in CIS)	19	19	19	18	17	9
Developing regions	654	849	933	1331	1237	671
Northern Africa	22	21	21	21	19	17
Sub-Saharan Africa	101	166	199	393	370	151
Latin America and the Caribbean	111	128	134	163	150	81
Eastern Asia	151	194	212	299	278	158
South Asia	199	253	276	385	357	179
South-Eastern Asia	49	57	60	73	68	58
Western Asia	22	30	33	50	46	26
Oceania	0,4	0,5	0,6	1	0,9	0,4

Source: UN-HABITAT State of the World's Cities Report 2006

Target 11 and Slum Population of the World (in millions)



Source: UN-HABITAT and the Goal of the Millennium Declaration on slums (2005), updated based on preliminary version of UN-HABITAT, State of the World's Cities Report 2006

Estimated investment required to upgrade slums and provide alternatives, 2005-2020

Intervention	Target population (million)	Average investment per person (\$)	Total investment (billions \$)
Upgrading existing slums	100	670	67.0
Providing alternatives to formation of new slums	570	400	228.5
Total	670	440	293.5

Source: Estimates by UN Millennium Project Task Force on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers based on data from UN-Habitat et al. in: UN Millennium Project. 2005. A Home in the City. London: Earthscan.