

BUILDING A COMMON FUTURE

In 1996, Habitat II emphasized two themes of global importance: 'Adequate shelter for all' and 'Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world'. These themes are central to the worldwide responsibility for building a common future and form the subject of the two chapters making up the last part of this report.

Chapter 16 focuses on selected aspects of adequate shelter for all. Attempts to arrive at a universal definition of adequate shelter are fraught with difficulty because standards and norms vary considerably according to cultural, climatic and political factors. Hence, there are also differing perceptions of the need for action and the types of approaches that would be appropriate. However, there is no disagreement about the need to do something about the complete lack of any shelter at all for a growing number of people. Homelessness represents the most obvious and severe manifestation of the unfulfilment of the distinct human right to adequate housing.

It is important to recognize the different needs of particular homeless populations, whether they are migrants, transients, substance abusers, mentally ill people, battered women, street children or others. However, it is also important not to stigmatize these groups and to avoid concentrating on individual characteristics without directing attention to the broader structural factors that underpin homelessness. Homelessness cannot be severed from its wider economic, political, cultural and social contexts. Strategies to combat its root causes, rather than its symptomatic expressions, must necessarily deal with these contexts, which vary internationally.

The experience of the US, Canada and Japan illustrates that high levels of affluence do not preclude – and indeed, can easily hide – homelessness. Chapter 16 stresses that markets have not eliminated and cannot be expected to eliminate homelessness. This chapter describes a range of policy approaches in relation to the causes behind homelessness. In the developing economies, these causes include rapid urbanization and household formation that produce a demand for housing that exceeds existing production capabilities. In addition, structural adjustment policies have curtailed subsidies on basic services, eliminated public assistance programmes and contributed to migration, eroding existing social safety nets and undermining family cohesion. Forced evictions also continue to be a source of homelessness, posing a particular problem to women in countries where they possess unequal property and inheritance rights. Women are also more at risk of violence and abuse when rendered homeless.

In more developed countries, the causes of homelessness include lack of affordable housing, gentrification, cutbacks in welfare budgets, stagnating and falling real earnings, the rise of part-time and insecure jobs, erosion of job benefits, lack of afford-

able health care and deinstitutionalization of people afflicted by mental illness. Further, discriminatory practices based on race, ethnicity, gender and family status remain widespread, part of processes of social exclusion in which lack of access to housing plays a key role. These problems are often compounded by spatial mismatches between housing and job markets.

In all parts of the world, but particularly in Africa and Asia, natural and human-made disasters – including wars and civil strife – are major causes of homelessness.

Globalization has played an ambiguous role concerning the right to housing. The number of people living in inadequate shelter, or no shelter at all, appears to have increased as a result of the expansion of market processes associated with contemporary globalization. However, at the same time, modern information and communication technologies have helped to spread norms deriving from the right to housing, facilitated the exchange of information about model legislation and supported cooperative action to counter violations of housing rights. Thus, housing rights *in law* have advanced, even if *in practice* they have not. Housing rights provide clear and consistent criteria against which the actions, policies, practices and legislation of states can be judged. In this regard, the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure is a major initiative to guarantee a justiciable right of access to and use of property. Secure tenure is also important because it stimulates investments by people in their own homes.

Within the context of tenure, an overall shelter strategy must necessarily be concerned not only with strengthening security of tenure, but also with developing and supporting appropriate forms of tenure. In this regard, cooperative housing offers advantages because it pools resources to lower individual housing costs; fosters collective action and self-help; increases the creditworthiness of low-income households; and limits or prevents speculation.

The second principal theme of the Habitat Agenda, sustainable human settlements development, has many aspects. Chapter 17 emphasizes the importance of supporting governance to create more inclusive cities and eradicate poverty, corruption and violence. The Global Campaign for Urban Governance promotes the establishment of legal frameworks and policy reforms to enable decentralized, democratic approaches for addressing these challenges. This chapter also insists that the eradication of poverty must be recognized as a public good because people living in poverty represent unrealized human capital potential with benefits for the *whole* of society. Given the failure of market forces to invest in people who are poor, governments have a key role that includes support for the informal sector.

Corruption undermines good governance. People are more susceptible to corruption when they have the monopoly over a good or service, the discretion to decide who gets that good or service and are not accountable for that decision. Privatization has increased the incentives for multinational companies to offer bribes in order to secure profitable concessions and contracts. Corruption tends to be reduced by separation of power, checks and balances, transparency, a good justice system and clearly defined roles, rules, responsibilities and limits. Corruption tends not to thrive where there is a democratic culture, competition and good systems of control, and where people have rights to information and rights of redress. Transparency and accountability are central

to good democratic governance. Often, the performance of urban government can only be effectively audited at the city level where people's expertise about local events, people and places can be brought to bear.

Urban violence is not primarily a spontaneous occurrence, but above all, the product of societies characterized by inequality and social exclusion. Measures that protect urban communities from deprivation, unemployment, homelessness, illiteracy, injustice and social disintegration will ultimately also protect them from crime and violence.

Conflicts between neighbours and communities often revolve around scarce resources. Shared water is a major cause of violence, and may be exacerbated by privatization. With deregulation, interpersonal violence is also increasingly linked to cut-throat competition in informal sector activities. The availability of firearms, facilitated by worldwide organized crime groups, multiplies the risks of urban violence and represents a fundamental threat to security.

In the urban context there has been a broad shift from approaches that focus on the control of violence, to those that concentrate on prevention, to more recent perspectives that aim to rebuild social capital. Two further approaches, commonly at national level but with important urban focuses, are peaceful conflict resolution through negotiation and legal enforcement of human rights. Cities need integrated frameworks to coordinate these approaches.

ADEQUATE SHELTER FOR ALL: STRATEGIC FOCI

Combating Homelessness

'Homelessness represents the most obvious and severe manifestation of the unfulfilment of the distinct human right to adequate housing'¹

'In many cities in the developing countries, an increasing proportion of the population lives in substandard housing or on the streets. In Mumbai alone, more than 5 million residents live in slums and the number of pavement dwellers has been estimated at over 1 million.'²

'When 43-year-old Yette M Adams froze to death at the doorstep of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development headquarters in Washington, DC, her death riveted public attention on a persistent and egregious problem in a country where it is possible to find 4 x 8 foot plywood dog houses at US\$500 a piece, designed to house homeless people, as well as a US\$15,000 miniature Victorian mansion for a Dobermann pinscher, with a redwood cathedral ceiling, Italian porcelain tile flooring, solid brass fixtures, cedar shake roof, double pane windows, pool and rock garden.'³

'In Tokyo, in the entrails of Shinjuku subway station, in front of an office window displaying an advertisement for a life insurance company, a homeless person finds shelter in a carton box – previously used by Microsoft, epitome of globalization, owned by the richest person on earth, with a net worth of over US\$60,000 million⁴ – within a stone's throw from the Welfare Office, housed in the Metropolitan Government building whose price tag of 157,000 million yen earned it the nickname of "the Tax Building".'⁵

The citations above succinctly capture several important points about homelessness worldwide. First, housing is now universally recognized as a human right and pervasive homelessness demonstrates clearly that efforts to implement this right must be strengthened and accelerated. The International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH) in 1987 helped to direct public attention to the extent and severity of homelessness and spurred a plethora of reports,⁶ but subsequent policies have not diminished the problem. Second, although data are sparse and scattered, it is clear that the scale of urban homelessness in the developing countries is enormous. The situation in Mumbai, with

more than 1 million pavement-dwellers, is not unusual. Lack of adequate shelter is common. In comparison, problems of homelessness in the more developed economies are neither as widespread nor as severe.

However, the two vignettes from the United States and Japan illustrate a third point: high levels of aggregate affluence do not preclude – and indeed, can easily hide – homelessness. In 1998, the US and Japan ranked in the top among countries worldwide in terms of per capita GNP,⁷ yet neither country has eliminated homelessness.⁸ This point is further demonstrated by the situation in Canada, another member of the world's economic elite, where, in an unprecedented action, the Toronto City Council by a vote of 53 to 1 adopted a resolution requesting that homelessness be declared a national disaster requiring emergency relief.⁹

High levels of aggregate affluence do not preclude – and indeed, can easily hide – homelessness

In varying degrees, these three advanced economies have systems of housing provision that rely on market mechanisms. In such systems, access to housing is predicated on people's ability to pay the price resulting from the dynamics of supply and demand. If demand does not generate sufficient profit, suppliers will make rational business decisions to seek higher returns on their investments elsewhere. Hence, households without adequate incomes, who cannot translate their real housing needs into an effective market demand, find themselves at risk of homelessness. Interests that have pushed for economic globalization, with its attendant emphasis on competitive processes, privatization of public provisions and curtailment of social programmes, even as more and more people live in poverty, have undoubtedly contributed to a rise in homelessness.¹⁰ It is clear that markets have not eliminated and cannot be expected to eliminate homelessness.

Markets have not eliminated and cannot be expected to eliminate homelessness

The diversity of homelessness

Homelessness is a complex problem. It has a variety of causes and consequences. The definitions of and approaches to it are many, shaped by political ideologies as much as

Box 16.1 Houselessness and inadequate shelter: seeking clarification

People *sleeping rough* – meaning in the street, in public places or in any other place not meant for human habitation – form the core of the ‘homeless’. Those *sleeping in shelters* provided by welfare or other institutions can also be considered as a part of this population. Persons or households living under these two types of circumstances can be categorized as being ‘houseless’. This definition avoids cultural and regional variations. An individual with no access to housing will be considered as houseless all over the world.

Concealed houselessness is another aspect of what is commonly grouped under homelessness as well. This category includes people living with family members or friends because they cannot afford shelter by themselves (eg doubling up). Without this privately offered housing opportunity they would be living in the street or be sheltered by an institution of the welfare system. This phenomenon is extremely difficult to enumerate, especially in countries where the extended family takes care of its members if necessary. Further, new strategies of sharing housing units are emerging as pressures on housing markets increases (eg in Eastern Europe), making enumeration of these situations even more challenging.

Others living under the threat of houselessness are those facing eviction or expiration of the lease, with no prospect for alternative housing. People being released from institutional settings with no place to go fall into this category of being at ‘risk of houselessness’.

People living in inadequate, *substandard housing* should also be included in studies and policies concerned with houselessness because such housing often is an antecedent condition, as well as a temporary situation for those seeking to escape houselessness. Households with insecure incomes are likely to live in such housing units.

The three last categories are overlapping, but none includes the whole of the others. Someone can live in the house of a relative (*concealed houselessness*) and the house may (but need not) be substandard. And the relative may or may not be liable to eviction (at risk of houselessness).

Figure 16.1 visually organizes these mutually non-exclusive types of situations under the label ‘inadequate shelter’, which is central to the concerns of the Habitat Agenda. In contrast to the above definition of houselessness, this classification of inadequate shelter is subject to multiple interpretations, owing to differences in climatic conditions, historic traditions, legislative contexts and culture-based variations. For example, a house without heating can be seen as adequate in a country with a mild climate, whereas it would be substandard in areas with cold winters.

For technical reasons the definition of inadequate shelter has to be restricted to measurable elements: a housing unit without a roof and/or walls that does not allow privacy; without adequate space, adequate security (legal and physical), adequate lighting, heating and ventilation and adequate basic infrastructure such as water supply, sanitation and waste-management facilities; without environmental quality and safeguards against health threats, and with housing costs that are not reasonable.

Figure 16.1 clarifies the relationships between the different categories of houselessness. Houselessness is part of the inadequate shelter situation, forming its bottom end. The introduction of the term ‘houselessness’ is meant to help the statistical analysis of movements in and out of houselessness.

There are several reasons for this refining of the conventional notion of homelessness. First, the categories correspond to different spheres of action by policy makers. Emergency action is required for the houseless part of the population, whereas those in inadequate shelter must be targeted for actions that prevent a worsening of their situation and that assist them in the transition to adequate and secure housing. Second, while the incidence of different forms of inadequate shelter can be established by census counts or surveys based on housing units, this is by definition not possible for the houseless population. The enumeration of houselessness and concealed houselessness will require the development of new methods. Third, the implementation of approaches to eliminate homelessness requires a proper understanding of the underlying causes that lead to each of the different forms of inadequate shelter. Each of these forms may demand a different approach. Finally, the conceptual distinctions make it possible to adopt *houselessness* as a global, universally acceptable category, while maintaining *inadequate shelter* as a category that can be sensitive to regional variations as to what constitutes substandard housing.

Source: Adapted from Springer, 2000.

dispassionate analysis. A voluminous literature reveals a great variety in conceptualizations of homelessness. Much of this literature concentrates on specific population groups: the unemployed, (im)migrants and transients, substance abusers, mentally ill people, racial and ethnic minorities, battered women, people infected with HIV/AIDS, war veterans, runaway youth, street children and so forth. Studies of this kind can be helpful in providing a close-up view of the experiences of homeless people.¹¹ However, the problem with these perspectives is that they centre on subjective experiences and implicate the personal characteristics and backgrounds of individual people, risking their stigmatization and failing to bring into focus the broader structural factors that underpin homelessness.¹²

There would be considerable merit in having an unambiguous definition of homelessness that applies uniformly, making possible consistent monitoring and comparative assessment of ameliorative approaches. At the global level, this seems an elusive goal in light of the diverse structural causes of homelessness, the range of consequences, the diverse cultural norms and national

standards and the particularities of the groups most affected. There have, nevertheless, been various attempts to develop such universal definitions. For example, a recent effort proposes use of the term ‘houselessness’ to denote various forms of inadequate shelter (see Box 16.1 and Figure 16.1). An advantage of this particular conceptualization is that it distinguishes between one component about which there can be no disagreement (ie those without any form of housing are houseless) and another component that flexibly allows for various interpretations (inadequacy), thus accommodating a range of regionally and culturally appropriate standards. However, its contribution remains on the conceptual level and the potential of its immediate practical applicability is limited.

There exist other conceptualizations of the multiple dimensions of inadequate housing. For example, the notion of ‘housing poverty’ includes qualitative deficiencies of the dwelling as well as the neighbourhood infrastructure, insecure tenure of the dwelling and the land, and excessive costs.¹³ In a related vein, the concept of ‘shelter poverty’ captures the trade-off relationship between housing expen-

ditures and the costs of meeting other basic needs, providing a useful method of measuring housing affordability (see Box 16.2).

The diversity of conceptualizations and operational definitions, combined with political influences on and practical difficulties in data collection, have led to measurements that show considerable range in the extent of homelessness. Measurement methods vary a great deal across countries, data collection is frequently incomplete at best, and the prospect for improvement in this regard is not promising¹⁴ (Box 16.2). Bearing these caveats in mind, the number of people who are homeless or residing in inadequate housing conditions has been estimated at more than 1000 million.¹⁵

There exist contexts where accurate figures are important. At disaggregate levels of policy making and programme implementation, it matters how many households fall into specific categories of homelessness. In this regard, self-enumeration by pavement dwellers and slum dwellers, as carried out successfully through the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC) and Mahila Milan in Mumbai, India, are an empowering alternative to conventional counting methods.¹⁶ However, for the purpose of the present global discussion, an undue preoccupation with the elusive precision of statistics is a misplaced pursuit of exactitude. There is a bottom line regarding homelessness worldwide whose veracity is not in doubt. While we may not be sure about exact figures, we can be certain about one thing: the number of homeless people is a *very large* number. What are the reasons?

The causes of homelessness are many and diverse. They vary across countries and across population groups. In many cities of the developing countries, the suppliers of housing cannot keep pace with the increasing need for housing resulting from rapid urbanization and new household formation. Aside from questions of affordability, there also exist serious quantitative and qualitative deficits. For example, ECLAC reports an absolute housing shortage of 17 million housing units (18 per cent) for Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁷ Another 21 million units (22 per cent) are considered inadequate but repairable.¹⁸ Table 16.1 shows a more detailed breakdown of the region's total housing deficit of 40 per cent, including Brazil (45 per cent), Colombia (43 per cent), Mexico (35 per cent) and Peru (53 per cent). Further, in most countries, the deficits are steadily growing (see Box 16.3).

In India, depending on criteria, the country's housing shortfall has been estimated at between 30 and 70 million units, up to 46 per cent of the stock required to house the national population¹⁹ (see also Box 16.4).

The contribution of precarious housing situations to homelessness is exacerbated by breakdowns of social safety nets and family units related to IMF-imposed structural adjustment policies that have curtailed subsidies and eliminated public assistance programmes, inducing migration, fomenting domestic violence and contributing to the rise in street children.²⁰ Although a gross violation of human rights, forced evictions also continue to be a cause of homelessness, posing a particular problem to women in

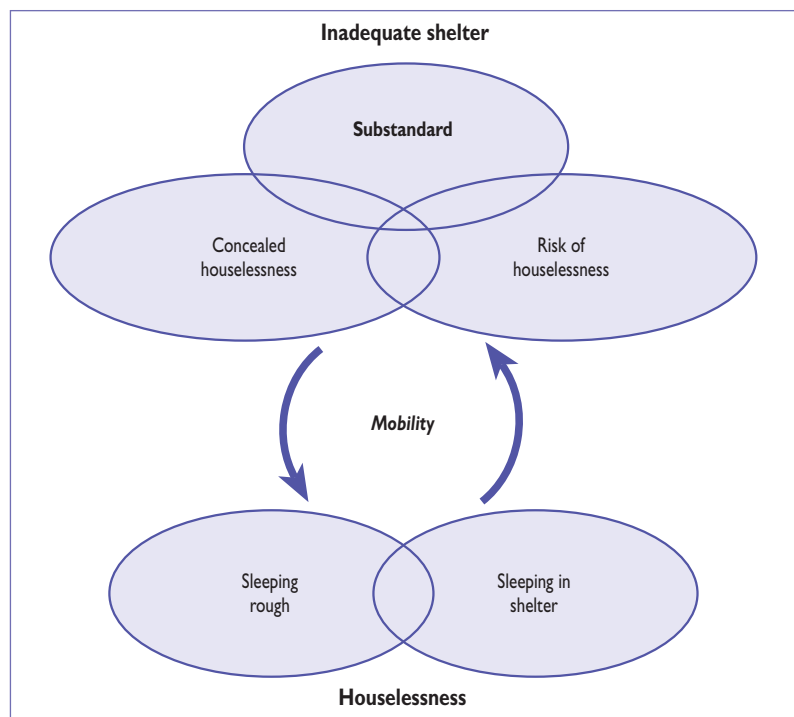


Figure 16.1

Conceptualizing homelessness: inadequate shelter and homelessness

countries where they possess unequal property and inheritance rights. The actions of the Railway Slum Dwellers in Mumbai, India, are an example of effective community organizing to resist displacement, turning a crisis into a situation of advantage (see Boxes 16.5 and 16.6).²¹ In the East European and Baltic states, the lifting of rent controls under liberalization policies dramatically increased the share of housing expenses from 3–10 per cent to 15–25 per cent of household income. Housing payments in the lowest income groups have risen up to one-half of household income.

Box 16.2 Measuring shelter poverty

Affordable housing plays an important role in many situations of homelessness. There exist a variety of ways in which to conceptualize affordability (see, eg Hulchanski, 1995) and each can be measured in more than one way. Careful comparative studies of affordability measures and subsidy mechanisms amply illustrate this point (see, eg Haffner, 1998; Haffner and Oxley, 1999; Kemp, 1997 for the European Union). A common rule of thumb in many countries expresses households' housing cost burden as a percentage of household income. However, this approach is problematic because the adequacy of residual income varies widely as a result of household size, level of income and other living expenses. The recently developed concept of shelter poverty addresses this difficulty (see Stone, 1993). It calculates how much income is left for housing after accounting for the known costs of 'basic (non-shelter) necessities' for households of given sizes. If the remaining income is insufficient to cover local housing costs, households are considered 'shelter poor'. Measuring housing affordability as shelter poverty introduces an opportunity for coordinating national policies. It makes it possible to agree on a common goal (ie preventing shelter poverty) within a shared policy framework that is responsive to variations in key variables among countries. Thus a single measure of housing affordability could accommodate national and regional differences in essential non-housing cost-of-living expenditures and household size. It would permit a better comparative assessment of housing affordability across countries and cities. However, as with the conceptual refinement of 'homelessness', implementation of policies based on the concept of 'shelter poverty' would require data that are simply not available in most countries.

Country	Year	Total households	Quantitative deficit ^b	% of total deficit	Qualitative deficit ^c	% of total deficit	Total deficit ^d	% of all households w/deficit
Argentina	1991	9,380,204	1,449,783	49.2	1,496,212	50.8	2,945,995	31.4
Bolivia	1992	1,614,995	406,979	55.4	327,844	44.6	734,823	45.5
Brazil	1991	35,517,542	5,881,221	36.7	10,145,712	63.3	16,026,933	45.1
Chile	1992	3,365,462	609,255	62.8	361,212	37.2	970,467	28.8
Colombia	1985	5,824,857	1,098,711	43.6	1,423,095	56.4	2,521,806	43.3
Costa Rica	1984	527,299	71,073	37.9	116,386	62.1	187,459	35.6
Cuba	1981	2,350,221	395,472	60.7	256,100	39.3	651,572	27.7
Ecuador	1990	2,136,889	424,833	55.8	336,834	44.2	761,667	35.6
El Salvador	1992	1,091,728	402,410	69.0	180,461	31.0	582,871	53.4
Guatemala	1994	1,591,823	328,978	31.7	709,911	68.3	1,038,889	65.3
Honduras	1988	808,222	137,026	41.9	189,767	58.1	326,793	40.4
Mexico	1990	17,394,368	3,323,847	55.3	2,687,615	44.7	6,011,462	34.6
Nicaragua	1991	–	289,994	56.8	220,992	43.2	510,986	–
Panama	1990	541,704	103,688	58.9	72,366	41.1	176,054	32.5
Paraguay	1992	873,694	161,227	45.3	194,889	54.7	356,116	40.8
Peru	1993	4,762,779	1,207,483	47.7	1,323,828	52.3	2,531,311	53.1
Dominican Republic	1993	534,827	8,570	4.1	199,266	95.9	207,836	38.9
Uruguay	1985	902,300	120,045	53.4	104,553	46.6	224,598	24.0
Venezuela	1990	3,750,940	763,413	70.8	315,359	29.2	1,078,772	28.8
Latin America and the Caribbean		92,969,854	16,544,477	44.5	20,662,402	55.5	37,206,879	40.0

Notes: Percentage of the 1990 population of Latin America and the Caribbean covered: 96.15%.
a ECLAC, Human Settlements: The Shelter of Development. b Quantitative deficit: number of households – number of adequate and repairable dwellings. c Qualitative deficit: number of repairable dwellings. d Total deficit: quantitative + qualitative deficit.
Source: MacDonald, 1998 135, pp 25, 54.

Table 16.1

Latin America and the Caribbean (19 countries): housing situation in the 1990s^a

Forced evictions continue to be a cause of homelessness, posing a particular problem to women in countries where they possess unequal property and inheritance rights

In more developed countries, the causes of homelessness include lack of affordable housing, gentrification, cutbacks in welfare budgets, stagnating and falling real earnings, the rise of part-time and insecure jobs, erosion of job benefits, lack of affordable health care and deinstitutionalization of people afflicted by mental illness. In addition, discriminatory practices, based on race, ethnicity, gender and family status remain widespread, part of processes of social exclusion in which lack of access to housing plays a key role.²² These problems are often compounded by spatial mismatches between housing and job markets. It is not uncommon to find a strong demand for low- or moderate-income workers who cannot afford housing on the local

market, while there are high vacancy rates in other places where jobs are hard to find.

Natural and human-made disasters, including wars and civil strife, are much overlooked causes of homelessness. During the 1990s alone, more than 186 million people lost their homes as a result of disasters of one kind or another. Although it is often difficult to prevent disasters from happening, appropriate planning of human settlements can sometimes reduce their probability and mitigate their effects (see the discussion on sustainable development in Chapter 15).

Framing policies to overcome the limits of market mechanisms

Just as there are a variety of structural and personal antecedents of homelessness, so also are there a variety of strategies to combat homelessness. These strategies span a wide spectrum. They vary between countries and cities. They also change over time and official government reaction has ranged from educational approaches to mass shootings at railway stations, reflecting the leanings of different political regimes.²³

Current strategies are wide-ranging as well. They include criminalization of homelessness in some cities and measures that may eliminate its local manifestations but that simply displace homeless people to elsewhere; narrowly focused programmes that address the most immediate concerns of the homeless, such as night shelters and free meals; intermediate support programmes such as mental health services, substance abuse counselling and transitional housing; and long-term approaches such as support for low-cost permanent housing and poverty eradication.

Box 16.3 Housing deficits in Latin America and the Caribbean

The countries of the region suffer from significant housing shortfalls. Only 60 out of every 100 households have adequate housing, while 22 require improvements and 18 need a new home or to rebuild the one they are now occupying. Taking both qualitative and quantitative aspects into account, the current deficit is at least 38 million units. This figure is increasing by more than 2 million each year as new households are formed. A great majority of the countries are not even managing to construct enough housing for the new households that come into being each year, so their shortfalls are steadily growing. The rate at which the housing stock is growing obsolete is also high, due to a lack of housing maintenance and repair programmes; this in turn is contributing to a worsening of the deficit, as it means that high rates of replacement are needed.

Source: ECLAC, *Human Settlements: The Shelter of Development*.

Homelessness cannot be severed from its wider economic, political, cultural and social contexts. Strategies to combat the root causes of homelessness, rather than its symptomatic expressions, must necessarily deal with these contexts

The problems of homelessness cannot be addressed in isolation. Homelessness does not occur in a vacuum. It cannot be severed from its wider economic, political, cultural and social contexts. Strategies to combat the root causes of homelessness, rather than its symptomatic expressions, must necessarily deal with these contexts. This report emphasizes a rights-based approach. Most of the remainder of this chapter is dedicated to a review of recent and prospective developments concerning the right to housing. UNCHS's Global Campaign for Secure Tenure is a major initiative developed within this context. However, other strategies are important as well, including the eradication of poverty, increasing affordability of housing, enhancing construction capacity, facilitating access to land and elimination of discrimination. Although some of these strategies can take advantage of market mechanisms when developed with appropriate regulatory provisions, they all require intervention by government, often with participation by civil society groups. The most appropriate combination and operationalization of strategies will differ from one country to another.

In high-income countries, there has been a shift in public policy regarding homelessness from remedial treatment and control towards a more preventive approach.²⁴ In support of this change, there is now more interagency collaboration than a decade ago, and programmes have become more targeted to the specific needs of homeless people. There is a frequent distinction between two, sometimes overlapping groups: those in crisis poverty and those suffering from chronic disabilities. A common model includes a two-pronged general strategy:

- to take emergency measures aimed at bringing those who are currently homeless back into mainstream society;
- to prevent the occurrence of homelessness by addressing the structural needs for housing and social infrastructure for the very poor.

The trend towards more individualized programmes and services requires the combination of resources across a variety of agencies and professions

The trend towards more individualized programmes and services requires the combination of resources across a variety of agencies and professions. This network style of management moves away from large-scale bureaucratic public agencies towards more collaborative organizational structures.

In the United States, programmes to remedy the homeless problem are often viewed along a 'continuum of care'. This approach has three distinct components: emergency shelter assessment to identify an individual's or family's needs; transitional or rehabilitative services for

Box 16.4 Housing need in India

In India, rapid urbanization and the deteriorating financial conditions of urban local bodies, coupled with an increase in urban poverty have resulted in inadequate provision of shelter, amenities and services in urban areas. In most Indian cities with populations of more than a million, one in four inhabitants live in illegal settlements, which are growing twice as fast as the rest of the city. In big Indian cities such as Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Calcutta, the percentage of households in designated slum settlements ranges between 40 and 60 per cent. Estimates of the percentage of the total urban population living in designated slum and squatter settlements vary between 20 and 25 per cent. In total, 350 million people are now estimated to be living in urban areas, suggesting that between 70 and 85 million people are in designated slum and squatter areas.

The Indian government recognizes that the need for housing investment is acute. Indian government agencies estimate that the housing stock increased from 93 million in 1971 to 148.1 million in 1991, while the number of households increased from 97.1 million to 153.2 million during the same period, increasing the housing deficit by 5.1 million units. Other sources estimate a housing shortage by 2001 of 30 to 41 million units, one-third of which is in urban areas and two-thirds in rural areas. The Ninth Plan (1997–2002) estimates that about 9 million new units are required in urban areas and 7.7 million in rural areas, while an additional 7.5 million units in urban and 20 million units in rural India require upgrading.

Source: Mitlin (background paper) compiled from information in Acharya, 2000.

those who need them; and permanent or supportive housing arrangements for every homeless individual and family. These ideas currently emphasize social improvement for the poor. Their overemphasis on social dependence as the problem has encouraged the use of shelters and social programmes to change individuals and households rather than improvement of kind and amounts of affordable housing in mixed residential communities, including low-rent single room occupancy.²⁵

In several countries in Western Europe, a similar idea of the 'staircase of transition' as a means for re-integration into society has been gaining ground in national policies. In 'dwellings for training' homeless people are to make gradual improvements in their housing, in terms of quality, privacy and control over the home. Step-by-step, the service providers reduce support and control until the once homeless person becomes an independent tenant. However, this system may turn out to be a 'staircase of exclusion'. Landlords have no incentives for converting a transitional contract or a 'dwelling for training' into an independent tenancy. Thus, the 'final step' for the client may be postponed or even removed. At the same time, social authorities can use referral to lower steps of the 'staircase' as negative sanctions, resulting in downward mobility.

In the transition economies, policies differ according to the state's recognition of homelessness. There tend to be three stages:

- 1 The number of homeless people grows dramatically. There is economic breakdown, closure of workers' hostels, the appearance of a 'real-estate mafia' and surging utility prices. Owing to weak economic performance, a social housing policy is not an affordable solution, so shelters are established.
- 2 The number of homeless people begins to stabilize as the additions are offset by high mortality among

Box 16.5 Empowerment by partnerships: relocation of the railway slum dwellers in Mumbai, India

Rural poverty has fuelled rapid migration to urban centres in India, as in most developing countries. As India's largest commercial centre, Mumbai attracts thousands of new residents every day from across the country. Finding work is relatively easy for the migrants, but finding shelter on this cramped island city is not. The open real estate market offers little affordable housing, and nearly half of the city's 11 million residents live in slums. These informal settlements have sprung up on private lands (about 50 per cent of the slum population), state- and city-owned lands (about 25 per cent) and lands owned by the central government (about 25 per cent). These last include more than 30,000 families living in rows of shacks 1.5 to 30 m from the three major suburban railway lines.

Living conditions in the railway communities are generally worse than in other Mumbai slums, comparable only to those of pavement dwellers. In slums on private and state-owned land, over time the city government has extended basic services such as water and sewerage. However, the land along the tracks is the property of Indian Railways (IR), a subsidiary of the central government, which argues that providing services will encourage more illegal settlement. Residents of the railway shanties have no clean water, electricity, sewerage or trash removal. They are vulnerable to extortion, since by living where they do they are technically breaking the law. Living so close to the tracks, the slum dwellers also risk being hit by one of the frequent trains, which kill an average of three slum dwellers a day. Trains travelling through the railway slums must slow down from their normal 50 km/hr to about 15 km/hr; thus extending the daily commute of 4.5 million people and increasing tensions. The relocation of the railway slum dwellers, described below, is an example of how people in poverty managed to improve their living conditions by forming and participating in a broad alliance of community-based partners.

In the late 1980s, a coalition of three NGOs emerged as advocates for the railway slum dwellers: the National Slum Dwellers' Federation (NSDF), and its Mumbai branch the Railway Slum Dwellers Federation; Mahila Milan (Women Together), founded to help poor urban women organize local savings schemes; and the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC), a group of professionals dedicated to various issues of welfare and the urban poor in Mumbai. In 1988, these three groups conducted a census of the railway slums and published it as *Beyond the Beaten Track*. The alliance generated a new sense of power within the slum dweller community; women especially began to push for relocation. For the next decade, the alliance approached the central government and the railways with proposals for relocation; it argued that the government should contribute to the effort, since the slum dwellers had added so much to the economy over the years and yet received so few services. However, little progress in negotiation was made during this period.

A shift occurred in 1996 when the state government of Maharashtra and the railways began negotiations with the World Bank for the Mumbai Urban Transport Project II (MUTP-II). This project was designed to ease Mumbai's traffic problems by expanding and updating the rail network and by constructing new roads. The former would require the relocation of many of the slum dwellers. Years of international attention on the negative consequences for the poor displaced by past World Bank projects led the Bank to make comprehensive rehabilitation plans mandatory for MUTP-II and many other loans. The alliance of NGOs was invited to participate in the negotiation process. By 1999, the World Bank had approved a US\$500 million loan to the Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA), an agency of the state government, which included a plan for the rehabilitation of 14,000 households to be directed by SPARC with money from MUTP-II. The World Bank also made it clear that if slum dwellings were demolished without a resettlement plan, it would review the loan to MMRDA.

However, projects of MUTP-II's size take years to get through their initial negotiation and planning phase. In the meantime, tensions on the ground increased between commuters, slum dwellers and the railways. Commuter anger at delays and breakdowns of trains precipitated the damaging of railway property. Train accidents also led to violence by the slum dwellers against the passengers. Frustrated, concerned commuters founded two groups, Citizens for a Just Society and the Suburban Railway Passengers Association, to lobby for the clearance of dwellings near the tracks. As tensions increased, the railway safety commissioner promised to stop trains unless buildings near a critical section of track were removed. In February 2000, the railway authorities began to bulldoze structures along two of the lines. The alliance and the state government tried to block the demolition by invoking a state law prohibiting the destruction of any building more than five years old. After reminders that the operation was also clearly jeopardizing the MUTP-II project, the demolitions were stopped. By that time, over 2500 families had been made homeless, including some who had been living there for over 30 years. With the months passing and the MUTP-II relocation remaining in the pipeline, tensions grew once again, and in September 2000, the central government undertook another demolition that rendered several thousand more people homeless. Again, they were stopped by the alliance of NGOs and the state government, which feared the loss of the World Bank funds.

By the end of 2000, the MUTP-II relocation process was finally underway. Of the 14,000 originally designated households, 1800 had moved into new formal housing constructed by the state housing authority (MHADA) and purchased with MUTP-II funds. Another 2500 had moved into transitional houses constructed under the supervision of the NGO alliance; 2000 more families were expected to move into permanent homes procured by the state in the suburb of Wadala by mid-2001; 5000 additional transitional houses were being built by a private developer in the Mankhurd area in exchange for development rights elsewhere in the city. By the middle of 2001, more than 11,000 of the 14,000 families will have moved away from the tracks. The experience of the slum dwellers illustrates how the participation of poor people in a broad coalition of partners can empower them to create better living conditions.

Source: Prepared by Manish Chalana, University of Colorado, based on information from the following sources:

Appadurai, 2000;

Beattie and Merchant, 2000;

Burra, no date;

Marquand, 2000;

Indian Express, 2000;

Patel, Sheela, personal communication, 5 January 2001;

RSDF website: www.dialogue.org.za/RSDF/index.htm;

SPARC website: www.sparcindia.org.

existing homeless people. At this stage, a system of shelters is often established. Discussions start on how policies should try to re-integrate homeless people into society. However, regulations tend to be confusing and there tends to be deep distrust so it is very unlikely that homeless people receive all the

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benefits to which they are entitled.

The transformation to a market economy is almost complete but rising prices are not compensated through higher wages, and the social security regulations target only those most in need. The number of homeless people grows dramatically.

Developing countries are still at a stage where changes in policies affecting housing supply have the greatest impact on the incidence of homelessness and the means for redressing the problem. The most important have been the structural adjustment programmes of the last two decades, frequently resulting in greater hardship and worsened housing conditions among the poor. The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 and the Habitat Agenda aimed to provide an enabling environment for the construction of housing through the private sector, alone or in partnership with the public sector and non-profit organizations (see Chapter 3). In practice, however, there has been no increase in the supply of affordable housing to reduce the number of homeless people. It is necessary to bridge the gap between the amount of income that people in poverty can afford to spend on housing and minimum housing costs. This may involve reducing the standard of the minimum dwelling, or regulating its cost, or increasing people's ability to pay (eg by raising wages or subsidies such as housing allowances), or all of these.

It is necessary to bridge the gap between the amount of income that people living in poverty can afford to spend on housing and minimum housing costs

Emerging strategies to combat homelessness often contain the following elements:

- Outreach, education, training and health care services for homeless people and street children that are inclusive and relevant to street life and built around their needs. There is a great need to modify the training of professionals who deal with vulnerable people. Homeless people, particularly street children, should be regarded as potential assets rather than burdens to society.
- Shelters that assist survival in the short term and provide a locus for services aimed at re-integrating homeless persons back into mainstream society. They tend to be the first response to the issues faced by homeless people but they must not be the main or only response. It is vital to ease the paths of homeless people into a sustainable lifestyle, anchored in social relationships and a supportive network of welfare services. Health services are required both for prevention and cure. For street children and young people, there is a need to provide basic information about nutrition and hygiene.
- A holistic approach towards homelessness through cross-sectoral collaboration. There is an increasing role for voluntary or not-for-profit organizations in promoting problem solving through cooperation across professional fields, as well as public, civil and private spheres of society. It is of particular importance that financial and other resources are allocated to these organizations proportionate to their given tasks and responsibilities.
- Policies towards homeless people that are inclusive and offer services near the areas where they live. People with health conditions may need special assis-

Box 16.6 Eviction, exclusion and resistance

Evictions have been a long-standing feature of Latin American cities. To some extent, international pressure, democratization and better training of planners has prevented the worst excesses. Eviction has not disappeared, however, and new pressures to enhance the productivity of cities have motivated governments to regain strategic sites for commercial and tourism use, and to market an image of order. What has also changed is the ability of groups resisting eviction to draw upon global networks of NGOs, discourses and declarations of human and indigenous rights.

Dominican Republic: The attempt by the Balaguer government to evict 30,000 households between 1986 and 1992, mostly without compensation, was reminiscent of the same president's attempts during the 1960s to 'sanitise' Santo Domingo through mass removals. During the 1990s, however, the government had to recognize the voice of NGOs, community and religious groups. The violence of the evictions and their ambiguous legal legitimacy brought condemnation from the United Nations Human Rights Commission. The construction of the Lighthouse Monument served as a focal point to 'think-ins' such as the '500 Years Eviction Forum', attracting global media attention. Groups resisting eviction also drew upon political and financial support from the Dominican community in the United States.

Mexico: In 1990 the governor of the State of Puebla attempted to expropriate 1082 ha from four *ejido* communities on grounds of 'public utility' to construct 21,014 houses, 13,731 sites-and-service plots and an ecological park. The communities opposed the expropriation as two-thirds of their land would be lost and compensation was set at a rural rate when documents revealed that the government had sold the land at commercial rates to developers. Housing built on illegally occupied land was bulldozed and threats were made against other settlements even though these were in process of an earlier legalization programme. The *ejidos* and occupiers responded by issuing legal writs against expropriation and dispositions were made to the Supreme Court and the Commission for Human Rights. Resistance also questioned the right of the Mexican state to acquire land from what were now represented as indigenous groups; approaches were made to Rigoberta Menchú and the Mexican Council for 500 Years of Indian, Black and Popular Resistance. The legal resistance strategies failed to prevent the evictions but raised the compensation. The land was eventually sold for a private university and hospital, shopping malls and elite residential areas.

Sources: Everett, 1999; Jones, 1998; Morel and Mejía, 1998.

tance in obtaining access to appropriate housing. Policies must create opportunities for paid employment and guarantee minimum wages sufficient to pay for low-cost housing. Programmes that provide work through renovating housing to be used as supportive shelter assist with the development of job skills and earnings capacity

Supporting the Realization of Housing Rights

Experience has shown that the private market does not respond well, if at all, to the needs of the poor. If access to and tenure of adequate shelter are restricted to those with the ability to pay, the needs of those with incomes too low to generate profit will go unmet. On the other hand, experience has also shown that most governments lack the resources to meet the housing needs of low-income households.

In response, a variety of community-based and self-help approaches have come about, within or outside the context of legal protections. In the resulting arrangements,

security of tenure has emerged as a key issue. It is the focus of the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure, which is discussed later in this chapter. Questions of tenure security are situated within the broader framework of housing rights. The following sections review recent developments in this regard and recommend actions to help to implement the human right to housing.

Recent developments²⁶

Housing rights *in law* have certainly advanced, even if housing rights *in practice* have not

While the number of people living in inadequate housing (or no housing at all) appears to have increased during the era of contemporary globalization, paradoxically, *the legal prominence* of the human right to housing has improved dramatically. Housing rights *in law* have certainly advanced, even if housing rights *in practice* have surely not. In this light, globalization is an ambiguous influence with respect to the human right to adequate housing. What are the implications of the relationship between these two areas?

Globalization, if defined as the freeing of market forces, reducing economic regulation and the increased inter-connections in the world economy, is invariably more detrimental than supportive to the enjoyment of housing rights to the one-quarter of humanity that do not yet have their housing rights met. For as markets become less regulated, as public expenditures decline and as the trade of goods and services across national borders becomes increasingly unfettered, the natural assumption is that the implementation of rights requiring some form of governmental intervention will suffer as a result of the renewed dominance of profit over people.

However, if we define globalization not purely in economic terms, but view this process within additional political, social and legal contexts, the negative impact of globalization on housing rights is by no means comprehensive. It is true that the economic dimensions of globalization can and clearly do yield negative socio-economic results for the most vulnerable groups throughout the world due to increases in housing costs, forced evictions to acquire prime land, reductions in social housing construction, privatization of the housing stock, exclusion of the poor from policy consideration and so forth. However, great strides have been made during the globalization era relating to the recognition, enforceability and seriousness accorded to housing rights. Granted, this may have come about in response to the overall decline or stagnation in housing and living conditions, but arguably the advancements that have been made with respect to the law relating to housing rights can, at least in part, be attributable to the increased openness and access by popular groups, civil society and individuals to institutions that were previously the exclusive domain of states. The emergence of civil society as an influential political force, whether implicitly or explicitly as a side-effect of globalization, has manifested in ways that are favourable to changing laws, policies and procedures to strengthen rather

than undermine economic, social and cultural rights, including housing rights.

Housing rights provide clear and consistent criteria against which the actions, policies, practices and legislation of states can be judged

While the past two decades have been correctly criticized as a period of declining housing and living standards for many, this same historical period was witness to unparalleled advances with respect to the treatment of housing as a human right. It is now widely accepted that housing rights provide clear and consistent criteria against which the actions, policies, practices and legislation of states can be judged.

Housing rights provide citizens with legal procedures and mechanisms to ensure implementation of housing rights and compensation in the event of violations

Housing rights are also an important means of providing citizens with legal procedures and mechanisms designed to ensure the implementation of the right to adequate housing and the receipt of compensation in the event of violations. Further, viewing housing through the looking glass of human rights creates a systematic, common and universally applicable framework for developing appropriate legal and other measures leading to the full realization of housing rights. Most actors have now understood that the pursuit of housing rights as human rights promotes good governance, governmental accountability, transparency, democratic decision-making, popular participation and international cooperation.

During the 1990s, many important advances were made with respect to housing rights. The work of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Housing Rights (1992–1995),²⁷ the publication of a Housing Rights Strategy by the UNCHS (Habitat) in April 1995,²⁸ the United Nations Housing Rights Programme (UNHRP), a joint programme between UNCHS (Habitat) and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights that will seek to provide overall United Nations-wide guidance on housing rights issues,²⁹ the launching by UNCHS (Habitat) of the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure in 2000 and the appointment by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights of a Special Rapporteur on Housing Rights in 2000 all represent key strides forward.

These and other positive developments are noteworthy in many respects, not the least of which is the recognition of the important role played by the law as a means of securing adequate housing for all. The relative permanency of legislation provides a valuable assurance that the acceptance of housing as a human right will not be subject to the whims of differing political administrations. Enshrining housing rights standards in national legal frameworks may be the only manner of ensuring equitable access to adequate housing resources by disadvantaged groups and protecting the rights of economically marginalized populations. The incorporation of housing rights provisions in law

encourages governmental accountability to citizens and provides tangible substance to what are often vague international commitments by a particular state. Housing rights laws can be important determinants for equality of treatment. It is on this basis that the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have emphasized that 'policies and legislation should not be designed to benefit already advantaged social groups at the expense of others'.³⁰

Property restitution

Refugees and IDPs have not only a right to return to their countries of origin, but to the actual homes they lived in at the time of their initial flight

Another recent housing rights advancement has been the attention given to the issue of housing and property restitution and compensation for refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and others who lost housing or property during periods of exile from their original homes, particularly during the past decade. The United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (now the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights) adopted resolution 1998/26 on *Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons* which reaffirms the rights of refugees and IDPs to 'return to their homes and places of habitual residence in their country and/or place of origin, should they so wish'. This and other similar pronouncements recognize that refugees and IDPs have not only a right to return to their countries of origin, but to the actual homes they lived in at the time of their initial flight.

While many factors have influenced the renewed emphasis on housing and property restitution, much is due to the changing nature of the origins and manner by which displacement has taken place in recent years, in particular 'ethnic cleansing', forced evictions and the growing scale of housing and property destruction resulting from armed conflicts. Ensuring the reversal of ethnic cleansing and violent forced evictions has probably contributed more than any other factor to strengthening the rights associated with housing and property restitution. Moreover, it has been widely recognized that ensuring these rights prevents refugees from being penalized or losing their homes and properties purely on the grounds that they fled their homes due to forces beyond their control. Implications in this connection follow from the right to adequate housing and other internationally agreed human rights: the right to property and the peaceful enjoyment of possessions, the right to privacy and respect for the home, the right to freedom of movement and to choose one's residence, and the legal doctrines of reasonableness, proportionality and fair balance.

Institutions designed to promote the rights of persons to return to their original homes have been established in many settings. In Bosnia, the Commission on Real Property Claims (CRPC) was established under the Dayton Agreements to settle outstanding disputes and facilitate residents' return,³¹ and in Georgia work is underway towards

the creation of a Housing and Property Claims Commission to ensure restitution to refugees and IDPs forced from their homes in the early 1990s. In Kosovo, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) established a Housing and Property Directorate (HPD) in mid-November 1999 to facilitate the regularization of the highly complex housing and property situation in the territory, while the United Nations Transitional Authority in East Timor will shortly create the East Timor Land Dispute Mechanism (ETLDM).

Addressing forced evictions

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has declared forced evictions as 'gross violations of human rights, in particular the human right to adequate housing'

International standards addressing the practice of forced evictions grew in scope in the 1990s, and began consistently to equate forced evictions with violations of human rights, in particular housing rights. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has declared forced evictions as 'gross violations of human rights, in particular the human right to adequate housing' (Res. 1993/77); a perspective echoed on numerous occasions by various United Nations human rights bodies and other human rights institutions.³² In one of the first of what have become regular pronouncements on forced evictions, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights declared in General Comment No. 4 (1991) that

'instances of forced evictions are prima facie incompatible with the requirements of the Covenant [on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights] and can only be justified in the most exceptional circumstances, and in accordance with the relevant principles of international law'.

In the past few years, a number of governments have been singled out for their poor eviction records and criticized accordingly by United Nations and European Human Rights bodies.

In 1997 the Committee adopted what is now widely seen to be the most comprehensive decision yet under international law on forced evictions and human rights. General Comment No 7 on Forced Evictions significantly expands the protection afforded to dwellers against eviction, and goes considerably further than most previous pronouncements in detailing what governments, landlords and institutions such as the World Bank must do to preclude forced evictions and, by inference, to prevent violations of human rights.

General Comment No 7 asserts that 'the State itself must refrain from forced evictions and ensure that the law is enforced against its agents or third parties who carry out forced evictions' and requires countries to 'ensure that legislative and other measures are adequate to prevent and, if appropriate, punish forced evictions carried out, without appropriate safeguards by private persons or bodies'. Thus, in addition to governments, private landlords, developers and

international institutions such as the World Bank and any other third parties or non-state actors are subject to the relevant legal obligations and can anticipate the enforcement of law against them if they ‘carry out forced evictions’.

The role of an appropriate domestic legal framework as a means of securing protection for people against forced evictions is a pervasive theme throughout General Comment No 7, which notes that ‘legislation is an essential basis upon which to build a system of effective protection’. Governments that wish to act in good faith with their housing rights obligations and comply with the sentiments expressed in the Comment, therefore, should consider adopting laws expressly prohibiting forced evictions and developing proper legal procedures that can be drawn upon by evictees to secure the prosecution and punishment of ‘persons or bodies’ who may have carried out illegal evictions.

Women are especially at risk of and impacted by eviction, given discrimination in property rights, including homeownership, and their vulnerability to violence and sexual abuse when they are homeless

While extending protection to all persons, the Comment gives special consideration to groups that suffer disproportionately from forced evictions, including women, children, youth, older persons, indigenous people and ethnic and other minorities. With respect to the rights of women, the text asserts that

‘women in all groups are especially vulnerable given the extent of statutory and other forms of discrimination which often apply in relation to property rights (including home ownership) or rights of access to property or accommodation and their particular vulnerability to acts of violence and sexual abuse when they are rendered homeless’.

General Comment No 7 declares that ‘evictions should not result in rendering individuals homeless or vulnerable to the violation of other human rights’, thus making it incumbent on governments to guarantee that people who are evicted – whether illegally or in accordance with the law – are to be ensured some form of alternative housing.

Security of tenure

Of all elements of the right to housing, it is the right to security of tenure (and increasingly the ‘right to security of place’) that forms the most indispensable core element. When security of tenure – the right to feel safe in one’s own home, to control one’s own housing environment and the right not to be arbitrarily forcibly evicted – is threatened or simply nonexistent, it jeopardizes the full enjoyment of housing rights. Secure tenure derives from a justiciable right of access to and use of land and property, underwritten by a known set of rules that may be anchored in constitutional and legal frameworks, social norms or cultural values.

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While it is true that all human rights are premised on principles of equality and non-discrimination, treating security of tenure as a human right (rather than as an exclusive by-product of ownership or the comparatively rare cases of strong protection for private tenants) expands the legal protection afforded by human rights not merely to all who can afford to buy a home, but to *all people of all incomes and in all housing sectors*. In this regard, it is important to note that securing tenure for a household does not necessarily secure tenure for women and children; gender equality is a fundamental principle underpinning the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure. Considering security of tenure in terms of human rights allows an approach to housing that treats all persons on the basis of equality.

In general, the rights associated with ownership of housing offer considerably more security of tenure, and protection against eviction or other violations of housing rights than those afforded to renting tenants or those residing in informal settlements (where perhaps one-quarter of humanity resides). Therefore, the right to security of tenure raises the baseline – or minimum core entitlement – guaranteed to *all* persons who possess housing rights based on international human rights standards, irrespective of housing tenure. In recognition of the central place of security of tenure to the rights of dwellers (just as everyone is a citizen, so too is everyone a dweller) as well as to the important role it can play in promoting individual and family investments in the improvement of their own homes, international human rights standards increasingly approach security of tenure in terms of human rights.

General Comment No 4 on the Right to Adequate Housing (E/1992/23), approved in 1991 by the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, is widely considered to be the single most authoritative international legal interpretation of what the right to housing actually means in terms of international law. It gives security of tenure particular prominence. In defining the nature of adequate housing under the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, legal security of tenure is addressed in the following manner:

‘Tenure takes a variety of forms, including rental (public and private) accommodation, co-operative housing, lease, owner-occupation, emergency housing and informal settlements, including occupation of land or property. Notwithstanding the type of tenure, all persons should possess a degree of security of tenure which guarantees legal protection against forced eviction, harassment and other threats. States parties should consequently take immediate measures aimed at conferring legal security of tenure upon those persons and households currently lacking such protection, in genuine consultation with affected persons and groups.’ (para 8(a))

With secure tenure, people will begin investing in their own homes

This right is also inexpensive to confer and is viable in all countries regardless of overall levels of human development. The conferral of secure tenure is particularly important to slum dwellers, squatters, residents of housing owned or controlled by exploitative landlords, and others threatened by insecure housing situations and most likely to be evicted. When security of tenure is squarely in place, people are legally protected from most forms of forced eviction and consequently (even in the worst of slums) will begin investing in their own homes, and in the process augmenting the enjoyment of housing rights through personal efforts. While there are obvious distinctions between the systems and structures in which tenure security is generated, the universal importance of secure tenure is clear. Its significance is recognized by the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure, an important new partnership initiative launched by UNCHS (Habitat) in 2000.³³ The Campaign is aimed at furthering the realization of the right to housing as part of a more encompassing strategy to provide all people with access to adequate shelter. It spearheads a new, more pragmatic and affordable approach to implementing the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda, adopted at the City Summit of 1996, with less emphasis on conferences, meetings of experts and ritual reporting of progress by national bureaucracies and with more emphasis on partnerships and decentralization.

Focusing further actions

It is abundantly obvious that despite the many legal gains made during the initial phases of globalization, much more needs to be done to ensure the implementation of housing rights. The bulk of such activity needs to take place at the local and national level. In terms of international actions, however, several undertakings would be particularly timely and potentially effective in securing housing rights for all.

● Reappraising housing rights standards

Serious consideration should be given to further entrenching international standards relating to the human right to adequate housing. Although the standard-setting process is long, arduous and not free of risk, several initiatives are underway to create new international standards on the right to housing. For instance, a draft International Convention on Housing Rights was prepared by the then Special Rapporteur on Housing Rights in 1994,³⁴ while the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has given some attention to the drafting of guidelines for the planning of international events, designed to persuade states to take appropriate measures during the preparation of large-scale events such as the Olympic Games to ensure that mass forced evictions so often associated with such events are prevented.³⁵ A set of *Comprehensive Human Rights Guidelines on Development-Based Displacement* was adopted at a United Nations expert seminar in 1997 and is

currently pending approval by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.³⁶ The adoption of each of these three draft standards will assist in further strengthening housing rights norms.

● Creating a global property registry

Comprehensive and regular housing, property and land registration systems are a crucial element of housing rights

While the specific methods of registering land and property differ greatly between nations, the importance of updated, transparent and secure housing, property and land records is widely recognized.³⁷ It is through such records that homes can be bought and sold, housing markets developed, property developed to increase economic value and land used for whatever purposes zoning or planning laws may have determined. It is also through such records that rights to housing and property can be defended against the aims of ethnic cleansers. As the ethnically driven, forced displacement in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Yugoslavia, East Timor and elsewhere have made clear, removing people forcibly from their homes, confiscating personal housing and property documents, destroying housing and property and cadaster records have been the hallmarks of ethnic cleansers in their attempts to perpetually alter the ethnic composition of a territory and permanently prevent return. While little positive emerged from the Balkan wars of the past decade, the international community was not ambivalent about the need to reverse ethnic cleansing and ensure the right to housing and property restitution for everyone displaced during the conflicts in the region. The difficulties of protecting rights to return to one's original home, however, have been considerably augmented by the loss, destruction, fraudulent alteration and illegal confiscation of records needed to prove ownership, occupancy and tenants rights. Intractable political considerations aside, were such records available to the institutions tasked with resolving land, housing and property disputes and promoting voluntary repatriation, fairly determining housing and property rights would be far more fluid. Indeed, comprehensive and regular housing, property and land registration systems are a crucial element of housing rights. Through registration systems the conferral of legal security of tenure is made possible, a public record of ownership and dweller rights exists and all rights relating to housing can be protected. Without such a system, tenure may be partially protected but only through informal means or based on political or organized crime patronage.

If the United Nations were to coordinate the establishment of a *global property registry* – a worldwide digital database containing the housing, property and cadaster records of all countries – an independent source of this invaluable information could serve to deter governments from attempting to solidify ethnic cleansing by destroying such records. In addition, a global property registry would promote the use of advanced technology to assist governments in the mapping of as yet unmapped areas, in the regular updating of housing, property and land records, and

ultimately promoting the right to security of tenure for all inhabitants of the planet.

● Developing housing rights indicators

Of all the internationally recognized economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights, indicators relevant to housing rights are probably the most sparse and unreliable. Few governments collect the type of data required to establish the degree to which housing rights are enjoyed in given countries. The highly personal nature of housing processes, coupled with the fact that a high proportion of persons reside in unregulated circumstances and communities for which data collection is more difficult, have contributed to a paucity of international statistics.

While the development of a composite *housing rights index* will require extensive discussion, ten key areas that could be incorporated into such a measurement tool include:

- 1 public expenditure on housing as a percentage of national budgets;
- 2 percentage of population with access to potable indoor running water and electricity;
- 3 percentage of population legally protected with security of tenure rights;
- 4 average household expenditure on housing as a percentage of income;
- 5 percentage of population residing in informal or irregular housing and the total number of homeless persons;
- 6 legal status of housing rights;
- 7 access to affordable and impartial judicial and other remedies;
- 8 number of persons forcibly evicted per year;
- 9 access to remedies for housing rights violations;
- 10 protection against discrimination for women.

The Women and Habitat Programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) is an ongoing effort to gather information on the situation of women in human settlements.³⁸ A recent synthesis of individual country reports includes an examination of women's empowerment indicators, several of which cover gender-related aspects of housing rights.³⁹

● Improving complaint mechanisms

The provision of effective remedies is an indispensable element of any housing rights strategy

The right to an effective remedy has been recognized as a key element of international human rights law since the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The provision of effective remedies is an indispensable element of any human rights strategy, including those designed to promote and protect economic, social and cultural rights, including housing rights. The right to a remedy, in turn, raises the related issue of the form of such remedies. If housing rights are to be subject to 'effective remedies', then these rights must also be seen as capable of

judicial consideration and to be sufficiently precise to command clear decisions by courts of law or through non-judicial routes of action geared to protect housing rights.

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has emphasized the importance of ensuring that domestic legal remedies are available to all beneficiaries of housing rights, in particular with respect to illegal evictions or discrimination in access to housing. In its General Comment No 4, the Committee stated that it

'views many component elements of the right to adequate housing as being at least consistent with the provision of domestic legal remedies. Depending on the legal system, such areas might include, but are not limited to: (a) legal appeals aimed at preventing planned evictions or demolitions through the issuance of court-ordered injunctions; (b) legal procedures seeking compensation following an illegal eviction; (c) complaints against illegal actions carried out or supported by landlords (whether public or private) in relation to rent levels, dwelling maintenance, and racial or other forms of discrimination; (d) allegations of any form of discrimination in the allocation and availability of access to housing; and (e) complaints against landlords concerning unhealthy or inadequate housing conditions. In some legal systems, it would also be appropriate to explore the possibility of facilitating class action suits in situations involving significantly increased levels of homelessness.' (para 17)

An international housing rights legal aid fund to provide legal assistance and advocacy to communities and households unable to access lawyers and thus judicial remedies would be a valuable resource in support of housing rights

There is nothing inherent about housing rights that makes these rights incapable of judicial consideration. The compatibility of housing rights standards and the capacity of making complaints, however, is by no means automatic. In numerous countries not only is an independent and impartial judiciary lacking, but even more so are rights to legal aid and assistance for lower-income groups. Even where legal aid programmes do exist, the right to counsel is generally reserved for criminal cases, leaving persons pursuing civil matters (as most housing rights cases would be), without rights to a lawyer. Such circumstances are by no means reserved for developing countries. Many housing groups and other community-based movements struggling against pending evictions and towards other housing rights objectives find it impossible to access affordable lawyers to represent them and assist in adjudicating their cases. The establishment of an *international housing rights legal aid fund* to provide legal assistance and advocacy to communities and households unable to access lawyers would be a valuable resource in support of housing rights.

Strengthening Appropriate Forms of Housing Tenure

Within the context of tenure, an overall shelter strategy must necessarily be concerned not only with strengthening security of tenure, but also with developing and supporting appropriate forms of tenure

Secure tenure is but the first component of the progressive realization of the right to housing; a necessary but insufficient condition for a successful shelter strategy that will lead to further economic and social benefits. Within the context of tenure, an overall shelter strategy must necessarily be concerned not only with strengthening security of tenure, but also with developing and supporting appropriate forms of tenure. A broad distinction is often made between owner-occupied housing and rental housing. The latter is frequently divided between private and public rental. For economic and political reasons, housing policies typically are not 'tenure neutral', but seek to promote home ownership through a variety of means. Prominent among them are highly regressive tax benefits to owners.⁴⁰

Recognizing the diversity of relevant tenure forms

The common tripartite tenurial classification, mentioned above, with its emphasis on private home ownership, is a simplification that does not do justice to the greater diversity of tenure forms that exists and that is needed to accommodate the varied needs of different households. Housing policies must recognize the range of relevant tenure alternatives and provide each with appropriate support. The following review identifies several major categories of tenure that are recognized in the Campaign for Secure Tenure and deserve careful consideration in the formulation of housing policies.

● Rent

Rent is a form of leasehold, in terms of which access to a property and the use thereof is governed by a legal agreement of fixed duration. Agreements are normally governed by law. Rental agreements operate either in the private domain, as contract between private citizens and corporate bodies, or in the public domain, wherein the rental is provided by a public body, such as a local authority, as part of a social housing policy. It is common, in formal rental agreements, for the lessor to assume some responsibility for the maintenance of the property. It is the form of secure tenure least likely to lead to capital investment by the lessee (and, some may argue, by the lessor).

However, in many countries, for low-income families, rental – which is the most used form of tenure – is seldom formal or regulated. Agreements are arrived at informally, with little or no recourse to legal advice, and the agreements are enforced in a non-legal manner. Indeed, a major part of the Campaign will have to address the urban-poor segment of the rental sector, and the tension that

exists between secure tenure for tenants and sub-tenants, and the property rights of the owners. Both in percentage and in policy terms, addressing the informal rental sector will be one of the most significant challenges for the Campaign, and one which will have the most impact for the urban poor.

● Leasehold

Leasehold conveys the right of beneficial occupation to land or property, but such occupation is circumscribed both by a finite period of time, as well as the specific conditions of the lease. The lessor retains ultimate control over the property, through the stipulated time limit and conditions. Upon expiry of the lease, the lessor may automatically reassume occupation, reallocate the lease to another person or body, or extend the lease of the occupant. For the period of the lease, which may be very long (eg 99 years), and subject to compliance with the terms of the lease, the occupant does enjoy secure tenure.

● Freehold

Freehold is the form of tenure which confers on the titleholder the maximum control and discretion over the land, normally only circumscribed by law and/or planning and zoning restrictions. It provides for the land (and improvements) to be used as collateral and mortgaged, it may be transferred or bequeathed in the discretion of the titleholder, and is free from any time restrictions; it is title in perpetuity. It is the form of tenure most associated with investment and, indeed, speculation. Ideologically, it is most favoured by the proponents of the free-market and individualist conceptions of society.

● Conditional freehold: 'rent-to-buy'

A hybrid of leasehold and freehold, this is effectively a lease that may be converted to freehold upon the fulfilment of stipulated conditions, which ordinarily include the payment of the lease (or 'rent') for a period of time. Another form of this approach is found in the term 'contract-for-deed'. However, it is all too often the case that the equity does not accrue in terms of the contract, and that even one or two months of missed payments – not unusual for this segment of the market – can lead to all previous payments being forfeited, and the renter being forced to start the repayment process from the beginning.

● Communal tenure

One of the defining features of communal tenure is that it is common for the community to have a long and common history and cultural identity, such as a tribe or clan. Access to such land may be governed by custom, and include the right to use and to occupy, but not to transfer or alienate, which would be determined by the community as a whole. Under Islamic tenurial systems, *musha* refers to a collective land holding, whereas *Waqf* is a category of land held in perpetuity by a religious institution, and is effectively removed from market mechanisms.

● Forms of collective tenure

There are a variety of methods of enjoying full security of tenure within a collective framework. The principle relates to the sharing of access to a property on the basis of an agreement, which specifies the terms and conditions of such access. This may take the form of the creation of a corporate body, such as a condominium or a private company, or a housing association or cooperative. What all of these forms of tenure share is the need for a relatively high level of common interest, and the skills and capacity to administer the arrangement, which generally requires quite a high level of organizational ability and commitment. The remainder of this chapter reviews housing cooperatives as a particular form of collective tenure with the potential to provide low-income households with improved access to adequate housing.

Housing cooperatives

Housing cooperatives are democratically governed nonprofit corporations whose members jointly own residential developments consisting of multiple units. Cooperatives resemble rental housing in that residents usually pay a monthly fee in return for the occupancy of a dwelling that they do not own. These fees buy down the collectively held mortgage, pay for operating expenses and capitalize reserve funds. Cooperatives also resemble homeownership in that residents own shares in the total property; enjoy the security, control and tax advantages of homeownership; and are responsible, usually through a mechanism of elected resident representatives, for maintenance and management. But, they are unique in being collectively owned and governed.

There are different types of housing cooperatives. Market equity cooperatives allow shares to be traded at market value as if housing units occupied by members are individually owned. Shares may also reflect individual unit characteristics such as size, layout and siting. On the other hand, limited-equity cooperatives restrict the amount of return on the sale of a share to the amount of equity accrued during occupancy, sometimes adjusting for inflation, interest or improvements. Members of leased cooperatives do not own their units but hold long-term leases from a community land trust, mutual housing association, or similar organization that grants them particular rights.⁴¹ The discussion that follows concerns itself with cooperatives that loosely conform to characteristics of the limited-equity and leased cooperatives, both of which lend themselves to providing and maintaining long-term affordable housing. However, the specific forms of cooperative housing differ from country to country.

● Advantages for low-income housing⁴²

Two governance principles of cooperatives are central to their institutional potential for low-income housing: collective ownership and democratic management

Two governance principles of cooperatives are central to their institutional potential for low-income housing: collective ownership and democratic management. In collective ownership arrangements, members jointly own the resources of the housing cooperative. Members collectively pool their investment resources for achieving a common housing objective (eg finance, construction, management and maintenance). Their investment is often in the form of share capital, but it can also be in the form of material inputs, labour or land. Collective management entails collective participation of members in monitoring and managing the cooperative. Decisions are made in a democratic way, based on a 'one member, one vote' principle, regardless of the number of shares owned by each member.

These two features of the cooperative are advantageous for low-income housing in at least four ways. First, pooling of resources in the collective lowers the individual housing costs that each household would otherwise incur. Such pooling offers economy of scale on several fronts: land, building materials, construction, financing, maintenance, management and service provision.⁴³

The second rationale – partly related to the first – is that of community organization and participation among low-income households. In this context, cooperatives foster collective action and self-help. For example, in cities such as Mumbai, NGOs have helped to organize informal cooperatives to mobilize slum dwellers and pavement dwellers for collective action. In some cases, women's participation, in particular, has been encouraged by organizing cooperatives focused on their particular housing needs and their potential to contribute to community leadership and action.⁴⁴ Some have argued that self-help strategies would be more effective if they were based on collective initiatives and collective democratic decision-making rather than individual households' efforts.⁴⁵

Third, the collective pooling of resources increases the credit worthiness of low-income households. Low-income households typically have little access to formal housing finance due to lack of collateral and meagre or unstable income (see Chapter 6). By and large, they depend on informal credit or personal savings. Pooling their limited resources in a cooperative increases their collective asset value. Group lending and micro-finance programmes usually require formation of a cohesive network of households for lending to be sustainable. In this regard, cooperatives may function better than conventional banks for two reasons. First, enduring cooperatives avoid asymmetric information between the lender and the borrower due to local knowledge about each other's assets, capabilities and character traits; thus they lower transaction costs of screening.⁴⁶ Second, members have incentives for repayment through group-based social sanctions that help to enforce savings discipline: all members will be deprived of future borrowing in case of default. Such social sanctions are typically not available in the context of conventional bank loans.⁴⁷ Peer monitoring among borrowers can also be more effective because they have better information about each other's borrowing capacity.⁴⁸

Fourth, cooperatively owned housing can more readily help to prevent or contain speculation and gentrification. Collective ownership of land, for example, limits the ability of individual households to sell land in the open market. This restriction can be especially beneficial in slums where granting of private land tenure to households on an individual basis can result in upward filtering.⁴⁹ Cooperative land banks have also been proposed as a means of limiting speculation through collective ownership.⁵⁰ In this arrangement, common areas in buildings, as well as land and infrastructure, belong to the cooperative. Individual households have perpetual leases to the unit and the number of shares owned by each household is proportional to the area occupied by it. When a household sells the housing unit, the cooperative appropriates a part of the value of land, infrastructure and common areas, while the household obtains the rest of the value, including the value of the housing unit. Speculation is limited through such sharing of value.

Cooperative housing offers four advantages to low-income households:

- **pooling of resources lowers individual housing costs**
 - **it fosters collective action and self-help**
 - **it increases their creditworthiness**
 - **it limits or prevents speculation**
-

● **Potential problems**

Given these advantages of cooperatives, why are they not used on a larger scale for low-income housing? While collective action does have its advantages for low-income housing, it is not achieved easily. First, cooperatives are seldom formed spontaneously. Low-income cooperatives typically emerge from the mobilization of low-income households into a group by some catalytic agent. Usually an organization such as a trade union, local authority, commercial enterprise or the government is the moving force behind the cooperative.⁵¹ Second, self-management in housing cooperatives can be problematic due to lack of managerial, legal or financial expertise of members. This is especially so in low-income housing cooperatives where members have not (yet) acquired the skills and knowledge and lack resources for obtaining technical assistance.⁵²

Third, collective action and management entail costs for participating households. Low-income people face opportunity costs between being involved in the collective and

other productive income earning activities. Households will participate only if benefits from the collective outweigh the costs of participation. In addition, collective action problems (such as free-riding) can arise. For example, some households may reap the benefits of the collective without paying their dues or without contributing in other ways. Small group size and imposition of selective incentives are crucial for overcoming free-riding.⁵³ Some have argued that, since costs of monitoring and sanctioning can be high, the degree of the cooperative's success depends on mechanisms developed by the group to minimize such costs.⁵⁴

● **Government policies**

In the past, if governments supported cooperatives, it was usually on an ideological basis. Any consequent policies typically involved extending special benefits to them in terms of subsidies, allocation of land and so on. Unfortunately, such preferential treatment does not help cooperatives in achieving their potential for low-income households. Rather, it encourages rent-seeking and in many instances bogus cooperatives emerge. More fundamentally, such policies do not address collective action problems inherent in cooperative arrangements.

Policies should provide enabling institutional structures to support the establishment and operation of housing cooperatives

Policies should rather be directed towards setting up a supportive institutional structure that can reduce these problems, while enhancing the potential of cooperatives. A supportive institutional structure can act as an enabling mechanism. Such structures can help in mobilizing housing finance for cooperatives. They can also channel technical, administrative, legal, accounting and financial assistance to them; such assistance is crucial to the functioning of cooperatives composed of low-income households. In addition, they can help to resolve disputes within cooperatives.

A concurrent advantage with the setting-up of institutional support structures is that it reduces transaction costs in the formation and functioning of housing cooperatives. Lowering such costs (for example by routinizing legal incorporation procedures) means making more efficient use of the time and effort that low-income households can contribute, an advantage that applies to inner-city neighbourhoods in industrialized countries⁵⁵ as well as communities in the developing countries.⁵⁶

Notes

- 1 UNCHS (Habitat), 1999.
- 2 See Appadurai, 2000.
- 3 See van Vliet-, 1997; 1993.
- 4 *Forbes Magazine*, www.forbes.com/tool/toolbox/billnew/. As of 21 August 2000.
- 5 Personal observation, 1994; construction costs of TMG building provided by Kyoko Dohnomae, librarian of the International House of Japan, Roppongi, Tokyo (13 April 1994), referenced in *Tokyo: The Making of a Metropolis*.
- 6 See, for example, *Third World Planning Review*, 1987; Dear and Wolch, 1987; Friedrichs, 1988; Burt, 1992; Watson with Austerberry, 1986; Glasser, 1994; Bingham et al, 1987; Jamshid, 1989; An examination of the Social Sciences Citation Index reveals that between 1988 and 1993, the annual number of articles on homelessness increased from 78 to 200, rising further to 309 in 1997, after which a levelling off seems to occur (see van Vliet-, 2000).
- 7 World Development Indicators database, World Bank 8/2/2000; Purchasing Power Parity in international dollars (www.worldbank.org/data/databytopic/GNPPC.pdf).
- 8 Estimates based on survey research suggest that 14 per cent of the US population (26 million people) have been homeless during their life; see Link et al, 1994; recent data from Japan indicate that the homeless population of Tokyo has grown by more than 70 per cent since 1994; see Matsumoto, 2000.
- 9 The text of the resolution read: 'That the provincial and federal

- governments be requested to declare homelessness a national disaster requiring emergency humanitarian aid and be urged immediately to develop and implement a National Homelessness Relief and Prevention Strategy using disaster relief funds, both to provide the homeless with immediate health protection and housing and to prevent further homelessness' (City of Toronto: Housing in the City, www.city.toronto.on.ca/housing/winter98.htm).
- 10 These trends are reviewed in Parts I and II of this report. At the same time, as argued in later in this chapter, globalization has also contributed to the spread of support for the human right to housing and, therefore, has played an ambiguous role in pursuit of the goal of adequate shelter for all, adopted at the Habitat II conference.
 - 11 See, for instance, ethnographic studies such as reported in the *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*. Examples, from this source and other places, include Vance, 1995; Anderson, 1996; Cress and Snow, 1996; Conover et al, 1997; Roschelle, 1998; Lyon-Callo, 1998; Baldwin, 1998; Miller, 1998; Wardhaugh, 1999.
 - 12 Note the wording in the title of *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless* (emphasis added).
 - 13 See UNCHS (Habitat), 1996c.
 - 14 On diversity in legal definitions and measurement approaches, see, for example, Daly, 1996; Helvie and Kunstmann, 1999; and a recent UNCHS (Habitat) report (2000) 'Strategies to combat homelessness', which distils the following numbers from the available literature: US: 1.5–2.5 people per thousand population use shelters; Canada: 130,000–260,000 homeless people; Japan: 19,500; Korea: 3000; Western Europe: between 4 and 12 per cent is homeless in Germany, France and the UK, and less than 2 per cent in other countries; Eastern Europe: 500,000–700,000 homeless people of which 100,000 in Russia; Hungary: 30,000–50,000; India: 1.2–2.3 million; Nigeria: 15,700; South Africa (Johannesburg, inner city): 7500. For the reasons mentioned, the meaning of these numbers is not clear and they must be treated with great caution.
 - 15 The Commission on Human Settlements 16th session, Nairobi, 28 April–7 May 1997.
 - 16 See www.sparcindia.org/documents/alliance.html and www.dialogue.org.za/sparc/Citywatch.htm#survey. See also Chapter 14.
 - 17 Total number of households minus the combined total of adequate and repairable dwellings, MacDonald et al, 1998, p 25, Table 4.
 - 18 Ibid.
 - 19 About half of this total consisting of inadequate housing; see Sandhu, 2000 (Background Papers).
 - 20 A review of studies of street children in 15 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America found that poverty was a major and often the main reason cited as the cause for homelessness. Domestic violence was the next most significant cause (Cohen, 2000).
 - 21 See the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions for current and detailed information concerning evictions, www.cohre.org.
 - 22 See, for example, European Federation of National Organizations Working with the Homeless, 1998; Marsh and Mullins, 1998; McGregor and McConnachie, 1995; Ratcliffe, 1998; Somerville, 1998; Taylor, 1998.
 - 23 See Stolee, 1988.
 - 24 The remaining paragraphs of this section have been adapted from the UNCHS (Habitat) report 'Strategies to Combat Homelessness' (2000).
 - 25 See Hoch, 2000.
 - 26 The following sections are drawn from 'The implications of globalization for the human right to housing: Recent developments and actions for implementation', a background paper prepared by Scott Leckie, COHRE, which contains appendices with full source documentation on the points reviewed in this discussion.
 - 27 Reports of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Housing Rights, Justice Rajindar Sachar, include: *Final Report* (UN doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1995/12); *Second Progress Report* (UN doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/20); *First Progress Report* (UN doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1993/15); and *Working Paper on the Right to Adequate Housing* (UN doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/15).
 - 28 UNCHS (Habitat) (1995b).
 - 29 UN doc. HS/C/17/INF.6 (30 March 1999).
 - 30 General Comment No 4 (paragraph 11).
 - 31 For analysis of the CRPC, see: UNHCR, the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and the CRPC (1999) *Property and Housing Issues Affecting Repatriates and Displaced Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina*.
 - 32 The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights *General Comment No 2 on International Technical Assistance Measures*, adopted on 2 February 1990 at its fourth session, addresses the obligations of the World Bank and IMF concerning the financing of projects involving evictions. In particular, para 6 of General Comment No 2 draws the attention of the international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank and IMF to the view of the Committee that: *'International agencies should scrupulously avoid involvement in projects which, for example ... promote or reinforce discrimination against individuals or groups contrary to the provisions of the Covenant, or involve large-scale evictions or displacement of persons without the provision of all appropriate protection and compensation... Every effort should be made, at each phase of a development, to ensure that the rights contained in the Covenant are taken duly into account.'*
 - 33 For more information on the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure, see www.unchs.org/tenure/.
 - 34 E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/20, pp 27–35 (Draft International Convention on Housing Rights). See also: Leckie, 1994.
 - 35 *Guidelines on International Events and Forced Evictions* (Report of the Secretary-General), E/CN.4/Sub.2/1995/13. See also Olds, 1998.
 - 36 E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/7.
 - 37 See also 'An integrated Geo-Information System (GIS) with emphasis on cadastre and Land Information Systems (LIS) for decision makers in Africa'. Paper prepared for UNCHS by Clarissa Fourie, November, 1998; and 'Conclusions from a research study based on best practices analysis on access to land and security of tenure', a paper prepared by Clarissa Fourie for the International Forum on Urban Poverty (IFUP), 3rd International Conference on 'Social integration and security for the urban poor; Towards Cities for All'. 12–14 October 1999, Nairobi, Kenya, UNCHS.
 - 38 See www.unchs.org/unchs/english/women/womenbody.htm.
 - 39 See 'Women's empowerment indicators: Synthesis of the women and habitat indicators process'. Report for UNCHS prepared by F Mirafab (2000) See also www.unchs.org/unchs/english/women/content.htm.
 - 40 These benefits often include write-offs from personal income taxes in the form of interest paid on mortgage loans and property taxes, and exclusion from capital gains tax realized on the sale of one's home. In the US, the total tax expenditure for the mortgage interest deduction alone exceeds US\$60,000 million annually. The lowest earning 14 per cent of owning households filing itemized tax returns receive less than 0.5 per cent of this total housing subsidy, whereas the richest 18 per cent get over 70 per cent. The lowest income owners, who do not itemize deductions, and renters, do not benefit from this policy, which profits most those who need it least. A theoretical justification for the policy lies in the assumption that it will encourage construction at the upper end of the housing market, stimulating vacancy chains through which units will filter down to lower-income households. Segmentation and distortion of housing markets set severe limits to the practicability of this model.
 - 41 These brief characterizations are discussed more fully in Silver, 1998.
 - 42 The following sections draw from Ganapati, 2000 (see Background Papers).
 - 43 Cost sharing may or may not benefit low-income households depending on local real estate market. For example, under high housing demand conditions, land or housing costs may be so high that cost sharing may still not make housing affordable for low-income households.
 - 44 See Moser, 1992; also Chapter 14.
 - 45 For example, Marcuse, 1992.
 - 46 See Wenner, 1995.
 - 47 Besley and Coate, 1995.
 - 48 Varian, 1990; Stiglitz, 1990.
 - 49 See, for example, Johnson, 1987.
 - 50 For example, Turnbull, 1983.
 - 51 Lewin, 1981, p23.
 - 52 See Vakil, 1996 for leadership and management issues in five housing cooperatives in Zimbabwe.
 - 53 See Olson, 1965.
 - 54 For example, Hechter, 1990.
 - 55 See, for example, White and Saegert, 1997.
 - 56 See, for example, Vakil (1996) for case studies in Africa and Latin America and Ganapati, 2000 (see Background Papers) for a conceptual model and empirical examination of the internal and external variables that are critical to the success of housing cooperatives in India. For a study finding community-based, cooperative regularization of squatter settlements more effective than an individually oriented approach, see Glenn et al, 1993. Habitat (UNCHS) is currently engaged with the International Cooperative Alliance in a research project assessing the contributions of the cooperative sector to shelter developments in eastern and southern Africa.

SUSTAINING HUMAN SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT: STRATEGIC FOCI

The World Bank estimates that the number of urban poor will almost treble to 1500 million by the year 2025.¹ At least 600 million people, most of them poor, already live in health- and life-threatening situations in decaying urban environments. A third of all city dwellers live in substandard housing. At least 250 million urban residents have no ready access to safe piped water, and 400 million do not have adequate sanitation.

Many urban centres are beset by such problems as rising poverty, violence, unsustainable environmental practices and social exclusion of the poor and minority groups. Corruption in city government often reinforces the control held by elites, contributing to the disenfranchisement of many city residents.

Sustainable urban development will depend largely on the capacity of cities to manage efforts to redress these problems, which is closely linked to the functioning of urban governance and the active participation of citizens in it. Therefore, this last chapter first examines the critical role of governance and discusses the contribution of the Global Campaign for Urban Governance to making cities more inclusive. It then reviews ways in which urban management can help to eradicate poverty. The last two sections focus on approaches to combating corruption and violence as two major urban problems that affect especially people living in poverty and other marginalized population groups.

Supporting the Governance of More Inclusive Cities²

The Habitat Agenda committed to ‘institutionalizing a participatory approach to sustainable human settlements development and management, based on continuing dialogue among all actors involved in urban development’ and to ‘enabling local leadership, promoting democratic rule, exercising public authority and using public resources in all public institutions at all levels ... conducive to ensuring transparent, responsible accountable, just, effective and efficient governance of towns, cities and metropolitan areas’.

In this connection, urban governance refers to the complex set of values, norms, processes and institutions by which citizens and governments interact to organize the functions, activities and space that make up the urban environment. Good urban governance works to make cities

more efficient, equitable, safe and sustainable. Systems of urban governance that are based on transparent and accountable processes can go a long way in making cities more inclusive. This not only involves the state and local governments but also civil society groups. Good urban governance results in economic efficiency, social equity, gender-aware policies, overall sustainability and, ultimately, improved living conditions of not only the urban poor but *all* city residents.

At the city level, there has been a tendency to see urban governance in terms of urban management: the operation and maintenance of infrastructure and services from the viewpoint of financial accountability and administrative efficiency. However, cities are located in wider regional, national and international economies, environmental and political systems and socio-spatial relationships. Inter-governmental relations encompass such joint activities as negotiations, dispute resolution, cooperative ventures among public and private parties and the fiduciary responsibilities of government. In addition, it implies bottom-up decision-making, decentralization and broad-based participation. Indeed, participatory decision-making is essential to good urban governance. A solely managerial perspective fails to consider these wider contexts within which urban governance is conducted and ignores the essentially politicized nature of governance. Good urban governance is not merely a matter of efficient management; it also has political dimensions related to democracy, human rights and civic participation in decision-making processes. Participation and human rights are, therefore, critical in governing cities well, concentrating attention on those who are excluded and denied access to the social, economic and political resources of the city.

Good urban governance is not merely a matter of efficient management; it also has political dimensions related to democracy, human rights and civic participation in decision-making processes

The growing importance of good governance

Systems of urban governance should:

- ensure that the regulatory frameworks and infrastructure provision of cities work efficiently to provide for and capitalize on the local opportunities

for economic development in an increasingly global economy;

- promote economic development that leads to employment generation and poverty eradication;
- develop and maintain decision-making processes that are transparent and accountable to all citizens;
- include all sectors of the community in participatory decision-making and implementation processes;
- ensure that the particular needs of all citizens are identified and taken into account in developing and implementing policy;
- meet the increased demand for housing and urban services through broad-based partnerships and enabling policies;
- protect the health, safety and security of all citizens;
- preserve the urban environment and the cultural and historical heritage of cities;
- implement the fiduciary responsibilities of the present generation of residents to future citizens through rational planning.

Poverty eradication at the local level

Among these tasks, the elimination of poverty must be a central concern. Although the causes of poverty may lie largely outside municipal jurisdiction and control, good urban governance can make an important difference.

The elimination of poverty must be a central concern of urban management because the extent and level of poverty directly affect its operational ability and viability

Poverty reduction programmes have tended to operate at two levels. First, at the macro level, where they involve interventions defined and implemented by central government, including aspects of investment, subsidy, pricing and credit. Second, at the local level, which involves working directly with community groups in supporting a variety of activities including the provision of credit, basic infrastructure and slum upgrading, micro-enterprise development and strengthening community participation. Traditionally, the macro level has been more targeted by the international agencies and development banks working with national governments, while the local level has been supported more by NGOs and CBOs working with donor agencies. However, international agencies, regional development banks and bilateral aid agencies increasingly recognize the importance of local capacity building (see Chapter 14) and have begun supporting poverty reduction activities at the city level.³ To some extent, the growing emphasis on NGOs and community networks also stems from a focus among development organizations on strengthening civil society as a precondition of democratic society.

Local government thus has opportunities to combat poverty by systematically enacting policies that improve access to housing and basic urban services through regularization of land tenure, extending access to credit for micro-enterprise and housing finance, supporting urban

upgrading, creating jobs and support to the informal sector.

Local government action may be constrained by financial and political dependence on central government, a lack of clarity of functions and responsibilities or lack of a coherent policy for addressing urban poverty. These considerations, as well as possible changes in responsibilities of local government and its authority to act as a financial intermediary, as well as the need to generate and increase access to financial resources may also require changes in local government powers (see Chapters 4 and 13).

However, local government action to eliminate urban poverty does not necessarily require a change in mandate; it may also not require additional funding, as is illustrated through some of the examples of possible action noted below. Particularly if a participatory approach is used that works in partnership with local communities and NGOs, existing resources can be more efficiently used to reduce poverty.⁴ In this regard, the single greatest resource is the potential of poor households themselves, in the informal sector, discussed next.

● The informal sector

The extent and impact of poverty on urban populations, as well as on urban and national economies would be much greater were it not for the informal sector. Various described as unregulated, largely self-employed and small-scale activities, this largely 'hidden' or 'unrecognized' part of the economy often provides employment, goods and services for as much as 60 per cent of the urban population.

Research shows that the informal sector is better integrated with and recognized by the formal sector than its title would suggest. It is far more buoyant and elastic in generating jobs for an increasing urban labour force than the formal sector. It has a number of other advantages as well. Its small scale of operations and low levels of capitalization greatly lower the costs of creating employment, and it also produces jobs that require fewer skills and less training than the formal sector may demand. Coupled with a lack of regulation and controls, the ease of entry makes the informal sector well suited to the absorption of rural-urban migrants and other newcomers to the urban labour market. Many enter the informal sector during economic crisis, as a survival strategy of last resort. Women often find domestic and other service employment, while men more often seek self-employment. When local economies have been impacted by globalization in general and structural adjustment in particular, it has been mainly the informal sector that has provided a safety net and a source of income for those made redundant or unemployed.

However, the informal sector has its problems and limitations. First, the low-productivity nature of the sector and its lack of bargaining power mean that household incomes are generally lower than in the formal sector. Second, the very nature of the sector makes earnings more intermittent. The more erratic pattern of earnings tends to disqualify households in the informal sector from access to formal credit mechanisms. Third, the irregular and often illegal nature of many of its activities makes informal sector operators subject to official harassment or persecution as

well as prone to mafia-style protection rackets. Fourth, the unregulated nature of the informal sector makes it difficult, and often impossible, to obtain access to services and supports necessary for increasing earnings and moving out of poverty. Fifth, the informal nature of many of the activities makes it difficult to protect those who are engaged in them, whether as paid workers or as unpaid family members. One much-publicized example is that of child-labour where the 'rights of the child' conflict with the survival strategies of the family. Another common situation concerns lack of protection against environmental contaminants and other hazards in the work setting.⁵ Sixth, informal sector jobs do not have associated with them health insurance and other common fringe benefits. This affects particularly women and migrant workers.⁶ Seventh, informal sector jobs do not produce government revenues to support welfare policies and can, thereby, erode safety net programmes and increase societal inequalities, as seen in the transition economies.⁷

● Investing in the poor⁸

One of the myths of globalization is that it pits elites and poor people against each other. To the extent that poverty reduction can be construed as a public good, the interdependence of better-off and poor groups gains prominence, and mobilization of broader constituencies becomes more feasible and benefits for poor people more likely. Doing so also sets a moral tone and political platform capable of mobilizing a broad range of citizens around common, even prosaic, interests.⁹

Poverty reduction must be recognized as a public good because people living in poverty represent unrealized human capital potential with benefits for the whole of society

Poverty reduction must be recognized as a public good because people living in poverty represent unrealized human capital potential with benefits for the *whole* of society.¹⁰ Market-based governance strategies exacerbate poverty and social disparities, most significantly by underinvestment in human capital. Current policy recommendations target human capital resources as the key to generating wealth and maintaining competitiveness.¹¹ Underinvestment in this strategic asset is an inefficient use of an important source of potential future wealth and international competitiveness.¹²

Opportunities for carrying out initiatives to ensure the realization of human capital are enhanced by partnerships (see Chapter 14). The Casa Pia de Lisboa project, for example, brings together public and private agencies, labour unions, business organizations and universities to move Cape Verde families into the political and economic mainstream. One goal is to legalize the families' situation in order for them to gain access to social and employment rights. Casa Pia also provides 'customized', on-the-job vocational training as well as support for small business start-ups. Casa Pia is affiliated with IGLOO (Global Integration Through Housing and Jobs),¹³ itself a joint

initiative set up by three European NGO partners (FEANTSA, CECODHAS-ICAP, ETUC-CGIL) as a platform to encourage projects integrating housing, social support, training and employment initiatives.

Given the failure of market forces to invest in human capital, there is an important government role. In turn, this requires more articulated policy and financial frameworks for identifying and assessing human capital needs as well as for negotiating with the many public and private actors involved in enhancing this potential. For poor people, their inability to take advantage of new economic opportunities stems from a lack of information, skills and credit as well as the marginalized opportunities of a volatile informal economy.¹⁴ An institutional commitment to investing in human capital is a necessary but not sufficient strategy for overcoming the systemic barriers that perpetuate social exclusion.

A key to poverty eradication lies in productive employment and income generation. Once a local government is ready and able to develop and implement appropriate programmes, the following options should be considered:

Employment generation through municipal works. In a number of countries such as Pakistan, Egypt, Colombia, Jamaica and Sri Lanka programmes of community-based, small-scale public works and contracts have been successfully implemented. Some cities have made the generation of jobs an explicit criterion for assessing and evaluating all bids for municipal contracts. The participation of women, especially as managers, supervisors, storekeepers, etc must be ensured. Box 17.1 describes a programme along these lines, developed in Senegal with the help of the national government.

Support for informal sector activities. Local government must recognize the contribution that the informal sector makes to employment and income generation and should remove regulatory impediments limiting the opportunities for informal sector operators such as hawkers, traders and waste recyclers to enhance the productivity of their activities. Municipalities can review and adjust land use and

Box 17.1 Creating jobs that benefit urban infrastructure and services

In 1989, the government of Senegal created the Agency for the Implementation of Public Interest Work (AGETIP) with support from various bilateral and multilateral donors. Its objectives were to create significant numbers of jobs in urban areas while increasing the productivity of the labour force through their employment on socially useful tasks. It works through a network of commercial companies and contracting authorities. During the first eight years, it has given 228,000 contracts in the building and civil engineering sector, which includes 7.7 million working days or 3000 permanent jobs. A total of 17,500 million CFAs have been spent on the labour component of these contracts with the total investment of the agency equalling 70,000 million CFAs. A third of its funds went to urban environment projects (including sanitation, water supplies, drainage, electrification and roads), 24 per cent to education and 22 per cent to health.

Source: MELISSA Program, 1998.

Box 17.2 The hidden significance of urban agriculture

In the next 20 years, urbanization will intensify in Latin America and the Caribbean, but Africa and Asia will witness the most explosive urban growth. Countries that are urbanizing the most rapidly are also among the least well prepared to satisfy their food needs, and many already depend precariously on food aid and imports.

Urban agriculture bolsters city food supplies while also increasing the incomes of the poor. Urban agriculture uses resources, products and services found in and around the urban area and, in turn, often supplies resources, products and services to that area.

Magnitude of urban agriculture

The United Nations Development Programme estimates that 800 million people are engaged in urban agriculture worldwide, the majority in Asian cities. Of these, 200 million are considered to be market producers, employing 150 million people full time. Urban agriculture is thus an important supply source in developing country urban food systems, a critical food-security valve for poor urban households. It productively uses open urban spaces, treats and recovers urban solid and liquid wastes, generates employment and income, adds value to products and manages freshwater resources more sparingly.

Urban agriculture complements, rather than supplants, rural supplies and imports of food. Cities will continue to depend largely on rural agriculture for bulkier, less perishable foodstuffs. But urban agriculture can provide significant amounts of food at small scales and for specific items. It can generate goods valued at tens of millions of dollars in any given major city. By growing their own food, cities lower their food deficits and obtain an important source of fruits and vegetables and livestock products, including dairy. Urban agriculture provides an estimated 15 per cent of all food consumed in urban areas and is likely to double that share in the next couple of decades. Cities with more advanced urban agriculture sectors, particularly in Asia, have become largely self-sufficient in higher-valued, nutritious perishables. Some cities even export surpluses.

Urban agriculture is also integral to city life, a vibrant part of urban economic and ecological systems. Urban farmers use urban land, public services, inputs and even urban wastes in production. They then sell to local markets and often reinvest profits into goods produced or sold at local city outlets.

Urban agriculture can also be an important supplement to household income. In Cairo, the rearing of small livestock, practised by over a quarter of households, provides more than 60 per cent of household income. In Dar es Salaam urban agriculture is the second-largest employer. High-valued speciality foods (for example, mushrooms) and non-food crops (such as ornamental flowers) that require little space for production are especially good for providing needed cash.

Still, the great majority of urban farmers are poor and grow food mainly for their own subsistence, with little support or protection, on small plots that they do not own. These households can secure food from urban agriculture that they could not afford otherwise. Studies in Harare, Kampala and Nairobi found that urban agriculture can improve nutritional status of household members, as measured by caloric and protein intake, meal quality or children's growth rates.

Many surveys indicate that women predominate in urban agriculture, enabling them to earn income, improve household diets, perform household chores and exert greater control over household resources, budgets and decision-making.

Risks and constraints

The poor can be constrained from doing well with urban farming for many reasons, including lack of access to land, credit, water and other inputs or legal obstacles arising from concerns about public health. Urban farmers often use public spaces, and if they lack title to the land they use, they cannot be assured they will actually reap the benefits of their investment. Without title, the majority of low-income urban producers cannot get formal loans that require assets as a guarantee nor can they get support from national farmers' unions, whose members' activities must be legally sanctioned. Women may be denied aid by extension or credit services that distrust or disregard their knowledge of crops, input combinations and cultivation methods.

Aridity, unreliable supplies of piped water and violent rainfalls can all critically constrain production systems. If improperly managed, urban agriculture can contribute to environmental degradation, including soil erosion, loss of vegetation, siltation and depletion of water resources.

Public health concerns stem from misuse or mishandling of agrochemicals; the application of untreated or improperly treated wastes to food crops; the exposure of crops to air, water or land pollution, including possible contamination from heavy metals; and unsafe disposal of vegetable and animal wastes. Some threats, such as those from agrochemicals, are less prevalent than commonly believed because the poor usually cannot afford inorganic inputs. Consequently they grow crops or raise livestock organically. However, the poor often have no option other than to grow their crops in hazardous conditions, and threats from authorities may only deter them from investing in safer production methods.

Policy and practice

To improve urban agriculture and make it more sustainable, farmers must use better practices and governments must promote or better manage it through more informed policies. NGOs can support these efforts.

Legitimizing urban agriculture can help its low-income practitioners to gain access to land, needed services and credit. Governments can provide land for urban agriculture in city master plans, support greenbelt projects and set up a network of input and service centres. They can engage directly in urban agricultural production by leasing out public land; assigning undeveloped, public land to farmer organizations; partnering with producers; or becoming producers themselves. Urban laws and regulations can be revised to be compatible with people's survival options, as in Kampala, where bylaws now allow for certain kinds of farm production in certain zones. Governments can also tolerate urban agriculture as interim land use in public housing schemes or incorporate it as a way to productively manage open urban spaces. Some development banks in South Africa and Tanzania have also provided credit by supporting revolving funds for cooperatives of urban farmers. Farmers' organizations can also help to legitimize the sector and organize access to credit, inputs and markets.

There is enormous potential for reducing risks to public health by educating and empowering urban producers, as opposed to ignoring or harassing them. Farmers can reduce environmental risks and gain financially by making appropriate choices about what crops to grow.

Producers can be taught to avoid the use of contaminated organic or chemical fertilizers on specific crops or to draw water from wells instead of rivers. Urban farmers can have mutually beneficial contracts with municipal waste-disposal services, and non-food urban agriculture can be used to rehabilitate contaminated water bodies and soils, generating income in the process. NGOs can help to determine the scale of composting that would be both cost-effective and environmentally suitable. Cities can treat and recirculate wastewater.

Challenges to urban agriculture remain to be addressed from the community up to the national level. Governments must apply the wealth of local experiences to creating institutional structures for implementing urban agriculture policies. Overall, experience shows that prohibition of urban agriculture has been ineffective. Governments now should move beyond accommodation and into issue resolution: multiple-stakeholder governance so far seems to be the best approach to creating a sustainable urban agriculture.

Experience also has shown that urban agriculture is most viable where it is mainstreamed into robust strategies for land use, poverty alleviation, economic development and sound environmental management. Outside Asia, few national food policies seek synergies between rural and urban production or guide integrated urban agricultural programmes. Land use and regulatory systems must be designed and enforced for fairer access to land, water and markets. Agricultural extension must be adapted to the needs of urban producers. Agricultural research stations and urban planning departments must collaborate. Model health and land use codes need to be developed. Regional and global networks are developing, but national and local networks must also be created and supported. Public policy should also acknowledge women's knowledge, constraints and opportunities and act on them to enhance women's citizenship.

Source: from a publication of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) 2020 Vision for Food, Agriculture, and the Environment (www.ifpri.org/2020/welcome.htm), an initiative to feed the world, reduce poverty and protect the environment (Mougeot, 2000a).

Note: For further reading see Mougeot, 2000b; UNDP, 1996b.

zoning regulations and infrastructure provision to facilitate marketing, manufacturing and employment generation activities. Support for informal sector activities can also include revising inappropriate construction standards to allow for lower cost building materials and to encourage self-help and gradual upgrading. In many cities in the developing countries, urban agriculture is growing fast as a source of food and earnings. Local governments can provide support by, for example, appropriate land use planning, extending credit and technical assistance concerning the use of fertilizers and choice of crops (see Box 17.2)

Establishing credit for small scale and micro-enterprises. Local government should support credit for small scale and micro-enterprises, preferably through providing funds for lending to NGOs and CBOs, or by providing guarantees for them to financial institutions. Biases against women either as borrowers or as entrepreneurs should be removed.

Mitigating the impact of economic shocks. Emergency credit facilities (small, very short-term loans available on a fast-track basis, triggered by general rather than particular circumstances) should be made available to reduce the vulnerability of low-income households and businesses to withstand economic shocks and fluctuations in market conditions. These local actions should occur in the wider context of strengthening international institutions to manage the volatility of global capital markets.¹⁵

Provision of marketing advice and information support. Credit schemes and facilities should be linked to market information and advice centres to support business networking and exchanges between micro-enterprises as well as vertically with other up- and down-stream enterprises. This will facilitate enterprises to move up the value-adding ladder through joint, collaborative or cooperative initiatives. Local government can also assist in the formation of 'chambers of micro-commerce', through which it can have a direct channel of communication and feedback on its employment generation and poverty eradication programmes.

Support for training and capacity building. Local government should provide or support vocational and other practical

training and capacity building courses. These efforts should include initiatives to help bridge the 'digital divide' by developing skills in modern ICTs, in conjunction with creating professional jobs and the application of ICTs in support of affordable housing and neighbourhood development (see Boxes 17.4; 17.5; 17.6; and 17.7). It is particularly critical to encourage the participation of women in these programmes by meeting their needs for childcare and transport.

Provision of security of land tenure. Providing security of tenure to 'owner-occupiers' in illegal settlements greatly increases the value of their assets and their ability to access credit.¹⁶ It also reduces the risks of eviction, thereby encouraging investment in property and equipment, associated with manufacturing, repair and assembly. Awarding secure tenure to women, rather than men, often has a greater multiplier impact on improvements and income generation.

Access to urban services and land. The poor, like other urban dwellers, need access to municipal services, as this directly influences their living conditions and, particularly, their health status. Further, well-serviced housing with secure land tenure plays a vital role in the survival of poor households.¹⁷ However, low-income neighbourhoods are usually

Box 17.3 Using ICTs to franchise access to information

In Dhar district, one of India's poorest, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, a model computer project provides residents with access to commonly needed state records and daily crop prices. The service is provided by young people with at least a 10th-grade education, picked by the state and given a franchise to sell the information for a small fee from the state's computer network. For 25–35 cents, people can buy immediate print-outs of documents that they might otherwise have spent days trying to get from local bureaucrats: land records, caste certificates, proof of income, etc. For another 25 cents, any citizen can send a complaint to the state by email and the state guarantees a reply within a week. The service provider will write out the grievance for those who are illiterate. Since the project was started in January 2000, 22 villages have each bought a computer, a modem, a printer and a battery for \$1500 with their own money and agreed to provide a small booth to house the set-up. It is expected that this sort of revenue-generating project will spread more quickly than those dependent on scarce public funds. The arrangement is also thought to counteract a tendency among low-level officials to demand bribes before furnishing information.

Source: Dugger, 2000.

Box 17.4 Design matters: best practices in affordable housing

The City Design Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago is establishing the first internet Affordable Housing Design Catalogue. 'Design Matters: Best Practices in Affordable Housing' will document exemplary functional and innovative affordable housing projects for a range of building types, site planning and technology practices across the US. With financial support from several national and local foundations and individual donors, the catalogue will take advantage of the internet technology to provide universal, free access to professionals, community groups, developers, builders, consumers, policy makers, researchers, educators and students worldwide.

The Affordable Housing Design Catalogue will help to demonstrate that 'design matters' in affordable housing and that it does not have to cost more. The catalogue will include all types of affordable, 'permanent' housing for independent living, constructed between 1980 and 1999. In addition to affordability considerations, economic, social and formal criteria will be used to catalogue projects that:

- minimize construction and life cycle costs;
- support household and neighbourhood fit;
- are adaptable to household changes;
- are universally accessible;
- meet high aesthetic standards;
- maximize energy and resource efficiency;
- promote healthy indoor environments;
- support physical safety and security.

Browsers will be able to search the database for photo-images and plans, location, architect, developer, project description (eg building and construction type, construction practices, number and type of units, building construction costs), 'target' residents (eg income, type of household), tenure, strategies to achieve affordability, and priority design objectives. In addition, the catalogue will offer information and resources for each of the design objectives, both in print and on the internet, as well as contacts for follow-up.

Source: Roberta M Feldman, Director, City Design Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago, personal communications, 15, 16 and 20 June 2000.

not the first targets for road upgrading, water supply, sewerage, drainage or municipal waste collection. Typically, women and girls bear the brunt of these deficiencies (see, for example, Chapters 9 and 10). Cities must be actively involved in efforts to decentralize the provision of urban infrastructure and services, preferably by forming enduring partnerships with the private sector and civil society groups (Chapters 13 and 14).

Combating Corruption

'There is increasing evidence that corruption undermines development. It also hampers the effectiveness with which domestic savings and external aid are used in many developing countries, and this in turn threatens to undermine grassroots support for foreign assistance' – James D Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank (<http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/anticorrupt/>)

Corruption is the misuse of office for personal gain. It means charging an illicit price for a service or using the power of office to further illicit aims. Corruption can entail acts of omission or commission. It can involve legal activi-

ties or illegal ones. It can be internal to the organization (eg embezzlement) or external to it (eg extortion). While some acts of corruption are 'freelance', others are more systematic. Systematic corruption generates (a) economic costs by distorting incentives and discouraging investment; (b) political costs by undermining institutions; and (c) social costs by redistributing wealth and power towards the undeserving. Overall, corruption has effects that vary widely, including sometimes net social benefits, but it usually leads to inefficiency, injustice and inequality.

In October 1996 the World Bank's President James Wolfensohn launched the Bank's campaign against 'the cancer of corruption' indicating that the Bank was willing to address the problem overtly and systematically. This followed a realization that political corruption and inefficiency are detrimental to economic growth as well as a growing concern over waste resulting from corruption-prone Bank projects.

Corruption within municipalities: What can be done?¹⁸

One of the key challenges facing municipalities today is how to reduce corruption. Corruption negatively affects the provision and maintenance of urban services and deprives taxpayers of the right to these services.

● A preventive strategy

People are more susceptible to corruption when they have the monopoly over a good or service, as well as the discretion to decide who gets that good or service or how much anyone gets, and are not accountable for that decision

People are more susceptible to corruption when they have the monopoly over a good or service, the discretion to decide who gets that good or service and are not accountable for that decision. Therefore a key to successful prevention of corruption lies in making changes in the policies and systems that put people into office rather than hunting for culprits after the deed. When public officials are paid meagre salaries without being rewarded for performance, and when penalties against corruption are rare and mild, we can expect corruption to flourish. A successful strategy against corruption focuses on corrupt systems, not just corrupt individuals.

Corruption tends to be reduced by separation of power, checks and balances, transparency, a good justice system and clearly defined roles, rules, responsibilities and limits. Corruption tends not to thrive where there is a democratic culture, competition and good systems of control, and where people have rights to information and rights of redress.

Fighting corruption should not be viewed as an end in itself because the economic costs of reducing corruption may outweigh the benefits. For example, setting up expensive monitoring systems may have little or no impact on corruption. Eliminating corruption can provide a lever for urban financial recovery, the reform of service delivery and

Box 17.5 MOUSE: building partnerships to bridge the urban digital divide

Founded in 1997 by a group of concerned and motivated individuals from New York City's Silicon Alley, MOUSE (Making Opportunities for Upgrading Schools & Education) is a nonprofit volunteer organization that provides New York City public schools and their extended communities with technology resources, expertise, access and support by linking them with professionals from the local high-tech industry. It has provided schools with an estimated \$5 million worth of equipment, technical expertise and support. MOUSE's core roster of 1500+ volunteer tech professionals have spent more than 40,000 hours working hands-on in the public schools building networks and solving technology problems. In 1999, volunteers put 50,000 teachers and students on-line.

MOUSE is currently managing programmes in 38 New York City public high schools. MOUSE selects partner schools based on the following criteria: strong administrative interest and support; short and long-term curricular goals utilizing technology; a dedicated and interested corps of teachers; community partners, corporate partners, PTA and alumni groups; and a willingness to let the students take part in creating and maintaining the technology.

In addition to the school-based technology programmes, MOUSE and its various partners are also involved in outreach programmes that include:

- a large-scale *computer donation programme* for 14 elementary and middle schools in Central Harlem. An internet company has donated more than \$500,000 worth of hardware distributed equitably throughout the district and installed and maintained via MOUSE's volunteer manpower. In addition to setting up 14 school networks, MOUSE coordinates staff development and student programmes as well as parent workshops to help schools begin to utilize the technology in meaningful ways.
- a three-year US\$1.1 million grant from the US Department of Education to set up a *community technology centre*. The centre fulfils the vital need of providing access to information technology for one of the poorest congressional districts in New York. Providing free access to families, students and teachers beyond school hours of 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. is an important step in narrowing the digital divide that exists in this city.
- an *annual two-day conference* which brings together over 350 teachers from high schools in Manhattan to share their experiences regarding 'best practices' on using technology in the classroom.
- an *On-line Student Designed Newspaper Contest* designed to give public high school students the opportunity to learn first hand about creating an on-line newspaper, web site design and programming, as well as to develop their critical and creative thinking skills as they gain experience in the field of journalism. Winning sites appear on *The New York Times* web site and winning teams are awarded laptop computers.
- a new programme that encourages young women in local high schools to get involved in the world of new technology. Called 'The NYC Young Women's Technology Club', the project brings New York City high school girls together with professional women in the new media industry to learn technology skills through building an on-line magazine. Project content is driven by the interests of participating students, and the mentors provide skills workshops, brown bag lunches and one-on-one interaction.
- an *Interactive Internship and Learning Programme* designed to prepare highschool students for the jobs of the future. MOUSE partnered with local high-tech and new-media firms to place students in paid summer internships. The year-round programme provides them with the skills necessary to be successful in today's high-tech workplace. Participating students attend monthly hands-on workshops taught by industry professionals and bi-monthly meetings with advisers.

The MOUSE volunteer network comprises a wide array of multimedia professionals: network designers, planners and architects, programmers, web site developers and designers, database managers and content providers. Approximately 75 per cent of MOUSE volunteers come from new technology companies. The remainder work for traditional media and other volunteer-minded corporations.

It works in partnership with dozens of private sector companies which provide funding, equipment, expertise and labour to the organization and its projects.

Source: Melissa Auerbach, Communications Director, MOUSE, personal communication, 6 June 2000.

the involvement of citizens – reflecting and reinforcing good governance.

● Assessing corruption

Corruption comes in many varieties. A good start for analysing corruption is to unbundle it. Citizens and government officials themselves can help to diagnose the extent of, and damage caused by, various kinds of corruption by simple methods:

Participatory diagnosis. The first task is to demystify corruption. This can be done by analysing a case study of a successful anti-corruption campaign in another city or country. Analytical frameworks can be provided to help participants to realize that corruption is not (just or primarily) a problem of evil people but of corrupt systems. Participants can then move on to a diagnosis of their own situation. This method can produce a deeper understanding of corruption in general and its specific local manifestations, and lead to a plan of action.

Technical studies and experiments. Studies can be useful to gain a better understanding of how corrupt systems work (or, rather, do not work). Clients are encouraged to share their knowledge without fear of recriminations, for example, through anonymous surveys or group work involving anonymous written contributions that are then discussed. Employees are then centrally involved in the subsequent design and eventual evaluation of experiments with new ways of providing information, incentives and accountability.

Implementing reform. Campaigns against corruption need some entity to be in charge. However, because no single agency can do everything in the fight against corruption and a coordinated effort is required, the anti-corruption 'body' must, above all, facilitate joint action and mobilize the resources of many government agencies. The first question facing a government wishing to fight corruption is what sort of coordinating authority it requires. It may choose to set up a 'super-agency' that combines investiga-

Box 17.6 Using the internet as a tool for improving urban neighbourhoods and preserving affordable housing

Despite the booming economy and the unprecedented wealth being generated by high tech, US cities face serious problems with housing, especially in low-income neighbourhoods. An interesting project at UCLA, with an impressive array of local and national partners, is using the internet to do something positive about housing in Los Angeles.

Neighbourhood Knowledge Los Angeles (NKLA) is a web site (<http://nkla.spps.ucla.edu>) aimed at improving and preserving neighbourhoods. Offered in two languages (English and Spanish), it is an on-line tool that provides easy access to a vast collection of data about properties and neighbourhoods that are in danger of falling into urban blight.

The conditions the project and its partners are trying to fix are sobering. The Los Angeles Citizens Committee on Slum Housing found that the number of LA-area rental units occupied by tenants living below the poverty level grew from 217,200 in 1989 to 422,500 in 1995, a 95 per cent increase over six years. The Census's *American Housing Survey* reported in 1995 that in the Los Angeles–Long Beach area there were 154,400 substandard apartments in need of major repair, 107,900 units infested with rats, and 131,700 units without working toilets. Such grim statistics are the product of severe pockets of poverty.

Leaders of the NKLA project, based at UCLA's School of Public Policy and Social Research and funded by the City of Los Angeles Housing Department, Fannie Mae and the US Department of Commerce's Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program, use computer data from a variety of public sources to look for 'early warning signs' that properties in Los Angeles are headed for unliveable status. One of the best predictors of housing abandonment is tax delinquency. Property tax delinquency is often followed by building code violations and tenant complaints, then by abandonment of the property. Slum landlords 'work the system' by buying a building and milking the tenants for rent without paying for maintenance or taxes, then disappear when the government threatens legal action.

The NKLA project and similar community data projects in other cities are good examples of two phenomena made possible by the internet. The first is that the internet tends to blur the boundaries between institutions; in the case of NKLA, between a university, the city and county governments and community activist organizations. This blurring is common in the private sector but is only beginning to emerge in the public and civic sectors. The second phenomenon is that NKLA shows what can be done with what would otherwise be underutilized public information. UCLA researchers use public data to serve specific ends, particularly community development. Importantly, NKLA enables new technologies to be used in ways that give people left out of the high-tech boom real hope, when those technologies are used as tools for solving specific, concrete problems.

The NKLA site and its on-line databases allow citizens and housing activists to look for properties with tax problems, code violations or other difficulties, such as tenant complaints or fire violations, that could be precursors to abandonment, neighbourhood deterioration and urban decline. The web site offers searchable databases by zip code or other parameters and shows individual properties on interactive maps of Los Angeles.

NKLA researchers also work with grassroots community organizations, tenant groups and activists to promote code enforcement by government officials. The NKLA project and its community partners played a role in developing the city's comprehensive slum housing ordinance, which mandates that all properties be inspected for code violations every three years. That, in turn, is having an effect on improving compliance by property owners.

One nonprofit community organization that finds the NKLA tools useful is Concerned Citizens of South-Central Los Angeles. This group is developing a land trust for housing in its community, which has the oldest housing in the city. The organization buys properties that are available because of tax delinquency or other problems, such as foreclosures, and then helps first-time homebuyers acquire the properties and refurbish them. All of this is made possible through information gleaned from public data.

Source: Chapman, 2000.

tion (like a police force), prevention (like a management consulting agency) and popular participation (like a community relations office). To be effective, it should have power and resources.

There is a simple rule for where to begin when combating corruption: 'Pick low-hanging fruit'. That is, select a type of corruption where visible progress might be made soon, without too great a cost. To generate political support, it makes sense first to attack the kinds of corruption that are most obvious to citizens or are most hated by them. This advice runs counter to the tendency to tackle everything at once, in a comprehensive plan, or to take on the kind of corruption with the most serious costs, even if this would seem to be the best approach for improving urban finance.

Experience suggests that municipal leaders usually should not begin anti-corruption initiatives by attacking their own officials and agencies, even if these are known to be corrupt. Instead, it may be more effective if they take positive steps to reform corrupt bureaucracies by improving ways of obtaining information, enhancing performance incentives and promoting competition. However, when corruption has become systematic, it is necessary to remove perceptions that impunity exists. Such perceptions may

arise when all that citizens and bureaucrats have seen are just a few minor prosecutions, making them cynical about the fight against corruption. Then it becomes necessary to break through this culture of impunity and 'fry some big fish'. Prominent culprits must be named publicly and punished so that a distrustful citizenry is persuaded that an anti-corruption drive is more than just words, more than just a campaign against one's political opponents.

Corruption in the water sector¹⁹

Globalization and the associated processes of marketization and deregulation have been accompanied by encouragement of privatization of public services and infrastructure by the World Bank and other international development banks. At the same time, privatization has increased the incentives for multinational companies to offer bribes in order to secure profitable concessions and contracts.

Privatization of public services has increased the incentives for multinational companies to offer bribes in order to secure profitable concessions and contracts

One of the sectors most at risk is water and sanitation. The concessions invariably involve long-term monopoly supply of an essential service, with considerable potential profit. Significantly, the label of 'Blue Gold' has been used in the context of the commodification of water.²⁰ Often, major construction works are also involved, themselves a source of profit.

It is not just the developing countries where corruption is problematic. In recent years, leading politicians have been prosecuted and convicted of corruption in a number of Western European countries, including Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK. In 1999, the entire European Commission, the highest political authority in the European Union, resigned over corruption allegations. Corruption also extends to business practices abroad, where it is so routine that British companies employ special agents to recover bribes that have failed to produce the desired result.²¹

In the field of public utilities, France pioneered the system of privatization by contracting out (*gestion déléguée* or delegated management). As a result, the major water multinationals are French. Therefore, many of the convictions or investigations on allegations of corruption concern French companies.²² For example, in the city of Grenoble in 1996, a former mayor and government minister and a senior executive of a private water company both received prison sentences for receiving and giving bribes to award a water contract to a subsidiary of the company.²³ In March 2000, the city dismissed the water company, and brought the water service back under public control, a case of re-municipalization. Another major company was convicted of bribery to obtain water concessions in the town of Angoulême.

As privatization of water and sanitation has spread to other parts of the world, the European multinationals have been centrally involved. For example, in Lesotho, 12 multinational companies are being prosecuted for paying bribes in connection with huge water engineering contracts for a water supply scheme.²⁴ In Indonesia, Jakarta's water was privatized, with support from the World Bank, through a French and a British consortium both of which were in partnership with companies owned by Suharto's relatives and associates. The World Bank has since then introduced procurement regulations that provide for the indefinite banning from Bank projects of companies found to have paid bribes on any project.²⁵ Allegations surround many other privatized water schemes, on all continents. In India, for example, the state of Karnataka is reviewing a decision to grant a water project to a UK-based company after alleged irregularities in the tendering of the contract.²⁶

The World Bank has introduced procurement regulations, providing for the indefinite banning from Bank projects of companies found guilty of bribery

● International initiatives

Transparency International (TI) is an international NGO that produces corruption indexes and surveys which rank

countries in terms of the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist in those countries. The TI Bribe Payers Index, for instance, ranks the leading exporting countries in terms of the degree to which their companies are perceived to be paying bribes abroad.²⁷

In 1998, the OECD agreed to a Convention on Combatting Bribery in International Business Transactions. This initiative was an attempt to generalize the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), under which it is an offence in the US for a company to engage in bribing officials of a foreign government.²⁸ This was seen as having put US companies at a competitive disadvantage, as their European competitors have had no such legislation to deter them from using bribery to obtain business.

Whether the Convention's adoption will produce the intended results will depend largely on whether the OECD countries will enforce such laws against their own companies. In practice, OECD governments and business associations have tended to be more concerned about protecting their companies' contracts than supporting action against corruption.

● Country responses

Developing countries can protect themselves against bribery in the water and sanitation sector by effective action that contains the following three elements:

- *Economic deterrents.* The most effective sanction against bribery among multinationals is to ban them from future contracts. Singapore, for example, banned five companies from bidding for any contracts for five years after an intermediary was convicted of handling bribes totalling US\$9.8 million.
- *The public sector option.* The best economic defence against bribery in public procurement is to ensure that the option of public sector provision is always kept open. This was a key part of the historical rationale for placing services under municipal or national control. Water and sanitation services are still 95 per cent in public sector hands worldwide. Any acceptable privatization proposal should be justifiable in light of this option.
- *Democratic transparency.* Public availability of all documents relies on democratic practice as a basic safeguard against corruption. This is a real issue in the water sector; some multinationals insist that the contract documents themselves are kept secret, on grounds of commercial confidentiality, even from elected members of the municipality that awards the contract. Transparency is the best defence against corruption; as practised in Kerala, India, with its widely praised model of decentralized democracy, in which documents on beneficiary selection, reports and minutes of meetings and all documents on works undertaken through contractors, including bills and vouchers, are made public.²⁹ The following section examines this approach in greater detail.

Box 17.7 The village internet programme: using ICTs to create jobs and stem urban migration

The village internet programme (VIP), in operation since July 1999 in Madhupur, a village in Tangail district about 160 km away from Dhaka, Bangladesh, has as its main objectives to:

- Familiarize the village people, particularly the young generation, with the use of computer and the internet.
- Provide computer training for a minimal price, thus helping to build a computer literate generation.
- Create IT-related local job opportunities.
- Offer low-cost computing and printing facilities, previously unavailable in this rural area.
- Facilitate access to relevant market information, for example, prevalent market prices of specific products in different locations. This gives the village people a better bargaining capacity when selling their produce.
- Provide email facilities for families with relatives abroad.
- Provide free email services to teachers and students for educational purposes and to doctors and journalists for emergency purposes.

In order to fulfil these objectives, Grameen Communications has introduced the following commercial services, which cross-subsidize the free services provided for educational and medical purposes:

- Job training for students and unemployed youth in rural areas, including data entry and programming, at an affordable price.
- Courses on computer operating systems and application software, eg MS Word and Excel.
- Advertising and marketing facilities through email. Clients are offered free advertisement for the first two months, after which they can become members for a minimum fee.
- Page composition and printing for a fee of 5–15 takas (50 takas = US\$1).

Source: Tariq Alam, Grameen Communications, personal communications, 14 and 15 February 2000.

Reconceptualizing transparency: grassroots movements for accountability to the poor³⁰

If globalization is as much about the flow of ideas as it is the movement of capital, then among its many manifestations has been the widespread diffusion of ideas about governance. Global institutions such as the World Bank have been crucial in disseminating the idea of good government, a notion that has come in for much criticism since its entry into the development lexicon at the beginning of the 1990s.

Transparency and accountability are central to good, democratic governance

Two concepts have been central to the idea of good (democratic) government: transparency and accountability. The former is, in theory, meant to help achieve the latter, though both are ill-defined. While increased transparency has indeed generated markedly higher levels of accountability in many parts of the world in recent years, the primary setting of this trend has been the private rather than the public sector: it is in the area of corporate governance that transparency has been taken furthest, in the form of stricter and more uniform disclosure norms that clearly have increased the capacity of shareholders to keep a vigilant eye on the performance of corporate managers.

These innovations have clearly influenced approaches by the public sector, especially the ‘client focus’ rhetoric, if not actual behaviour, of agencies throughout the world. But government bureaucracies have inherited a number of the shortcomings of corporate transparency as well.

The work of several activist groups in different parts of India illustrates the main deficiency of existing efforts, both within and beyond India, to promote transparency in the public and private sectors: their elite bias, and their consequent inability to rectify the information inequalities that characterize even today’s globalizing world of free-flowing data. Just as importantly, they signal the radical possibilities of transparency, an idea in serious danger of withering from overuse and underspecification. The experiences of two groups serve as examples illustrating points of broader applicability. The first highlights problems and prospects in public sector, while the latter addresses issues relating to transparency and accountability in the private sector.

● Local participatory auditing of the public sector

The Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS), or Worker and Farmer Power Organization, is based in the northern state of Rajasthan. Over the past six years, the MKSS has held a series of ‘public hearings’, unofficial gatherings of ordinary people in villages and small towns. Prior to these hearings, MKSS activists obtain copies of government documents related to the planning and execution of local development projects. India’s bureaucracy, still operating within the constraints of the colonial-era Official Secrets Act, is not keen to share these sensitive records, partly due to sheer force of habit and partly for fear of providing evidence of official misdeeds. But sympathetic (or sometimes naive) bureaucrats often provide the necessary documents. Sometimes direct action protests, such as a sit-in outside a local rural development agency office, are required.

The MKSS activists include a number of seemingly unlikely members of local society, such as semi-employed labourers, poor women and members of the lower strata of the Hindu caste hierarchy. Armed with documents indicating the amounts spent on each aspect of specific public works in the local vicinity, the technical specifications of the works and statements indicating payments to labourers, the MKSS goes about systematically auditing these projects. For instance, labourers on employment-generation schemes are shown official accounts, which show that the workers have been paid the minimum wage, and are asked to verify or dispute the amounts entered next to their names in the ledgers. Drivers of camel carts – a popular mode of transport in mainly desert-covered Rajasthan – report on how many bags of cement were actually delivered to specific work sites, in many instances calling into question the inflated figures listed in project documents.

At the public hearing itself, workers and others with relevant evidence that contradicts the statements contained within government records are invited to repeat their testimony. MKSS activists have read aloud (to the largely non-literate villagers) from employment registers that list

recent payments to people everyone knows are long dead. In one case, the public hearing was held in front of a dilapidated school which, according to official documents read out at the meeting, had just been repaired at considerable expense. A stream of satirical commentary combines with public outrage at the extent of fraud to create an atmosphere in which the trappings of power lose some of their magic. Local politicians and bureaucrats, a surprising number of whom actually attend the hearings, are asked to account for these discrepancies, as their signatures are to be found on the documents certifying that construction was complete, even when it manifestly was not, and that beneficiaries of anti-poverty programmes meet the eligibility criteria, even when everyone knows they do not. In some instances, officials have owned up to appropriating funds. In a small number of cases they have actually returned ill-gotten loot.

The public-hearing process has allowed the MKSS to develop a radical interpretation of the notion that ordinary citizens have a right both to know how they are governed and to participate actively in the process of auditing their representatives in minute detail. Not only has the MKSS built a movement demanding the passage in Parliament of Right to Information legislation – a state-level act was passed in Rajasthan in mid-2000, and much-debated national legislation should be enacted by 2001 – it has managed to transform the popular understanding of freedom of information by showing its applicability to the concerns of the rural poor, for whom government programmes are a lifeline against the vicissitudes of (increasingly global) economic circumstances.

Public debate increasingly acknowledges the relationship between opacity and the perpetuation of everyday forms of corruption that afflict highly vulnerable people. Until the mid-1990s, the right to information had been most closely associated with the right to free expression. India thus followed international precedent, which tended to group the right to information with press freedom, as in the United States, where the Freedom of Information Act is associated with the press in general, and has received judicial affirmation under the free-expression provisions in the US Bill of Rights. The MKSS, in its grassroots organizing and practical work, as well as in its own documentation, prefers to locate the right to information within the Indian Constitution's provisions guaranteeing the right to life and livelihood.

There are many implications of this case, but what needs to be emphasized in the context of this report is the extent to which the MKSS's grassroots work has breathed new life into an increasingly hackneyed term, transparency. Its skill in mobilizing ordinary people on very sensitive matters has exposed the hollowness of initiatives by public agencies in many parts of India to pass off bureaucratically controlled information-sharing activities as radical experiments in 'open government'. The type of 'information' that government departments pledge to provide is usually prospective rather than retrospective, thus avoiding the possibility of popular 'audit' and genuine accountability. Government initiatives on transparency often involve bureaucrats preparing promotional literature on existing

Box 17.8 Sign the contract yourself!

In the global rush to privatize property in developing countries, local specialists and foreign advisers assigned to survey land and grant titles most often treat the family as a unit. Because families change and women often do not receive explicit title to property, the practice increases disparities between women and men. The case of Laos illustrates the issues. Although a small country, Laos is particularly interesting because of the matrilineal tradition in rights to land among the lowland Lao (the majority group); it is also an example of transition from socialist planning to market-oriented reforms.

The reform period began in the mid-1980s. Forest and farmlands that were traditionally used by certain families have gradually been officially titled. The government also permits purchase of up to 15 ha of land per person (the limit is to prevent total domination by one or two wealthy families). The biggest problem is that typically the husband alone would sign a contract for the family's land. This amounted to a transfer of control of land from the wife and her extended family to that of the husband.

This constituted a windfall profit for the husband and his relatives. Divorce and abandonment have been increasing, though still low compared with Western experience. Even though most couples have stayed together, the transfer of control could be seen to affect land use and sale since the husband's family did not have long ties to that plot of land. The practice contributed to more rapid deforestation. In addition, the award of initial titles led some people to believe erroneously that they could sell their land and then get another title for a new plot from the government.

Specialists analysing gender aspects of land titling in Laos began to point out that women were losing their traditional rights and that courts might not recognize their share in land ownership if their names did not appear on the contracts. Local researchers managed to get the contracts altered so that they now have two lines for the signatures of both wife and husband. This has been useful, but problems continue in getting those witnessing the titling process to make sure that the wife also signs. Although this is just one part of addressing gender inequality in property rights, it can be beneficial and one of the simpler, win-win strategies in assigning rights to use and own property.

Source: Tinker and Summerfield, 1999.

schemes, or else promising to speed up the delivery of 'information services', such as delivery of a birth certificate for a citizen who needs documentary proof of age and residence for a government job. These kinds of initiatives are usually not only anodyne in content, but also seldom developed at local levels accessible to the poor.

The MKSS is fighting an uphill battle, not only because of the power and resources of state and private elites who would like to shield their activities from public gaze, but also owing to the suspicion with which critical public opinion in India has come to view the idea of transparency. The push for transparency is associated with multinational capital, which tends to discredit the idea to some degree among India's mainly left-leaning social activists. Their fear is that official multilateral agencies like the World Bank and transnational NGOs like Transparency International (founded by former World Bank staffers and funded by several high-profile multinational companies) promote transparency only to the extent that it can assist foreign firms in gaining access to the Indian market and exploiting India's natural and human resources. Thus, there is support for more transparent settlement systems on the Mumbai Stock Exchange; but no effort to promote access for members of the public to background documentation relating to Memoranda of Understanding between foreign firms and various public authorities.

● Private sector transparency that goes beyond disclosure of financial performance

Indeed, the elite-biased transparency initiatives pursued by government agencies in India are seen as a natural by-product of the form that corporate transparency has taken. The work of a trade union in Mumbai has highlighted the need for private sector transparency to shed its narrow preoccupations with those aspects of financial disclosure that concern, almost exclusively, capital markets. The Girni Kamgar Sangharsh Samiti (GKSS), or Textile Workers Struggle Committee, has sought to hold Mumbai's textile firms accountable for their commitments to workers. Ailing companies have taken large packages of state assistance, but have not been forced to account publicly for their use of the funds, which are supposed to assist in the revitalization of the mills, the preservation of jobs and the welfare of workers.

Unions such as the GKSS are hamstrung due to a lack of information. GKSS activists would like not only detailed information on what state-provided revitalization funds have been used for, but also (in those cases where companies have clearly not lived up to their side of the bargain) why government regulators have failed to take action. Thus, the GKSS has turned the spotlight on the lack of transparency in those regulatory bodies responsible for protecting the interests of highly vulnerable citizens from unaccountable exercises of corporate power.

That transparency in the regulatory bureaucracy – which implies transparency in corporations themselves to the degree that they must submit documentation to government agencies which is then available to the public – has not been a concern of either international bodies or Indian public authorities comes as no surprise to activists working among poor communities. The agenda, they argue, is being driven by the interests of domestic and international investors, whose interest extends almost exclusively to data on financial performance. Investors would, of course, care more about information relating to other regulatory functions were they convinced that, for instance, provincial Pollution Control Boards were likely to do their jobs effectively – that is, in ways that might impinge upon profits – rather than, as is all too often the case, with scant regard for proper procedure. The lack of transparency allows these and other regulatory agencies to get away with such lapses and the corruption that accompanies them.

● Lessons

Both the MKSS and the GKSS have participated, in collaboration with a range of other NGOs and people's movements, in protests against the process by which public authorities have vetted various business projects involving multinational corporations. It is in this sphere of activity that the lessons of these two organizations may have their most powerful reverberations. The opposition to multinationally financed industrial projects often takes the same locality-specific form that the MKSS has pioneered. This is logical. Just as government accounts can only be effectively audited at the local level (where people's expertise about

local events, people and places can be brought to bear), claims by multinationals about the proposed project sites (their environmental characteristics, employment profiles and, most importantly, the opinions of local people about the desirability of such projects) are best verified at local levels.

Government accounts can only be effectively audited at the local level where people's expertise about local events, people and places can be brought to bear

For this conception of accountability to take root, however, corporations must be obliged to supply information about their intentions not only to government regulators, but to citizens as well. While the main beneficiaries will be people residing in the vicinity of proposed projects, a larger range of actors from among the nation-wide network of civil society organizations will no doubt analyse and debate the implications of the information received; things like environmental impact statements and projections of employment creation, foreign-exchange requirements and all the other things that national laws require authorities to scrutinize before approving the establishment of such ventures.

Moreover, as a number of existing cases of local opposition to multinational projects in India have demonstrated, the information supplied will have to cover the global operations of the firms concerned. Only by studying in detail, on the basis of documentary evidence, the conduct and impact of a firm's previous and existing business ventures in other countries can an informed judgement on an investment proposal be made. Through just such means were activists in the western state of Goa made aware of shortcomings in the environmental record of the DuPont Corporation, which was at that time planning a nylon factory near Goa's famed beaches. Data obtained from activists in the United States highlighted several inconsistencies in the government of Goa's defence of the DuPont project, and the project was ultimately scrapped. This experience is also a good example of 'globalization-from-below', showing how civil society can take advantage of transnational networks to obtain relevant information to help mobilize necessary resources.

People whose lives and livelihoods depend on the accountable exercise of corporate and governmental power should have official information available to them by right

People whose lives and livelihoods depend on the accountable exercise of corporate and governmental power should not have to rely on having to obtain official information informally by activists. It must be made available by right. For this to happen, governments must rethink transparency; both in terms of their direct interactions with poor and vulnerable people in development programmes, and perhaps more importantly, in the obligations they impose on private-sector actors to divulge details of their intentions and ongoing activities. Pension-fund managers in the North will only demand the degree of transparency necessary to protect their investments. To

protect people, governments (and people themselves) are the only solution.

Reducing Urban Violence³¹

Violence, previously regarded as an issue of criminal pathology, is now recognized also as a development problem, particularly in urban areas.³² The incidence of crime, robbery and gang violence, as well as gender-based domestic violence, undermines both macro- and micro-economic growth and productivity of a country's development, as well as societal and individual well-being.³³ In addition, the number of countries currently experiencing internal armed conflict has escalated dramatically since the end of the Cold War, with cities often at the centre of civil strife. Map 1 and Tables 15.1–15.3 in Chapter 15 showed the massive dislocations and vast numbers of homeless people that result.

'The same technological means that foster globalization and the transnational expansion of civil society also provide the infrastructure for expanding global networks of "uncivil society" – organized crime, drug traffickers, money launderers and terrorists' – Kofi Annan, Renewal Amid Transition: Annual Report on the Work of the Organization, 3 September 1997

The globalization of crime through international rings – such as Mexican and Colombian drug cartels, the Jamaican posses and the Chinese triads – has reduced the significance of city or national boundaries with some violence problems.³⁴ In urban areas, the relationship between inequality, exclusion and violence is increasingly acknowledged. Its impact on human rights, governance and democratic political procedures is now a global concern.³⁵ At the same time, there is an alarming trend where safety and security are decreasingly seen as a public responsibility and increasingly treated as a private good, available to those with the ability to pay, protecting those that are better off, while leaving the poor more vulnerable and especially putting women at greater risk. This worrisome trend is closely linked to the quartering of cities, discussed in Chapter 2.

● Definitional issues

References to 'violent crime', 'criminal conflict', 'conflictual violence' and 'violent conflict' illustrate how terms such as violence, crime and conflict frequently are categorized synonymously, despite important distinctions between them.³⁶ Both violence and conflict are concerned with power. The key difference refers to the fact that conflict – power struggles over competing goals for scarce resources between two or more parties³⁷ – does not necessarily inflict physical or mental harm on others, while violence by its very nature does.

Conflict can be peacefully resolved through negotiation without recourse to force but becomes violent when it includes fighting and killing

Conflict can be peacefully resolved through negotiation without recourse to force but becomes violent when it

includes fighting and killing. Violence by its very nature includes 'an uninvited but intentional or half-intentional act of physical violation'.³⁸ Finally, crime is an act (usually a grave offence) punishable by law; that is, the breach of a legal prohibition. Perceptions as to which crimes are violent, or which types of violence are unlawful differ widely, determined less by objective indicators of degree of damage or injury than by cultural values and power relations.

Violence can refer to the *nature of a violent act*³⁹ (including the distinction between direct, indirect, repressive and alienating violence), or to the *organizational level* (such as the distinction between organized [politically motivated, organized in groups] and disorganized violence [individual crime, delinquency, vandalism]).⁴⁰ Equally it can be defined by *uneven distribution of power and resources in society*, as in the concept of personal and 'structural violence',⁴¹ or in terms of *unequal access to justice* as in the concept of 'institutional violence' as perpetrated by police and other state institutions.⁴² Given definitional complexities such as these, frequently it is virtually impossible to distinguish the point at which violence ends and conflict begins.⁴³

● Measurements

The measurement of violence is fraught with difficulties. The most common measures are based on mortality rates. However, statistics are notoriously unreliable as they can only reveal those cases reported, and are difficult to interpret.⁴⁴ In addition, national and regional differences in data collection methods recall periods and cultural definitions of crime and violence make valid cross-country comparisons hard to achieve, and only possible through global data sets such as the International Crime Victimization Survey. Other data sources commonly used to measure crime and violence levels include victimization studies, official crime statistics, homicide/ intentional injury statistics from hospitals and undertakers, offender surveys and death certificates.⁴⁵ More recently, qualitative participatory urban appraisal techniques have been used for the study of community perceptions of violence.⁴⁶

Categories of urban violence

The range of types of urban violence is both highly complex and context-specific. In a participatory study in urban Jamaica, local residents listed up to 19 types of violence in one community including political, gang, economic, interpersonal and domestic disputes; in a similar study in Guatemala, some 60 types of violence were identified.⁴⁷ Therefore, it is important to clarify the complexity of violence without oversimplifying the concept. Any categorization is, by its very nature, static since in the real world, violence exists along a continuum with important reinforcing linkages between different types of violence.

Recent research has divided violence into three categories: *political violence*, *economic violence* and *social violence*, each identified in terms of the type of motivation that consciously or unconsciously uses violence to gain or maintain its power. Table 17.1 summarizes some of the

Category	Definition	Manifestation
Political	The commission of violent acts motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, to obtain or maintain political power	Guerrilla conflict; paramilitary conflict; political assassinations; armed conflict between political parties
Economic	The commission of violent acts motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, for economic gain or to obtain or maintain economic power	Street crime; carjacking; robbery/theft; drug trafficking; kidnapping; assaults made during economic crimes
Social	The commission of violent acts motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, for social gain or to obtain or maintain social power	Interpersonal violence such as spouse and child abuse; sexual assault of women and children; arguments that get out of control

Source: Moser and Shrader, 1999.

Table 17.1

Categories of violence

common types of violence for each category, in terms that are deliberately broad, and not necessarily mutually exclusive.

This categorization allows for integrated approaches, both conceptual and operational, that recognize the connections between the dynamics of different types of violence, based on the differing motivations of the perpetrators. This assists in explaining why interventions to reduce one type of violence may not yield results for other types of violence. For example, while community-policing programmes have been credited with a 43 per cent decline in New York City's economic crime rates, reports of police brutality in the city have increased by 41 per cent, a social problem.

Causes of urban violence

Violence is complex not only because of its different categories, but also because of the multitude of causal factors. Empirical evidence shows that women and men, girls and boys, are not all equally violent, that communities vary in their levels of violent conflict, and that violence tolerance levels differ across societies. Circumstances relating to the individual, the family, the community and the broader national context all play a role in violence or victimization.

Despite the wealth of descriptive evidence on violence, theoretical analysis of specific causal factors of violence is both limited and fragmented. Analyses tend to reflect professional disciplines such as economics, biomedical sciences, criminology, epidemiology, psychology and sociology. Frequently they are compartmentalized and tend to perpetuate fragmented understandings of violence. The causes of violence can be identified at four interrelated levels: individual, interpersonal, institutional and structural.⁴⁸

● Individual level

These are factors relating to personal history and biophysical make-up. Overcrowded conditions and a lack of privacy prevalent in low-income human settlements contribute to violent behaviour. Children's exposure to violence perpetrated by their parents, particularly gender-based violence, may influence their propensity to commit similar violence. In addition, severe mental ill-health, when aggravated by poor living conditions and lack of support, may increase a person's likelihood of committing violence.⁴⁹

● Interpersonal level

Conflicts between neighbours and communities often revolve around scarce resources. Shared water is one of the biggest causes of violence, and may be exacerbated by privatization. With deregulation, interpersonal violence is also increasingly linked to cut-throat competition in informal sector activities such as market stalls or informal transport

These are factors that involve interactions between individuals, including intimate or acquaintance relationships. In the urban context, this relates mainly to social violence, including high levels of street and bar conflict as a consequence of high levels of substance abuse, both of alcohol and of drugs.⁵⁰ In addition, availability of firearms is strongly related to the number of deaths resulting from crime.⁵¹ Of critical importance are conflicts between neighbours and communities in resource scarce situations. In urban slums in cities throughout the world, shared water is one of the biggest causes of violence, and may be exacerbated by privatization.⁵² (see Box 10.1). Equally with deregulation, interpersonal violence is increasingly linked to cut-throat competition in informal sector activities such as market stalls or informal transport systems.⁵³ In El Salvador, after the 1992 Peace Accords, the influx of return migrants from the US exacerbated the activities of US-modelled youth gangs, including drive-by shootings, high casualty gang warfare and daylight armed assaults.⁵⁴ Finally, lack of adequate infrastructure in informal settlements exposes people – particularly women – to greater risk when in situations such as accessing sources of fuel, eliminating bodily waste in shared toilets or open space, fetching water and walking in unlit areas.⁵⁵

● Institutional level

Crime is also associated with factors at the level of social institutions, both informal and formal, associated with workplaces and local communities. Governance issues relating to local municipalities and their capacity to mediate conflict have critical implications for public security. Democratization processes, for instance, are often linked to shifts from political to other types of violence. In the wake of El Salvador's peace accords and a corresponding reduction in political violence, rates of homicide and economic crime increased. For example, the number of violent deaths in 1994 stood at 9135 and, despite a decline to 8047 in 1996, this still exceeded the annual average of 6000 violent deaths a year during the civil war.⁵⁶ In South Africa, police data show that violent crimes have increased substantially during the democratic transition from the apartheid system; especially since 1990 and particularly for murder and rape.⁵⁷

'Our safety depends not only on the local police station, but on an environment safe from pollution, nuclear menace, drugs and terrorism' – Kofi Annan, Address to the World Television Forum, New York, 19 November 1998

The strength of the police and the judicial system increases the probability of apprehension and punishment, and reduces the incentive to commit crime. However, if past incidence of crime in society is high, and if policing is inadequate or corrupt (for example, involved in drug trafficking), crime and violence may rise.⁵⁸ In some contexts, informal community-level responses may include the creation of neighbourhood patrols to prevent criminal behaviour. More frequently, these become mechanisms of social cleansing that perpetrate 'rough justice' and lynching not only to offenders but also to members of marginal social groups, such as street children or homeless people.⁵⁹ Such vigilante behaviour is a negative manifestation of civil society, reinforced by municipal measures that criminalize homelessness.

● Structural level

Inequality is now recognized as an important determinant of violence

This refers to the macro-level political, economic and social structure and policy environment, including cultural norms that permeate society. At the urban level, issues of inequality, poverty and exclusion are critical. While traditionally violence levels have been linked to poverty,⁶⁰ it is now recognized that violence is also linked to inequality. A recent global study showed that this is an important determinant of national homicide rates, after controlling for the distribution of education, poverty, ethnic and economic polarization, security services and social capital.⁶¹

'Urban violence is not a spontaneous occurrence, but above all, the product of a society characterized by inequality and social exclusion. Measures that protect urban communities from deprivation, unemployment, homelessness, illiteracy, injustice and social disintegration will ultimately also protect them from crime and violence' – Message of the Executive Director to the World Habitat Day, 5 October 1998

Structural causal factors associated with globalization relate to on-going processes of polarization and differentiation between those who are 'connected', and those who are not, increasingly overlapping with the spatial and economic segregation of disadvantaged groups, neighbourhoods or even cities. Those excluded from 'connectivity' to the dynamic new sectors (through lack of education or infrastructure) are more likely to turn to crime, violence and a drug culture.⁶²

Organized criminal groups linked to global networks (ie mafia groups and drug cartels) are increasing, with a tendency to tap into other illegal activities such as extortion rackets, prostitution and trafficking in women, at times abetted by tourism promotion.⁶³ As drug syndicates become more aggressive, so, too, does violence, augmented by the free trade in firearms.⁶⁴ Drug production and drug possession crime rates correlate positively with homicide rates, because the illegal drug trade is usually accompanied by violent disputes for market shares between different

networks of producers and distributors.⁶⁵ The availability of firearms, facilitated by worldwide organized crime groups, multiplies the risks of urban violence and represents a fundamental threat to security.

The availability of firearms, facilitated by worldwide organized crime groups, multiplies the risks of urban violence and represents a fundamental threat to security

Characteristics of urban violence

Extensive research on urban violence, at both macro- and micro-levels, shows that violence has increased. For instance, a United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) report states that violent crime has increased in the majority of developing cities and accounts for 25–30 per cent of offences worldwide.⁶⁶ At the *global level*, crime and violence is generally much higher in Africa and Latin America than Asia. A UNICRI data set of 18 developing country cities⁶⁷ shows that Asia consistently ranks the lowest for all types of crime, while Africa and Latin America share first place for all types of crime.⁶⁸ Drawing upon World Health Organization data the report describes regional homicide rates (not based on exclusively urban data) across the world, and notes that in 1990 sub-Saharan Africa had a median homicide rate of 40 per 100,000 population, compared with 23 per 100,000 in Latin America.⁶⁹ Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet bloc nations are substantially lower than this at approximately 9 per 100,000.

At the *country level*, the UNICRI 18 developing country cities survey (1998) shows that assault with force was highest in Zimbabwe and South Africa (around 6 per cent), followed by Botswana, Colombia, Bolivia and Argentina, with rates of approximately 3 per cent. The highest robbery rates (more than 10 per cent) were observed in Brazil and Colombia, followed by all the other Latin American countries and Tunisia with rates around 6 per cent. Again, the pattern remains the same whereby Asian countries score relatively low and African and Latin American countries compete for highest crime levels.

At the *regional level* urban violence measurements to date have focused principally on Latin America. The overall picture shows that homicide rates are not significantly related to city size, but crime in general is, as measured by victimization. A household living in a city of more than 1 million inhabitants is almost twice as likely to be victimized as a household living in a city of less than 20,000 inhabitants. The probabilities of victimization do not change much once the 1 million threshold is surpassed.⁷⁰ UNWCS data (1970–1994) indicate that urbanization level is not significantly associated with the homicide rate.⁷¹ They do find a relation with the robbery rate, however, 'confirming the view that this type of property crime is more an urban phenomenon than homicide'. A study of 17 Latin American countries indicates that the probability of *victimization* increases with socio-economic status and *city size*; the probability of being a victim of crime is substan-

Box 17.9 Examples of intra-urban violence

In Jamaica, violent crimes are geographically concentrated in poor urban communities. In 1994 more than half occurred in Kingston and St Andrew; almost three-quarters of murders and more than 80 per cent of shootings took place in Kingston, St Andrew or Spanish Town.ⁱ

In South African cities, victimization patterns are spatially specific with marked differences between poor townships, informal settlements, suburbs and inner cities. People who live in informal settlements, particularly townships, are more likely to be victims of violent crime.ⁱⁱ

Notes: i Moser and Holland, 1997, p. 1; ii Shaw and Louw, 1998.

tially higher in larger cities.⁷² According to this study, this relates to the fact that larger cities have lower probabilities of arrests. Consequently, impunity and good governance emerge as critical issues.

Intra-urban economic differences and associated levels of violence have long existed in cities, particularly those with colonial or post-colonial origins.⁷³ Upper income areas are well maintained and serviced with housing interspersed with public and private amenities like parks and shops. In contrast, poor marginal, informal settlements, far from major centres of employment on the periphery of cities, are marked by squalor and poverty, overcrowded, under-serviced, lacking formal retail services and community and recreational facilities, particularly open space.⁷⁴ Violence and crime are widespread in these areas.

Turning to perpetrators and victims, global evidence shows that young men are the main perpetrators and victims of political and economic violence, and that men are the perpetrators and women and children the victims of social violence particularly rape and sexual abuse. Race is also a critical variable. In the US, black men are more likely to die of homicide than of any other cause, and male life expectancy in the Bronx, New York, is 30 years,⁷⁵ far lower than low-income countries such as Bangladesh.

Costs and consequences of violence in urban areas**Box 17.10 Four kinds of capital and their associated assets**

Physical capital (also known as produced or man-made capital) comprises a country's stock of plant, equipment, infrastructure and other productive resources owned by individuals, the business sector or the country itself. Physical capital comprises those assets generally considered in financial and economic accounts.

Human capital includes investments in education, health and the nutrition of individuals. Labour is a critical asset linked to investments in human capital; health status determines people's capacity to work; and skill and education determine the returns from their labour.

Social capital is defined as the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity and trust embedded in social relations, social structures and societies' institutional arrangements, which enable its members to achieve their individual and community objectives. Social capital is embedded in social institutions at the micro-institutional level – communities and households – as well as referring to the rules and regulations governing formalized institutions in the marketplace, the political system and civil society.

Natural capital includes the stocks of environmentally provided assets such as soil, atmosphere, forests, minerals, water and wetlands. In rural communities land is a critical productive asset for the poor; while in urban areas land for shelter is also a critical productive asset.

Sources: Moser, 1996; 1998; Narayan, 1997; North, 1990; Olson, 1982; Serageldin, 1996.

The economic and social costs of violence have been well documented. The direct costs and associated losses due to deaths, disabilities and 'transferrals' resulting from property crimes can be measured as percentages of GNP or GDP. In Mexico City, for example, the 1995 costs from violence were calculated as equivalent to US\$2975 million dollars, worth 1.1 per cent of GDP or 4.2 per cent of the city's GDP in that year.⁷⁶ In Colombia, expenditures on protection and the associated direct and indirect costs arising from crime and violence might be as high as 13 per cent of GDP.⁷⁷ Similarly, the net accumulation of human capital in Latin America and the Caribbean had been cut in half because of the increase in crime and violence over the last 15 years.⁷⁸

Despite decades of research, these remain difficult to measure. Expenditure assessments of the police, the judiciary, the penal system and even the armed forces are constrained by serious problems of access to information. Therefore, assessments of the impacts of violence on a city's capital and associated assets would give a better understanding of the true price of violence. In this connection, it is useful to distinguish between four types of capital: physical, human, social and natural (Box 17.10).⁷⁹ In each case, violence is erosive.

● The erosion of physical capital

Economic costs of violence are frequently associated with violent attacks on infrastructure such as electrical installations, roads and airports. However, a number of important sectors in the urban economy can be affected, directly or indirectly, by violence. For instance, the banking and taxation sectors can become linked to drug trafficking. Drug syndicates generate enormous amounts of cash that, to be useful, must pass through legitimate international banking or commercial channels; something that has been facilitated by current globalization processes. Where police and judicial institutions are weak, the increasing privatization of security is a mounting economic and social problem. In many developing countries, there are two to three times as many private guards as policemen. It is estimated that 10 per cent of Brazil's GNP is spent on private security including insurance, security gadgets, armoured cars and private guards.⁸⁰

● The erosion of human capital

Violence reduces access to, and the quality of, education and health services. When teachers or health workers are threatened, attacked or even killed, schools and health posts can be abandoned. School dropout rates may increase because of neighbourhood violence, which can result from family conflicts, scandals, gang presence, drug use and prostitution. Dropout rates are also associated with domestic violence, and alcohol or drug use within the family. Night school dropout rates are increased by fear of street or public transport crime. Finally, violence creates an additional burden for the health sector, when trauma care consumes a significant portion of health resources.

● The erosion of natural capital

Scarcity of natural capital such as land and water can cause

extreme levels of conflict between neighbours and communities alike. When displaced populations fleeing violence flow into urban areas, this can seriously exacerbate such environmental problems as solid waste disposal and water contamination. Inappropriate land use and land degradation usually become more severe when rural populations are forcibly evicted or flee to escape violence. With the growing intensity of civil wars and cross-border disputes, the erosion of natural capital in urban areas is largely invisible.

● The erosion of social capital

Social capital is important because of its recognized contribution to sustainable economic development; the size and density of social networks and institutions and the nature of interpersonal interactions significantly affect development processes.⁸¹ Violence erodes social capital when it reduces trust and cooperation within formal and informal social organizations that are critical for a society to function.⁸²

Social capital in formal institutions. In contexts with human rights violations and high impunity rates, violence often erodes faith in the relevance and governability of formal social institutions. When judicial, educational, health, media and security institutions are no longer able to function appropriately and transparently, the institution of democracy itself is challenged. Violence-linked industries associated with drugs, diamonds or other natural resources can erode the state by corrupting institutions and dividing the population. For instance, drug traffickers' systematic threats and attacks against the communications media effectively suppress 'the voice' of civil society institutions to participate effectively and peacefully in political decisions at community and national levels.

Social capital in informal community-level institutions. The capacity for community-level organizations to function depends on levels of cohesion and the ability to meet locally; which hinges on personal safety issues. Sustained violence often systematically creates fear and reduces trust between neighbours and communities. Fear of crime is higher where contact crimes are higher.⁸³ The response, particularly for women, is frequently to avoid certain places after dark. This restriction breaks community cohesion. Fear increases urban fragmentation, resulting in a new urban landscape made up essentially of 'fortified fragments' from which the poor and marginalized are excluded⁸⁴ (see Chapter 2).

Violence also contributes to the creation of 'perverse' social capital.⁸⁵ A primary example of perverse social capital is gang involvement, in which young people, bereft of strong family and community support, form mutually reinforcing groups. In many poor neighbourhoods, gangs form the main context of socialization for children, who join as young as age 12 or 13. Often gangs are at war with rival groups involved in robbery, theft, drug distribution or consumption and assaults. In some communities gangs protect their neighbours, committing crimes elsewhere; in others they prey on their neighbours, creating a climate of fear.⁸⁶

Social capital in household relations. Violence erodes household relations when it reduces the capacity of households to effectively function as a unit. High levels of stress in conflict zones, for instance, where many men join illegal guerrilla or paramilitary groups, can seriously disrupt family life. Many women identify a direct link between male unemployment, alcohol abuse and increased domestic violence. This may result in an increase in women-headed households, which reduces violence but also household assets.

Interventions to reduce urban economic and social violence: 'good practice' examples

In recent decades, extensive and highly innovative interventions have been implemented to address and reduce violence. However, like much of the analysis of violence itself, interventions to reduce violence have usually been dominated by a particular policy approach and its associ-

Box 17.11 Shifts in policy approaches for violence reduction

Control of violence

Most commonly associated with *criminal justice*, one of the most widely established approaches, this focuses on deterrence and control of violence through higher rates of arrest, conviction and punishment, facilitated by judicial, police and penal reform. More successful in reducing economic crime than in reducing social and political violence, this top-down approach is popular among politicians seeking short-term solutions to the symptoms of violence.

Prevention of violence

Linked to the well-established *public health* approach, it focuses on economic and social violence at individual and interpersonal levels. This approach aims to prevent violence by reducing individual risk factors. It draws on epidemiological surveillance – especially homicide rates – and identification of risk factors to develop strategies for modifying individual behaviour, the social and physical environment, or both.

Negotiation of peaceful conflict resolution

This approach aims to rebuild the fabric of societies through the *resolution of conflicts*. Influenced by international actors such as the United Nations, it addresses political and, to a lesser extent, social violence through non-violent negotiation among conflicting parties, often relying on third-party mediation.

Legal enforcement of human rights

A 'rights-based approach' to violence reduction, focuses on the role of the state in *protecting citizens' rights* to be free from the threat or victimization of violence. Drawing on the documentation of abuse in relation to international human rights conventions, this approach addresses political and social violence, mainly at the individual and structural levels. While early users of this perspective were targeted towards governments that violated human rights, more recent formulations have focused on other social actors denying or abusing rights.

Rebuild social capital

This is a new approach, still being formulated. It focuses on rebuilding *social capital* in informal and formal institutions such as families, community organizations and the judiciary. Using bottom-up, participatory processes, it seeks to create trust by building on community identification of needs, and focuses on the strengths and assets of communities affected by violence, providing the potential for community needs to be scaled up to public sector interventions.

Source: Developed from Moser and Shrader, 1999.

Box 17.12 An innovative approach to criminal justice: the Colombian *Casas de Justicia*

Colombia's *Casa de Justicia* programme works within the criminal justice system to achieve binding resolutions, a first step in moving the judicial system towards a system that promotes conciliation rather than winners and losers. An additional objective of the *Casas de Justicia* is to facilitate access to the justice system in poverty-stricken communities with very high rates of violence.

A typical *Casa de Justicia* is the one created in 1994 in Bogotá's Ciudad Bolívar lower-income *barrio*. With support from USAID, the Foundation for Superior Education and the Ministry of Justice, the *Casa* includes a lawyer for consultations, a centre for conciliation, a family commissary, a police inspector, a forensic doctor, a defender of human rights and a prosecutor (attorney general). Various manuals on 'conciliation techniques' have been developed to support the programme. Based on an initial follow-up survey of cases attended, over 60 per cent of those who had used these services reported being satisfied with the result.

Source: Moser et al, 2000, p 25.

ated professional disciplines (such as criminology or epidemiology). Thus interventions have tended to prioritize a particular type of violence and focus on a particular level of causality and target group. Even when initiatives do address more than one type of violence or target multiple levels of causality, a lack of impact evaluation or cost-benefit analysis often severely hinders identification of 'best practices', reducing the chances of replicating successful interventions.

To provide an integrated framework for intervention, it is important to classify dominant violence reduction policy approaches in terms of both the categories of violence they address and the causal factors on which they focus. In the urban context there has been a broad shift from approaches that focus on the *control* of violence, to those that concentrate on *prevention*, to more recent perspectives that aim to *rebuild social capital*. Two further approaches, more common nationally but with important urban focuses, are *peaceful conflict resolution through negotiation and legal enforcement of human rights*. These policy

Box 17.13 Combining policy approaches to address economic and social violence: Cali (Colombia) DESEPAZ programme

El Programa Desarrollo, Seguridad y Paz (DESEPAZ) was established by the Mayor's Office of Cali in 1992 to address the high rates of crime and violence in the city. Grounded in a public health approach, it was based on an epidemiological analysis of violence – primarily homicide rates – to identify specific risk factors for urban violence as well as community involvement in combating crime and violence. DESEPAZ and the Colombian Legal Medicine and Forensic Science Institute identified several key risk factors for homicide in Cali, which revolved around alcohol use, gun ownership and leisure time. They therefore restricted alcohol sales in public areas and initiated a disarmament programme, which appears to have had a beneficial effect on homicide reduction.

A key principle of DESEPAZ is that the prevention of crime and violence requires a commitment from all citizens. *Consejos Municipales de Seguridad* (Municipal Security Councils) were created in order to educate government officials; the mayor held weekly meetings with community leaders. Open to the public, participants suggest and agree on concrete solutions. This community-based approach has led to the creation of law enforcement, public education and social development programmes.

Sources: Ayres, 1998; Guerrero, 1998; Vanderschuren, 1996, cited in Moser et al, 2000.

approaches are 'ideal types' (see Box 17.11). More than one approach can be used simultaneously, and often well-established approaches are combined with more innovative ones.

There has been a broad shift from approaches that focus on the control of violence, to those that concentrate on prevention and rebuilding social capital. Increasingly important as well, are peaceful conflict resolution through negotiation and legal enforcement of human rights

● Criminal justice approach

Historically, efforts to reduce violence have focused primarily on a *criminal justice* approach. In many developing countries, criminal justice systems are characterized by inefficiency, delays, high costs, lack of transparency, widespread corruption and political interference.⁸⁷ These factors prevent the justice system from constituting an effective deterrent and punishment body, and may result in impunity and citizens' lack of trust in the state. Judicial reform often includes harsher sentencing for felons, a shift to accusatory evidentiary procedures, and training for prosecutors and police. Other initiatives have addressed widespread corruption and impunity, and the training of judges. 'Community policing' – community-based surveillance strategies implemented by police departments – is designed to increase patrols in high crime areas and to train community leaders to monitor the number of crimes and victims per neighbourhood.

One of the biggest problems that poor urban populations experience is their lack of access to the judicial system. A recent, highly innovative intervention to address this issue in Colombia is the *Casas de Justicia* (Houses of Justice) programme (Box 17.12). This is a particularly valuable approach, as it provides different forms of conflict resolution. Rather than simply employing traditional judicial procedures, these are designed to improve poor communities' access to conciliation, legal and human rights services. Other innovations have introduced various types of conflict transformation tools and developed manuals based on 'Conciliation Techniques'. Educating low-income groups on human rights issues is also integral to the programme.

● Public health approach

The public health approach has also been important in relation to the reduction of both *economic* and *social violence*. Particularly useful from this perspective has been the use of the media, especially through campaigns to limit violence on television, and to promote public awareness of the causes of violence. Other significant public health initiatives include controlling situational precipitators such as drugs, alcohol and firearms. Many countries have made attempts to restrict the carrying of weapons, as well as the sale of alcohol in an attempt to reduce crime rates. Again in Colombia, one of the most important showcase public health interventions is DESEPAZ (*Programa Desarrollo, Salud y Paz*) in Cali (Box 17.13). It employs public health tools such as epidemiological surveillance, environmental manip-

ulation and behavioural modification to achieve measurable reductions in homicide. It identifies risk factors, such as alcohol use and gun ownership, and then attempts to limit exposure to these risks. The DESEPAZ programme is notable in that it focuses on economic violence using a number of approaches to the problem. For instance, its emphasis on community-level solutions indicates that rebuilding community and social institutions is also important. In addition, some of its interventions have direct and indirect implications for social violence reduction.

● Conflict transformation approach

Interventions that draw on conflict transformation mechanisms such as mediation, arbitration and non-violent conflict resolution, have been developed only quite recently. The SERVOL programme in Trinidad and Tobago, for example, focuses on violence prevention by providing 'life skills' that include mediation and conflict resolution for youths (see Box 17.14). Life skills programmes are designed to overcome a culture of failure felt by many youths – which can lead to their joining gangs – and include elements of self-awareness and self-knowledge, anger management, conflict resolution, family planning and parenting skills.

● Human rights approach

A human rights approach is gaining greater recognition in terms of social violence, especially in relation to recent United Nations rights. These relate to such issues as children's rights and gender-based violence and are based on the Convention to Eradicate, Sanction and Prevent All Forms of Violence Against Women and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. However, laws in many countries make it impossible to prosecute violence against women, especially violence perpetrated by an intimate partner. In Pakistan, for instance, four male Muslim witnesses must testify before a man can be convicted and subjected to the *hadd* punishment (the most severe) for rape.⁸⁸ The Law of Evidence considers women 'incompetent' as witnesses in cases of rape and grants their testimony only the status of corroborative evidence.⁸⁹

Despite such constraints, a growing number of countries have passed laws or reformed their penal codes to criminalize domestic violence – including Malaysia, Puerto Rico and Barbados⁹⁰ – with women's NGOs adopting a rights-based approach to try to effect their enforcement. One of the best known urban initiatives has been the creation of women-only police stations that has greatly facilitated the reporting of abuse, although the tremendous demand by women for their services has meant this important innovation has had its problems (see Box 17.15).

● Social capital approach

Interventions aimed at building social capital often focus on youth. In many cities, youth clubs provide alternative recreational opportunities while building trust and cohesion. Such projects generally provide adolescents with a meeting place free from alcohol and drugs, where they are encouraged to engage in activities such as sports or music along

Box 17.14 The SERVOL programme in Trinidad and Tobago

SERVOL is an NGO that works in poor urban neighbourhoods, particularly with children who are not reached by the school system, aged 0–5 and 16–19. They run an early childhood intervention programme, a parent outreach programme and an adolescent development programme; all are community-based programmes. Father Pantin, the director, describes a culture of very high levels of psychological battering and physical abuse in families (including sexual abuse) that result in youth with low self-esteem who are 'conditioned to failure'. The adolescent development programme is an intense, full-time, three-and-a-half-month programme that teaches 'life skills' designed to overcome low self-esteem. The programme consists of courses in self-awareness and self-knowledge, anger management, nutrition, personal hygiene, parenting skills, family planning and public speaking, among others. After successful completion the students continue on a one-year to two-year skills training and apprenticeship programme in professional trades such as mechanics and nursing. Most graduates find a job in their field after completing the total programme.

SERVOL is an interesting example of community-based interventions directed at helping at-risk youth and preventing violence at the individual, family and community levels. Its success has led to its expansion to work with the Ministries of Social Development and Education.

Source: Moser and van Bronkhorst, 1999.

with making friendships and contacts. For many children and youth living in marginalized neighbourhoods – where the role models and heroes are gang members – joining a gang often seems to be the only way to achieve some status in the community and gain self-esteem. Successful programmes provide an alternative path.

An innovative example from Brazil, for instance, describes how a theatre group can give children an opportunity to take on responsibility and become 'someone' in an alternative way, while gaining important life skills (Box 17.16). Other examples of programmes that offer alternatives to gang and delinquent life and help to build self-esteem are based on cultural activities – on the rediscovery of black culture, for example, as in *Olodum* in Salvador – or on joint efforts to improve the community.

Towards integrated approaches to urban violence reduction

Given the varied emphases and levels of interventions of different policy approaches, a more integrated approach to

Box 17.15 Innovative government solutions to gender-based domestic violence: women-only police stations

In South America the innovation of women-only police stations has spread from Brazil to Colombia, Uruguay, Peru, Costa Rica and Argentina. Data from Brazil show that this has greatly facilitated the reporting of abuse. In São Paulo reported cases went from 67 in 1985 (before they were opened) to 841 in 1990. This city has 96 of the country's 125 women's police stations.

While an important innovation, they have also had problems. Many stations have been overrun by women seeking assistance that the stations do not provide, such as counselling and legal advice, while the female police officers assigned to the stations become easily demoralized because their male peers do not consider their job 'real police work'.

Source: Heise, 1994, pp 32–33.

Box 17.16 Nos do Morro theatre group, Rio de Janeiro

Nos do Morro (Us up the Hill) is a small community theatre group in Vidigal, one of the most violent *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro. Founded in 1986 by Guti Fraga, it has about 120 members (adults and children). The group has a small theatre and facilities in a school in Vidigal. They work as a collective with everyone expected to help with all the different tasks. This has inadvertently led to a change in gender roles and perceptions as boys become accustomed to doing work such as cleaning. The group has been very successful, and some of its members have gone on to work in cinema and television. They also have links with the Royal Shakespeare Company in London, members of which came to Vidigal to give workshops.

The plays are rotated between Brazilian classics and their own productions. The topics that surface most often during improvisation and in the plays are school, sex, pregnancy, single parenthood and domestic violence. The subjects of violence and drugs and trafficking often come up in workshops but not in the official plays, as part of the gang 'code of conduct'.

The principal qualities of the project appear to be the way in which it provides an alternative path to gangs to build self-esteem and a sense of responsibility within the local community. As Guti Fraga says, by joining the group youth take a position. This position complicates their life; in their relationships with parents, siblings and peers they defy gender stereotypes. This transformation results in the acquisition of life skills that go far beyond those skills directly related to the theatre.

Source: Moser and van Bronkhorst, 1999, p. 13.

intervention needs to be developed. This will allow policy makers to shift from menu-like checklists of single-sector interventions towards an interdisciplinary approach that

recognizes a spectrum of violence and addresses simultaneously the reduction of different types of violence. It will facilitate synergies between interventions at different levels. Such an integrated framework coordinates interventions that prevent and reduce violence with interventions that rebuild social capital.

We need integrated frameworks to coordinate interventions that prevent and reduce violence with efforts that rebuild social capital

Since the causes and manifestations of violence are context specific, the particular details of integrated intervention frameworks need to be tailor-made to the requirements of different situations. Ultimately, in many cities, one of the biggest problems is not the multitude of interventions, but the lack of a coordinated approach to violence reduction. The impact of impressive menus of initiatives – implemented by government, the private sector and NGOs – is often limited by fragmented approaches to violence reduction with single-focused independent programmes. One of the most important priorities is the development of a cohesive policy that integrates and combines different objectives and instruments for reducing violence, develops monitoring indicators and undertakes rigorous evaluations.

Notes

- World Bank, March 2000 *Cities in Transition: A Strategic View of Urban and Local Government Issues*.
- The following section is condensed from Taylor, 1999.
- See for example: Asian Development Bank, Urban Sector Strategy, July 1999; World Bank, March 2000 *Cities in Transition - A Strategic View of Urban and Local Government Issues*. See also Chapter 14.
- For a range of city-specific experiences along these lines see Special Theme Issues of *Environment and Urbanization* (1995; 2000).
- See O'Rourke, 1999, cited in Evans, 2000.
- See, for example, Perrons, 2000, (see Background Papers) and Chang, 2000.
- See Chapter 1.
- This section is drawn from 'Newly emerging forms of governance in an era of globalization', a background paper prepared by Susan Clarke, University of Colorado.
- Moore and Putzel, 1999.
- Clarke and Gaile, 1998.
- Reich, 1991.
- For example, McGregor, 1994; Hornbeck and Salamon, 1991.
- In French: *Intégration Globale par le Logement et l'emploi*, see www.igloo-europe.org
- www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices/listen-findings.htm.
- See, for example, Rogoff, 1999.
- An unintended side-effect of tenure regularization may be that land and housing will be appraised, with property taxes producing a hardship or the sale of property to generate one-time income during a crisis time, both of which cause displacement of poor households. See also Box 17.8.
- Vanderschueren et al, 1996.
- This section draws on a summary of the Urban Management Programme's Working Paper No 7, *A Practical Approach to Dealing with Municipal Malfeasance* by R Klitgaard, R MacLean-Abaroa and H Lindsey Parris (May 1996), jointly published by UNDP, UNCHS (Habitat) and the World Bank, prepared by Jyri Juslen, [Associate Expert with the Urban Management Programme (UMP) at UNCHS (Habitat)]; and material adapted from an article by Michael Lippe published in *Habitat Debate* 4(1). Michael Lippe is Urban Coordinator at Transparency International, an international nonprofit organization based in Berlin, Germany, which focuses on corruption.
- This section draws from David Hall 'Contracts, concessions and corruption in the water sector'. *Habitat Debate* 6(3). That article is based on a paper, 'Privatization, multinationals and corruption', published in *Development in Practice* 9(5), November 1999, available on the PSIRU website: www.psiru.org with permission of the publishers. This site contains regularly updated news on all aspects of privatization in public services, including corruption. David Hall is Director of the Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU), based at the University of Greenwich in London, UK.
- See Barlow, 1999. Chapter 10 offers further discussion of privatization of water provision.
- 'Bribes', transmitted by BBC Radio 4 on 28 April 1996.
- The French water system is critically appraised in a report by France's state auditor, the *Cour des Comptes: La Gestion des Services Publics Locaux d'Eau et Assainissement* (Paris, January 1997). This is available at www.ccomptes.fr/Cour-des-comptes/publications/rapports/ea/ucdc72.htm.
- Reuters, 16 November 1995.
- Financial Times*, 5 June 2000. The trial began in Lesotho on 5 June 2000 and has yet to conclude. The World Bank, the European Union and the South African government have all offered assistance to the Lesotho government for what is expected to be a very complex and costly trial.
- For the World Bank's anti-corruption web site, see www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/anticorrupt/.
- The Times of India*, 28 April 2000.
- The Index does not name the private companies and multinationals involved in corrupt deals. For more information, see its multilingual web site, www.transparency.de/.
- For more information, see www.oecd.org/daf/nocorruption-web/.
- See *The Hindu*, 24 May 1999.
- Drawn from Jenkins, 2000 (see Background Papers). Additional source information can be found in Jenkins and Goetz, 1999a; 1999b; Jenkins, 2000.
- This section draws from a background paper by Caroline

- Moser that is a highly abridged, and considerably adapted version of a Research Paper written for the National Academy of Science Panel on Urban Population Demographics (see Moser and Grant, 2000). The framework was developed by Caroline Moser when task manager of the Urban Peace Programme in the World Bank. For an earlier version see Moser and Shrader, 1999; for a gendered version, see Moser, 2000.
- 32 Ayres, 1998.
- 33 Fajnzylber et al, 1998; Heise et al, 1994.
- 34 Castells, 1998.
- 35 Fajnzylber et al, 1998; Moser and McIlwaine, 2000a.
- 36 As defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, for instance, 'Violence is (i) the quality of being violent; violent conduct or treatment, outrage, crying; (ii) by law, violence is the unlawful use of physical force; or intimidation by the use of this'. In contrast, 'conflict is (i) a state of opposition or hostilities; fight or struggle; the clashing of opposed principles; (ii) the opposition of incompatible wishes or needs in a person; an instance of this or the distress resulting from this'.
- 37 Soley, 1996.
- 38 Keane, 1996. A recent US National Academy of Sciences Research Panel defines violence as 'behaviours by individuals that intentionally threaten, attempt or inflict physical harm on others' stating that death is the basis for defining the most serious crime: murder. They distinguish between *individual* behaviour causing fatal or non-fatal violent crimes, and *collective* violence identified as wars, state violence, riots and some activities of organized crime (Reiss and Roth, 1993, p 2).
- 39 Salmi, 1993.
- 40 Peca, 1997.
- 41 Galtung, 1985.
- 42 Peneiro, 1993.
- 43 McIlwaine, 1999.
- 44 Underreporting is particularly prevalent in crimes such as sexual assault. The UNICRI (1998) report, for instance, shows that Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Costa Rica had the lowest average reporting rates for sexual incidents.
- 45 Glaeser, 1999.
- 46 Moser and McIlwaine, 1999.
- 47 Moser and Holland, 1997; Moser and McIlwaine, 2000b.
- 48 Since violence is frequently the result of a combination of factors, it may occur simultaneously at several levels; for example, factors at the structural level may also cause violence at the interpersonal level.
- 49 Hiday, 1995.
- 50 In the Manila metropolitan area, for instance, six out of ten women were widowed over a ten-year period as a consequence of their husband's involvement in violent bar fights (Moser, 1998). For a detailed description of the impact of alcohol on social violence in urban Guatemala, see Moser and McIlwaine, 2000b.
- 51 PAHO, 1998b.
- 52 For instance this is widespread in the 'yards' of urban Jamaica (Moser and Holland, 1997) and the urban settlements in Guatemala (Moser and McIlwaine, 2000b).
- 53 Anecdotal evidence from Cape Town describes the violent competition in the taxi car business between two ethnic groups: the Coloured population who control the business and the Black population attempting to enter the sector.
- 54 Rogers, 1999.
- 55 Shaw and Louw, 1998.
- 56 Pearce, 1998.
- 57 Louw, 1997. 'Since the election of Nelson Mandela's government in April 1994, political crime has fallen sharply. In its place has come an upsurge of common-or-garden criminal violence. At 110 per 100,000, Johannesburg (now including Soweto) has a higher murder rate even than Washington, DC' (*Economist*, 1995, 28).
- 58 Fajnzylber et al, 1998.
- 59 Paes Manso, 2000.
- 60 Rosenberg, 1999.
- 61 Lederman and Loayza, 1999.
- 62 Castells, 1998:144.
- 63 See Taylor and Jamieson, 1999; Wilson, 1997a; b; Barry, 1997, for recent discussions of this growing problem.
- 64 Vanderschueren, 1996.
- 65 Fajnzylber et al, 2000, p 24.
- 66 UNICRI, 1995.
- 67 UNICRI data set on crime in 18 developing country cities collected through the International Crime Victimization Survey (ICVS) constitutes the most detailed global data set on urban violence available. Crime was measured and categorized into five types: vehicle-related crime, break and enter crime, victimization experienced by the respondent personally (including robbery, theft of personal property, assault/ threat and sexual incidents), consumer fraud and bribery/ corruption (UNICRI, 1998). Data were collected in the largest city in each of the selected countries. Although it is not representative of the urban population in each country, it provides a starting point for regional comparisons of urban crime (bearing in mind issues of under reporting, etc).
- 68 UNICRI, 1998. When the 'contact crime' rate is analysed separately (broken down into incidents involving violence), Latin American cities outstrip African and Asian cities for sexual assault, with a rate of 5 per cent (compared with 2.4 per cent in the African cities and 1.6 per cent in the Asian cities). For assault with force, African cities show a rate of 3.1 per cent compared with 2.7 per cent in Latin America and 0.8 per cent in Asia; and for robbery, cities in Latin America have a rate of 8.1 per cent compared with 4.2 per cent in Africa and 1.4 per cent in Asia.
- 69 Gartner, 2000; However, Ayres, 1998 notes that Latin America and the Caribbean has a regional homicide rate of approximately '20 per 100,000 inhabitants, which makes Latin America and the Caribbean the most violent region in the world'. It is not clear which data set Ayres is using, but these conflicting viewpoints reflect the lack of clarity surrounding the issue of homicide rates and the inadequacy of reliable data sources.
- 70 Gaviria and Pagés, 2000: 15.
- 71 Fajnzylber et al, 2000.
- 72 Gaviria and Pages, 2000.
- 73 Peneiro, 1998; Soares et al, 1998.
- 74 Stren, 1999.
- 75 Novello, 1991.
- 76 Inter-American Development Bank calculations cited in Mexican Health Foundation, 1999.
- 77 Moser, 1996, cited in Ayres, 1998.
- 78 Londoño, 1996.
- 79 This draws on recent work on sustainable economic, environmental, and social development (Serageldin and Steer, 1994; Serageldin, 1996) as well as on the asset vulnerability framework (Moser, 1996; 1998).
- 80 Ayres, 1998.
- 81 Putnam, 1993.
- 82 Moser, 1998; Moser and Holland, 1997.
- 83 UNICRI, 1998.
- 84 Caldeira, 1996a, p 63.
- 85 A useful distinction can be made between productive and perverse institutions. While productive institutions aim to provide benefits in order to improve the well-being of the community, perverse institutions benefit their members but are usually detrimental to the community or society at large (Rubio, 1997; Moser and McIlwaine, 2000a, p 78).
- 86 Moser and McIlwaine, 2000b; Rogers, 1999.
- 87 Ayres, 1998.
- 88 Human Rights Watch, 1992.
- 89 Heise et al, 1994.
- 90 Ibid.

LIVEABILITY OF CITIES IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD

Forty years ago, Jane Jacobs wrote *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, a fervent plea to create viable communities through urban planning.¹ Today, it is the death and life of the world's urban poor that are bound up with planning. More than anything else, the promise for improving urban liveability rests on freeing the potential of people living in poverty. Recognition of this important fact not only acknowledges the inability of the public and private sector to end urban poverty, but also welcomes marginalized and disenfranchised population groups as equal members of and participants in the world community, extending to them the full rights and responsibilities of urban citizens.

Against this background, this Epilogue first revisits the question: what is urban liveability? Next, it explores contexts for enhancing liveability and, finally, it highlights strategic directions for making human settlements better places to live.

Questioning Urban Liveability

To people living in poverty and squalor, the question of what constitutes urban liveability is simple enough. To them, it is not an abstract notion, but the real struggle for daily survival

Urban researchers have put much effort into the conceptualization of urban liveability. They have attempted to develop sophisticated measurement instruments, including multidimensional scales and weighted indices for use with advanced analytic techniques. Their work has resulted in 'quality of life'² classifications and the ranking of cities as places to live or work.³ Experts continue to debate the pros and cons of these different approaches. There is undeniable merit in efforts to enhance methodological rigour when seeking to obtain valid, reliable and comparable data as a basis for urban planning and management. However, to those living in poverty and squalor, the question of what constitutes urban liveability is not complicated. To them, it is not an abstract notion in need of operationalization, but the real struggle for daily existence. They do not have the luxury of being able to consider methodological options; they toil to meet basic survival needs of food, shelter and safe water. They often lack access to adequate sanitation, health care and education.

One in four of the world's urban population is living below the poverty line. In many cities, confronted with rapid growth, environmental problems and slow pace of economic development, it has not been possible to meet the challenges of generating sufficient employment, providing adequate housing and meeting the basic needs of the citizens. These are real challenges for human settlements development and the world is facing unprecedented further growth of urban population in the developing world.⁴

In recent decades, there has been encouraging progress in improving the living conditions of many people around the world due to the efforts of national and local governments, which have the primary responsibility for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda through laws, policies and programmes.⁵

In many places, there have been impressive steps forward in increasing access to safe water and sanitation services and elementary education.⁶ NGOs and community-based organizations have played more visible roles in bringing about these improvements. Progress notwithstanding, this *Global Report on Human Settlements 2001* documents the continuing prevalence of abysmal living conditions in cities where hundreds of people have to share a single public standpipe to obtain water; in cities where each resident has to compete with 100 or more other people for access to a public latrine, which itself is a major health hazard; in cities with governments that are corrupt and unable to deliver basic services to their citizens; in cities with too few jobs that pay a living wage and not enough affordable housing units; and in cities whose residents suffer from environmental contamination and fear for their safety.

From the perspective of these people, who make up a large number of the world's population today, the answer to the question: What are liveable cities? is simple enough. Liveable cities are places where residents can find jobs that pay a living wage. A liveable city provides its citizens with basic services, including safe water, adequate sanitation and transportation. The inhabitants of a liveable city have access to educational opportunities and health care. They are not at risk of forced eviction and enjoy secure tenure in affordable housing. They live in communities that are safe and environments that are clean. Liveable cities are void of discriminatory practices and governed through inclusive local democratic practice.

While it is relatively straightforward to specify the conditions that make cities liveable, it is more challenging to implement the processes that will help bring about

greater liveability. There are different views as to the strategies most likely to be effective. This report has repeatedly observed that market considerations dominate current processes of globalization, and it has emphasized the limitations of market mechanisms in improving people's quality of life. Further, it has made the argument that globalization is occurring mainly in a top-down manner, driven by the motivation of transnational corporations to maximize profit and accumulate financial wealth.⁷

This report has made the case for alternative goals for globalization – goals that derive from newly emerging normative platforms, as articulated during the United Nations world conferences of the 1990s.⁸ These goals stress the importance of social justice and environmental sustainability. Attainment of these goals requires support for 'globalization-from-below', through broad-based partnerships with full participation by civil society, specifically including women and low-income groups. Forming and operating such coalitions, in turn, requires deliberate capacity-building strategies.⁹

Contexts of Urban Liveability

The increasing economic role of cities and towns in a globalizing world has been well documented. Cities and towns hold the potential to maximize the benefits and to offset the negative consequences of globalization. Well-managed cities can provide an economic environment capable of generating employment opportunities as well as offering a diversity of goods and services.¹⁰

Globalization has placed cities in a highly competitive framework of inter-city linkages and networks. These globally networked cities act as energy nodes in a field of global forces. In a volatile world economy, the growing speed, complexity and precariousness of change in all sectors seem to demand a parallel concentration in cities that have the necessary assets to sustain ongoing competitiveness.

For cities to succeed in the competition for global capital, they must provide a minimum package of enabling conditions that will serve the forces of globalization. The package varies from place to place, but includes incentives such as well-functioning infrastructure and urban services, a skilled labour force, excellent communications, efficient transport systems, availability of affordable housing and access to educational and recreational facilities. As global forces increasingly mediate the economic base of cities, the critical nexus between cities and globalization will only strengthen.

Pro-growth policies are not necessarily pro-poor, as the recent East Asian crisis has demonstrated. In that region, the urban poor were worst affected when there was a sudden decline in economic growth. Technology-driven options for growth and development, which spur globalization, have a global and local downside: they lead to more lines of stratification between places, people and groups. The paradox associated with globalization is that while cities need to increasingly operate as territorial units if they are to compete effectively in the global economy, globalization has in fact led to increased fragmentation of cities – socially, economically and physically.

The social and economic cores and peripheries of the global information age and the global economy are not only continents apart but can now also be found geographically adjacent to each other within individual cities. In many cities, the disparities between the affluent and the dispossessed are exemplified by the co-existence of thriving business districts, affluent neighbourhoods and slums or derelict inner-city quarters.

On the other side of the digital tracks, living conditions are not only worsening, but also becoming unliveable. In many countries, real incomes have fallen, living costs have gone up and the number of poor households has grown. Real estate costs in certain cities have skyrocketed, pushing middle- and lower-income groups to the fringes of the city. A growing proportion of urban dwellers faces an impossible disjunction between the salaries generated by city labour markets and the housing costs determined by the urban land market. This has led to the birth of enclaves of poverty on the urban periphery and in the inner city, showing a hitherto unseen pattern of spatial segregation.

However, the reality emerging from the world's slums reveals that while the poor so far may have had little influence over global economic forces, they are taking an increasingly active role as agents of their own development. Where banks do not lend to them, they save and lend to each other; where no housing is available, they build their own shelter; where no education is provided, they teach each other. The poor are also getting more organized. Federations of slum dwellers in some countries, for instance, have managed to influence national and international policies by presenting a formidable political force and by participating in cooperative national frameworks.

Notwithstanding the so-called 'hollowing out of the state', central governments remain important, even essential, actors in the governance of cities. They still hold crucial powers, not only in terms of financial resources but also in terms of long-term urban agendas, strategic planning and sustainable development.

The state has a legitimate intervention role in the process of decentralization, first, in matters of national interest and, second, in local matters when they impact on wider interests or when local actors prove to be incapable or dysfunctional.

National government must act as a watchdog, safeguarding the interests of vulnerable sections of society. The state must also retain a major role in giving coherence to local actions and mediating between local and international actors. While national governments must facilitate the functioning of global markets and forces, they must also take responsibility for social cohesion, justice, equity and conflict resolution in cities. In the long run, governments have the ultimate responsibility of ensuring that globalization and urbanization are positive forces of development.¹¹

New forms of governance are required to manage and mitigate the risks associated with globalization. The combined processes of urbanization and globalization have thrust additional responsibilities on city governments, which find themselves suddenly having to deal with the economic development of their local constituents vis-à-vis the international community, while at the same time

having to shoulder the burden of ensuring social justice and equity within cities.

Local governments have to play a strategic role in facilitating decision-making and mediating the divergent needs of business and organized elements of civil society. Where local government has decentralized powers and where civil society is buoyant and organized, urban development can improve the life of every urban citizen.¹²

Globalization has created an apparent paradox where polity – the condition of civil order – is simultaneously becoming more global and more local. Globalization and localization, or ‘glocalization’ – the hybrid economic, political and cultural structures and processes associated with the growing interdependence of local and global dimensions – creates the possibility of a new type of grassroots politics that localizes within the network of global cities.

Such developments require empowering local authorities, NGOs and other Habitat Agenda partners, within the legal framework and according to the conditions of each country, to play a more effective role in shelter provision and in sustainable human settlements development. This can be achieved through effective decentralization of responsibilities, policy management, decision-making authority and sufficient resources, including revenue collection authority to local authorities, through participation and local democracy as well as through international cooperation and partnerships. In particular, the effective role of women in decision-making in local authorities should be ensured, through appropriate mechanisms.¹³

Strategic Directions to Ensure the Liveability of Cities

The liveability of cities depends on a number of factors, one of which is their global competitiveness. Economic globalization has grown through the expansion of markets made possible by deregulatory policies that have lifted trade barriers and restrictions on capital mobility. While seeking to enhance the competitiveness of cities, many national governments have devolved responsibilities that they had traditionally assigned to lower levels of government. The increased competition that characterizes globalization is accompanied by urban fragmentation, producing two conflicting trends. To compete effectively, cities must act as a collective unit; however, growing social exclusion, spatial segregation and economic polarization are divisive and hamper the ability of cities to mobilize resources and govern their development in a sound and sustainable manner.

Given that metropolitan areas are the chief arenas for global competition, it is necessary to strengthen them by giving them greater authority and autonomy in resource mobilization and allocation. However, the enabling role of governments must be broader than facilitating the functioning of markets and should also include responsibility for social cohesion, equity and conflict resolution. Under globalization, urban governance faces new challenges, as well as new opportunities.¹⁴

Liveability of cities depends on political recognition that globalization necessarily materializes in specific insti-

tutional arrangements in specific places, many of which are in cities. Far from exerting a deterministic, homogenizing effect, globalization processes allow for local differentiation. The outcomes of these processes reflect the claims that different interests make on urban places and the power they can wield to advance those claims. These interests include representatives of global capital that use cities as an organizational commodity to maximize profit, but they also include disadvantaged local population groups who need the city as a place to live. Cities are increasingly strategic sites in the realization of these claims.¹⁵

Liveability of human settlements cannot be enhanced without recognizing the empowering role of infrastructure, micro-finance institutions and community-based organizations that have initiated programmes providing low-income households with access to land and services needed to improve their earnings capacity and living conditions. Urban policies and international development agencies should, as this report points out, be directed to support these initiatives.

Recent experience shows that the shift in responsibility for service provision and management of infrastructure to the local level is not always supported by a commensurate transfer of resources and authority to develop the requisite tax base. The implications have been serious deficiencies, total system collapse and loss of physical assets as a result of overload and insufficient maintenance. The success of decentralization depends greatly on the ability of central government to institute an appropriate regulatory framework for central–local relationships and its willingness to provide localities with assets and inter-governmental transfers rather than budget allocations. Democratic local governance is essential if decentralization of infrastructure management is to be effective.

Liveability of human settlements depends on a properly established and efficiently functioning legal system. Globalization, as the report points out, has played an ambiguous role concerning the right to housing.¹⁶ The number of people living in inadequate shelter, or no shelter at all, appears to have increased as a result of the expansion of market processes associated with contemporary globalization. Such trends could bring considerable damage to cities’ liveability if appropriate actions are not taken.

This report highlights that urban liveability depends on the efficacy of measures undertaken to protect the urban population from deprivation, unemployment, homelessness, illiteracy, injustice and social disintegration, as well as protect them from crime and violence. To enhance liveability in the urban context, there are further needs to search for new approaches that not only focus on the control of violence but concentrate on its prevention through peaceful conflict resolution, negotiation and legal enforcement of human rights.

Liveability of human settlements is heavily dependent on the housing situation. The report shows that if housing is inadequate because of dampness, vermin or overcrowded conditions, it undermines people’s health and well-being. While a number of achievements are seen in housing policy formulation in many countries, it is neces-

sary to undertake legislative and administrative reforms to support the efforts of people, individually and collectively, to produce affordable shelter, adopt proactive planning of land supply, promote the efficient functioning of land markets and administration, eradicate legal and social barriers to the equal and equitable access to land and to ensure that equal rights of women and men to land and property are protected under the law. There is a need to vigorously promote affordable shelter and basic services for the homeless, preventing forced evictions that are contrary to the law and facilitating access of all people to information on housing legislation, including any legal rights and to remedies where these laws are violated.¹⁷

Liveability of human settlements can be enhanced through capacity building that goes beyond the training of individuals to the strengthening of the institutions and frameworks within which they work. Traditional capacity building is characteristically hierarchical and relies on vertically structured relationships. However, there is increasing recognition of the importance of and potential for fostering capacity building through horizontal processes.

The drive for cities' liveability requires cooperation between the public and private sectors. Partnerships are now evolving from single-purpose, project-oriented ad hoc

agreements between government and business interests to more institutionalized arrangements concerned with a range of interrelated long-term goals, involving multiple partners that include civil society.

Cities in a Globalizing World presents a view of globalization as a process with positive as well as negative implications. Human settlements are not powerless in the face of globalization, but, through good governance and in effective partnerships, can play an important part in mediating and directing its consequences for economic and human development in positive ways. It is necessary to intensify efforts for ensuring transparent, responsible, accountable, just, effective and efficient governance of cities and other human settlements. Good governance at all levels is essential in addressing the challenges of urban poverty and environmental degradation and to harnessing the opportunities offered by globalization. Cities need to improve governance, to plan and act strategically in order to reduce urban poverty and social exclusion and to improve the economic and social status of *all* citizens and protect the environment in a sustainable way.¹⁸ The challenge is to develop and implement policies that support not only the function of cities as engines of economic growth, but also their role as agents of social change.

Notes

- 1 Jacobs, 1961. In a scathing critique of existing urban renewal practices in the US, Jane Jacobs described four 'generators of diversity': mixed land use patterns; aged buildings; population density; and short blocks. Her emphasis on principles of physical planning invited accusations of advocating an approach premised on a naive belief in 'physical determinism' (see, for example, Gans, 1962).
- 2 See, for example, Grayson and Young, 1994.
- 3 Fisher, 1999
- 4 Draft declaration on 'Cities and other human settlements in the new millennium'. HS/C/PC.2/3/Rev.1, paragraph 3.
- 5 Ibid, paragraph 14.
- 6 It is significant that many of these improvements are the work of non-governmental and community-based organizations. For documentation of successful efforts, see, for example, the case studies reported in the journal *Environment and Urbanization* and the Best Practices database of UNCHS (Habitat) (www.bestpractices.org). See also data presented in the annual *Human Development Report* (UNDP 1996a; 1998; 1999).
- 7 Detailed arguments are given in the Prologue and Chapters 2 and 5.
- 8 See Chapter 3 for details.
- 9 Chapter 14 presents detailed analysis of capacity building strategies.
- 10 Draft declaration on 'Cities and other human settlements in the new millennium' HS/C/PC.2/3/Rev.1, paragraph 12.
- 11 See Chapter 4 for trend analysis in urban governance.
- 12 Detailed analysis of decentralization and urban infrastructure management capacity is presented in Chapter 13.
- 13 Draft declaration on 'Cities and other human settlements in the new millennium' HS/C/PC.2/3/Rev.1, paragraph 37.
- 14 Chapter 4 shows both new challenges and new opportunities for urban governance under globalization.
- 15 See Chapter 5 for additional arguments.
- 16 See Chapter 16 for details.
- 17 Draft declaration on 'Cities and other human settlements in the new millennium' HS/C/PC.2/3/Rev.1, paragraph 47.
- 18 Ibid, paragraph 49.