

Human Settlements Development through Community Participation

Table of Contents

Human Settlements Development through Community Participation	1
Foreword.....	1
Introduction.....	1
A. Background to the issues.....	1
B. Inadequacy of past service–delivery methods.....	2
C. Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000.....	3
I. Community Participation as a Strategy for Human Settlements Development	5
A. What is community participation?.....	5
B. The community decision–making concept of participation.....	7
C. Obstacles to the concept of community participation.....	7
D. Principal community actors.....	10
E. Community–based organizations.....	10
F. Women and women's organizations.....	11
G. Non–governmental organizations (NGOs).....	13
H. How they participate.....	15
II. Key Human Settlements Issues and the Scope for Community Participation	18
A. Housing policy.....	18
B. Land.....	20
C. Construction and building materials.....	21
D. Environment and infrastructure.....	23
E. Settlements financing.....	25
F. Squatter–settlement upgrading.....	26
G. Sites–and–services schemes.....	29
III. Training Approaches and Methods for Community Participation	30
Country project experience.....	32
IV. National and Local Strategies for Community Participation in Human Settlements Development	43
A. Policies.....	44
B. Operational plans.....	46
C. Accountability.....	48
D. Training.....	49
E. Partnerships.....	51
IV. Towards Self–reliant Communities	53
A. Summary and recommendations.....	53
B. Institutional approaches.....	55
C. Training methods.....	56
D. Benefits of community participation.....	58
References.....	59
Annex.....	62
List of training modules.....	62
List of bibliographies.....	65
List of occasional papers.....	66
The Danida/UNCHS Training Programme.....	66

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Foreword

The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1988, calls for concerted action by public agencies, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and the residents of urban and rural areas to achieve the goal of adequate shelter conditions for all. The recognition of the specific role that communities and their organizations can (and have to) play, is a significant step forward in the search for affordable and adequate shelter solutions. It has to be noted that, so far, the experience with community participation in urban areas had little impact on the formulation of national shelter policies. Planners and policy-makers charged with the responsibilities of formulating national shelter strategies can learn by now from increased knowledge of working with communities as regards establishing working linkages between physical development, the provision of basic services, and people's participation.

This publication presents an assessment of experiences gained with the Community Participation Training Programme which UNCHS (Habitat) has been carrying out since 1984. Within this Programme, there are stimulating examples of effective and practical cooperation between the public sector and poor urban communities. It was found that non-formal methods of training on technical and organizational issues of shelter development are appropriate tools in bringing about enhanced capacities by local governments and community organizations to implement shelter programmes. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that, with an organized effort, commitment and open exchange of ideas, at both policy and community levels, progress can be made towards the goal of sustainable development of human settlements.

The clearest lesson thus far is that community participation is critical to any effective human settlements programme designed to benefit low-income groups, and that participation must be accompanied by an assurance of secure tenure, access to finance sources, building material, and the provision of infrastructure.

It is hoped that the issues raised in this publication will contribute to a continuing dialogue among professionals and policy-makers working in this sector, with the people at the community level. I wish to acknowledge with thanks the substantive contribution of Ms. Caroline Puzzle in the preparation of this report.

Arcot Ramachandran
Under-Secretary General
Executive Director

Introduction

A. Background to the issues

Community involvement in human settlements development must be viewed against the background of several current phenomena. The first is the enormous growth in population. In 1950, at the beginning of the era of explosive population growth, there were 2.5 billion people in the world, 29 per cent of them in cities.

Two thirds of the global population lived in what was later called the “developing world”. Between 1950 and 1990, the cities of the developing countries added more than 1.5 billion people – the combined result of high fertility and a massive rural–urban migration. By 1990, urbanization in the developing countries had risen from the 17 per cent of 1950 to 34 per cent. Some cities grew as fast as 7 per cent per year, doubling their numbers each decade.

Rapid urban growth has produced the most obvious and dramatic mark of third world “underdevelopment” (UNDP): Around or beside the big cities of the developing world, shantytowns have sprung up to spread their rickety dwellings over everything in sight. Various labels *favelas*, *villas miserias*, *bidonvilles*, tin–can towns, these squatter settlements lack electricity, sewerage, drinking water, postal services, transport and all other urban amenities. They also present almost unresolvable problems of legal tenure and land titles. In 1988, about 600 million people were thought to be living under these inhuman conditions. If present trends continue, nearly half the world's population will live in towns and cities at the turn of the century with an increasing percentage under totally inadequate shelter conditions. The figure could reach 60 per cent by 2025.

The projected doubling of the populations of urban areas in the developing countries implies an increase in demand for serviced land – for residential plots for all income groups, for industry, commerce, and all other urban functions – at a scale and rate without precedent in the industrialized countries. Given these trends, it is clear that the question of land supply and the management of land will be one of the key issues of urban development in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America in the coming years.

In addition, many developing countries face an economic crisis which has imposed severe budgetary constraints. Economic–adjustment policies have limited investment in infrastructure, housing and informal–sector business, as well as social services. Low–income groups suffer disproportionately from such policies, and among them, women are worse off than men in terms of employment opportunities and pay. Women also suffer more than men from reductions in training opportunities, social–welfare programmes, and transport services. The plight of poor women in securing housing, health and education is exacerbated during times of austerity and greatly influences the well–being and future of children.

Nevertheless, cities of the developing world are expected to “develop”. Indeed, the third world metropolis is regarded as the engine which will pull the rest of the country into the twenty– first century; but in the process, traditional attitudes and ways of doing things are likely to be abandoned, involving a breakdown and reconstruction of relationships –with family, friends, and authorities. In the process, everything is affected, including hope and love, desire and ambition. A new vision of the world is forcibly, perhaps violently, brought into being. (UNDP, “Out of the Slums a New World,” n. d.)

B. Inadequacy of past service–delivery methods

On a world–wide scale, public sector efforts (through National Housing Authorities or National Housing Corporations) to reduce the “housing deficit” have not made a significant or large–scale impact. Projects have often been over–designed and expensive and have required massive subsidies. They have rarely addressed the housing and service needs of the poor as they and their communities perceive them.

The project–by–project approach, often supported by international assistance, is costly and elaborate in administration and planning, unpredictable in terms of funding, and slow in producing results. Even the more successful projects have not been able to overcome these basic deficiencies and are not affordable nor replicable, particularly for the poor, who are most in need. In the aggregate, they hardly ever approach the national scale of urban shelter problems.

Moreover, with resource allocations to human settlements declining each year, numerable tasks, within the realm of “public works” have by default been undertaken by women in order to maintain human settlements at even a minimally habitable level. Although it is impossible to make a firm estimate, it is safe to assert that much of the maintenance of the existing housing stock has been carried out by women over the years and many hours of women's daily labour go into fetching water, disposing of garbage, and substituting for non–existent community services such as clinics and crèches.

Table 1. The growth of world population and proportion of urban population (1950–2025)

	1950	1975	1990	2000	
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	Total Population (millions)	Urban Population (percentage)	Total Population (millions)	Urban Population (percentage)	Total Population (millions)	Urban Population (percentage)	Total Population (millions)	Urban Population (percentage)
Africa	224	14.5	415	25.3	648	34.4	872	4
Asia	1 374	16.4	2 353	25.3	3 108	29.9	3 698	3
Latin America	165	41.5	323	61.4	448	72.3	540	7
Northern America	166	63.9	239	73.8	276	74.3	295	7
Oceania	13	61.3	21	71.8	30	70.8	39	7
Europe	393	56.3	474	68.8	498	73.1	508	7
U.S.S.R.	180	39.3	255	60.0	288	67.5	308	7
Developing Countries	1 683	16.9	2 984	27.3	4 087	33.9	4 989	3
Developed Countries	832	53.8	1 096	68.8	1 205	72.6	1 262	7
World	2 515	29.1	4 080	38.4	5 292	42.7	6 251	4

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Human Settlements Data Base, 1990

C. Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000

In recognition of the poor results of public-sector direct involvement in shelter projects and delivery of services, UNCHS (Habitat), through the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, advocates a change in how governments operate in this sector. The Global Strategy promotes an “enabling” role for government and describes the basic elements of a cooperative action in which all actors (government, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and communities themselves) are mobilized in a national strategy.

An underlying assumption of the UNCHS (Habitat) strategy and programmes is that governments do not have the financial and administrative resources to respond directly to the housing/human settlement needs of the poor, who represent the majority of the world's people, more and more of whom are living in urban centres. Further, both experience and common sense show that the participation of the poor themselves in their communities offers the best hope for filling basic housing and infrastructure needs.

Both the deficiencies of government and the potential of people at the level of communities to shape their housing and living conditions have made the promotion of community participation in human settlements development one of the primary concerns of UNCHS (Habitat). This focus was introduced as early as 1976, at Habitat United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held in Vancouver, Canada, at which public (or community) participation was identified as one of the main requirements in the development of human settlements. Recommendation E. I. reads:

“Public participation should be an indispensable element in human settlements, especially in planning strategies and in their formulation, implementation and management; it should influence all levels of government in the decision-making process to further the political, social and economic growth of human settlements.”

The United Nations Commission on Human Settlements in 1986 underscored this point, when it identified “The role of community participation in human settlements work” as a special theme and adopted principles for the incorporation of community participation in human settlements development. Commission resolution 9/4 stresses the need for governments to establish supportive mechanisms which will enable communities to obtain access to land, finance and building materials, and urges governments to support the development of community organizations and partnerships with non-governmental organizations and voluntary agencies in the field of human settlements.

The response of UNCHS (Habitat) to this critical issue has been to develop a special programme focused on assistance to governments in the development of methods for community participation in the improvement of

human settlements. Specifically, a Training Programme for Community Participation in Improving Human Settlements was established with the financial assistance of the Danish International Development Agency (Danida). The Danida/UNCHS Training Programme began its first phase in 1984 with the development of training methods and materials, followed by implementation of training approaches in Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Zambia, in subsequent phases from 1987.

Box 1. The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000

- * Aims for shelter for all by the year 2000;
- * Promotes an enabling approach whereby governments enable the people to improve their shelter situation themselves, by making it easier to:
 - Obtain security of tenure and other legal requirements;
 - Work with appropriate building codes;
 - Have access to finance for housing;
 - Have access to low-cost building materials.
- * Harnesses the energies and skills of the people themselves to improve their homes through the enabling approach, involving the participation of the community, especially women.

The main goal of the Global Strategy is to encourage governments to set up national shelter strategies based on an enabling approach. For example, in Nicaragua, where many people have been displaced by the internal situation, and others made homeless by the Hurricane Joan in 1988, attention is now being focused on low-income groups. Uganda is currently devising a shelter strategy to integrate housing needs into its large-scale task of reconstruction and Indonesia is focusing on suitable methods of housing finance to assist its enormous population.

Financial arrangements, in all developing countries, must now benefit low-income groups if the “enabling approach” is to be successful. The demand for financial assistance is so great that new approaches to finance are needed, like Turkey's special fund for housing which is supported by taxes on luxury items, and Sri Lanka's savings scheme which reaches the people through post offices and other outlets. In Brazil, Mexico and the Philippines, a certain percentage of a salary is saved for a compulsory savings scheme for housing.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are also helpful in organizing finance for people of low-income to purchase or to build. NGOs are working with the Government of Sri Lanka in implementing its Million Houses Programme and the Government of Kerala, India, with its Subsidized Aided Self-help Housing Project of which the first phase will be 25,000 housing units.

Most governments now appreciate the involvement of NGOs in national housing issues. These organizations, which are usually small, well-organized and work well with the people, can form important links between government and the people. Apart from raising finance, NGOs have shown their worth in training, research, generating employment and lobbying to change the laws.

Adequate housing for all by the year 2000 can only be achieved if people are able to help themselves in their bid for low-cost housing. Governments must enable people to improve their living conditions. In the long run, it is the energy and initiative of the shanty dwellers that will produce new cities from old.

The chapters that follow draw on experience and the lessons learned in the implementation of this Programme, the UNCHS (Habitat) involvement with policy issues and technical cooperation for human settlements development, and other relevant material. Because community participation is still not universally accepted as a viable concept for resolving the human settlements problem, attention is given to development of local strategies for participation and to the key issues with which the community is concerned. This report will show some of the practical benefits of community participation.

In the discussion of methods and techniques being used to support community participation, note is taken of the roles of government and non-governmental organizations, particularly at the local levels. The account of the constraints that have been encountered, represents an effort to deal with reality, rather than remain in the realm of theory. It is hoped that the professionals and policy-makers for whom this publication is intended will be motivated to test the ideas and approaches and also enter into a continuing dialogue with UNCHS (Habitat) on how to improve this aspect of its work to improve human settlements for the poor.

I. Community Participation as a Strategy for Human Settlements Development

“The protection and regeneration necessary to ensure survival of humans and of nature's survival cannot take place without the active, involved participation of local communities.”

Kothari Miloon, National Campaign for Housing Rights, India

This chapter is based on the premise that for national and local government officials and professionals to implement an “enabling” human settlements strategy in their country, it is indispensable that they have a strategy for community participation – a strategy that relates public support to the priorities developed by the communities themselves.

The disappointing experiences with conventional human settlements programmes in developing countries has convinced most governments that it is beyond their financial and administrative capacities to provide shelter and basic physical and social services for the expanding number of poor rural and urban households. Instead, they must foster and complement the efforts and investments of the poor families themselves in meeting these basic needs.

In the 1950s and 1960 governmental programmes were totally out of touch with the priority needs of the poor and concentrated on shelter and services that were insufficient in scale and unaffordable by low-income groups. However in the 1970s an awareness emerged that the poor themselves were and would continue to be the main agents through which their human settlements would be created and improved.

Because of the lack of housing opportunities in the formal housing market, the poor have no alternative than engaging themselves in the production of their own shelter in the form of slums and squatter settlements. In these settlements, an enormous quantity of affordable shelter has been generated with impressive ingenuity and efficiency, in contrast to the performance of government-managed programmes. Most governments have acknowledged that their stance on human settlements in particular needs rethinking and have officially recognized the necessity of taking appropriate measures to improve uncontrolled settlements and to integrate their residents into the national development process.

The strategy of community participation in human settlements work was emphasized at the HABITAT Conference in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976. Since then, UNCHS (Habitat) has promoted the role of community participation in the execution of shelter programmes and projects. To this end, UNCHS (Habitat) commenced its Training Programme for Community Participation in Improving Human Settlements, with the objective of making training in community participation a standard element of low-income housing development programmes and projects.

The International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, 1987, led to the Global Strategy for Shelter, which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1988. Community participation is at the heart of the enabling approach, since the Global Strategy for Shelter is, literally, about increasing the participation of people in creating their own environment.

Within the framework of Global Strategy, it is possible to distinguish at least four ways in which people (i.e., the beneficiaries of the shelter process) are able to participate in decisions over housing: (a) participation in national policy-making; (b) involvement in managing the institutions which provide infrastructure and services to them; (c) participation in all stages of project design, implementation and monitoring of shelter programmes which affect them; and (d) participation in the wider political process in decisions over shelter, land, planning, resource allocation and so on. It is evident that participation of the people in decision-making is crucial to the success of the enabling approach to shelter delivery.

A. What is community participation?

Unfortunately, there is considerable confusion as to what the term “community participation” means in practice. UNCHS (Habitat) defines community participation as: (a) the voluntary involvement of people in making and implementing all decisions directly affecting their lives; and (b) the activities undertaken by low-income households, with or without outside assistance, to improve their living conditions. Community participation, thus defined, was not invented by development agencies; it has always existed in the form of

mutual aid in rural societies. However, with the rapid pace of urbanization in many developing countries, community participation has been given more attention and taken on new dimensions and sometimes controversial meaning.

Community participation is sometimes viewed from outside the community as merely an “instrument” to bring about change, particularly in low-income settlements. A major limitation of this view is its emphasis on organizing outside interventions to “mobilize” the poor to achieve externally-conceived plans and programmes, rather than support for the empowerment of men and women in the community itself to determine the type, degree and direction of change they need and want – which is a basic tenet of democracy. Seen from the communities' point of view, the problem is not one of enhancing their capacity to participate in a public-sector programme, but to seek the public- and private-sector support to their own development priorities.

To some proponents of development, the community represents a source of free labour for construction, the community gets raw materials under the heading of “self-help”. Community members are assigned to carry bricks, dig foundations, and perform other unskilled construction tasks. While this type of labour may lower costs, the community itself is excluded from planning and designing, which are left entirely to the (external) professionals. But if the community itself has not identified construction as a priority, the community's labour may well not be entirely voluntary; consequently, interest in sustaining this development may wane before long.

To others, community participation amounts to a cost-reduction and cost-recovery exercise. Contributions by members of the community in cash or kind are advocated, as an indication that they value the shelter and service and are committed to seeing that it is maintained.

Another point of view argues that neither of these models will prevent neglect, misuse or abuse of projects on a large scale. In this view attempts should be made to establish at least a minimal local institution to manage and maintain the settlement through local leadership, committees and locally recruited maintenance volunteers.

Box 2. Who the poor are

The renewed concern about human deprivation in recent years has generated a growing body of research on poverty. Here is a summary of some of the salient facts.

First, the poor are not a homogeneous group. The chronic poor are at the margin of society and constantly suffering from extreme deprivation. The borderline poor are occasionally poor, such as the seasonally unemployed. The newly poor are direct victims of structural adjustment of the 1980s, such as retrenched civil servants and industrial workers.

Secondly, over 1 billion people live in absolute poverty in the third world. Asia has 64 per cent of the developing countries' people in absolute poverty, Africa 24 per cent and Latin America and the Caribbean 12 per cent. Poverty is growing fastest in Africa, with the number of absolute poor having increased by about two thirds between 1970 and 1985.

Thirdly, three quarters of the developing countries' poor people live in rural areas. There is, however, a recent trend towards the urbanization of poverty, owing to the rapid increase in urban slums and squatter settlements, expanding by 7 per cent a year.

Fourthly, there is a close link between poverty and the environment. About three quarters of the developing countries' poor people are clustered in ecologically fragile areas, with low agricultural potential. Owing to a lack of employment and income-earning opportunities outside agriculture, environmental degradation and poverty continuously reinforce each other.

Fifthly, poverty has a decided gender bias. A large proportion of poor household are headed by women, especially in rural Africa and in the urban slums of Latin America. Female members of a poor household are often worse off than male members because of gender-based differences in the distribution of food and other entitlements within the family. In Africa, women produce 75 per cent of the food –yet they suffer greater deprivation than men.

Source: United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 1990*, (New York, 1990).

B. The community decision-making concept of participation

Missing from these approaches is a basic understanding of and commitment to the need for a broad base of community involvement in the process of developing human settlements. This is not to minimize the importance of cost-reduction and cost-recovery methods, or to deny the need for local institutions. Rather, it is to stress the primary importance of having the community identify its own development priorities, for which the public sector can then provide support. It is a "bottom-up" approach that moves away from the service-delivery or dependency mode, and looks to the community to help shape public-sector programmes in order to make them more supportive to the development needs of the poor.

While some governments are still reluctant to encourage this kind of community participation, an increasing number of governments, as well as national and international development agencies, have become aware of the importance of full community participation in settlement schemes. Disappointing experiences with conventional human settlements programmes in developing countries have also helped to convince some governments that it is beyond their financial and administrative capacities to plan for and provide shelter and basic physical and social services for expanding numbers of their poor rural and urban households.

Instead, governments are recognizing the necessity of fostering and complementing the efforts and investments that poor families themselves are making to meet their basic needs. They are moving towards the recognition that community participation not only can improve the chances of project success, but is a human right – an end in itself – the right and responsibility of people to take charge of their own lives and participate in the planning, implementation, and management of projects which affect them. Community participation in human settlements can also stimulate people to seek participation in other spheres of life, which could accelerate the overall development of the country.

C. Obstacles to the concept of community participation

Participants in the Regional Seminars on Women and Human Settlements, organized by UNCHS (Habitat) in 1988 and 1989, identified many constraints encountered when introducing community participation in human settlements programmes. Some of them reflect the difficulty in altering established administrative procedures: national housing authorities or local governments often do not enter into serious dialogue with communities, but instead restrict community participation to mobilizing controlled self-help in housing construction and contributing labour to infrastructure projects. Too often, government officials, whether professionals at the national planning level or technicians at the local project level, have been unwilling to change their established perspectives and procedures to allow the sharing of information and decision-making. As a result, the projects they initiate are often designed and implemented without adequate and sufficient consideration of the particular community's needs or human and financial capacities.

Some bureaucratic resistance results from a genuine concern to maintain standards and procedures – a conservative mentality, as well as a desire for predictable results within a pre-conceived time-span. Some of these attitudes can, of course, be changed over time, particularly if efforts are made to modify institutional links, reorganize agency functions, and recruit appropriately skilled personnel. Some of the obstacles to realizing the full potential of community participation arise from the fact that this management strategy is very new to agencies and to national administrative systems as a management strategy. It cannot be reduced to a tightly scheduled set of fixed procedures and a timetable that can be replicated in every community. On the contrary, although the concept is transferable, its practical applications may vary widely in accordance with the people, history, and conditions of each community.

Poor people, particularly women, have the greatest difficulty in being informed about, participating in, and benefiting from intended community-based projects. When families are struggling to survive and putting in long hours at low-income employment, they usually have little time, energy or inclination to attend project meetings. Moreover, their distrust and fear of officials, born often of negative encounters and despair that any change will favour them, further discourages them. In many cases, too, people who have experienced severe physical deprivation and have been downtrodden for too long react negatively to pressures or urgings to participate. Thus the whole process runs the risk of deepening their isolation.

UNCHS (Habitat) experience also suggests many other, context-specific factors which hinder the participation of a community as a whole – including heterogeneity along economic, racial, ethnic, religious or

political lines (and, there is also the culturally– biased gender factor). Often, the social and economic vulnerability of the poorest families forces them to seek the patronage and protection of others more affluent and better connected than they. Such patrons can deliver certain services and have contacts with prominent people and governmental officials which may seem to be of some benefit to poor families. The important point is that whether they are exploiters or genuine patrons, they have a vested interest in reinforcing attitudes of dependence among people. Such attitudes and the social patterns crystallized by them are often difficult to change.

Where autonomous community organization is perceived by a government to constitute a threat to national stability – i.e., to its power – the degree of participation is usually very low. Established top–down patterns of decision–making prevail and are limited to activities of priority to government. Whatever has been achieved in social and physical terms through such participation cannot be expected to be developed, sustained, or maintained.

Box 3. Types of low–income settlements

The popular image of the city in the developing countries is one of a central business district and a collection of middle–income and upper–income neighbourhoods set in a sea of squatter settlements peopled by desperately poor migrants drawn from rural areas. However, there is hardly a city in the developing countries that fits this stereotype. The popular conception does not begin to capture the diversity that exists in the types of accommodation occupied by low–income groups and the settlements they build. A partial listing of urban residential settlement types would need to include at least the following:

- * “*Back–to–back*” housing (the *callejon* in Mexico, *vecindad* in Mexico, and *conventillo* in Chile). These consist of a series of horizontal one–room and two–room rental units with shared water and sanitation facilities, often built around courtyards or accessible only through entryways. They are usually occupied by families who pay rent.
- * *Government ‘temporary’ or emergency housing* (the *barracas populares* in Brazil, *villas de emergencia* in Chile, and *jhuggi–jhompri* colonies in northern India). This type of accommodation is provided by government agencies to rehouse people displaced as a result of natural disaster, political action (refugees), or eviction. In Latin America, emergency housing usually takes the form of barracks, although it may comprise large single buildings. In Africa and parts of Asia it may comprise tented camps. While officially designated “temporary”, such accommodation may exist for decades and become part of a city’s housing stock.
- * “*Occupational*” settlement (the *conjunto* in Brazil). This is an accommodation, often of poor physical standard, built by enterprises for low–income workers. This type may also include dwellings built by an agency, labour union, association, or other collectivist group for its members. These residential enclaves inevitably tend to have a high degree of occupational specialization.
- * *Tilled plots without services* (the *barrios piratas* in Colombia, *suburbios* in Brazil, and *colonias populares* in Mexico). These are simple, separate, privately owned houses with very little in the way of supporting infrastructure and services. The houses are laid out more or less according to a predetermined plan but may range from little more than hovels to consolidated housing.
- * “Urban villages”. These are small rural settlements engulfed by cities in the course of their own growth. The villages are usually devoid of services, even though the new development that surrounds them may be reasonably well served. Such villages are much in evidence in Indian cities: about 110 villages, with 250,000 people, have been engulfed by Delhi alone. Jakarta is made up of an interlinked series of *kampung*s and has been called the largest village in the world.
- * “*Floating settlements*”. The best known examples are the boat communities in Hong Kong and Bangkok
- * *Camps on garbage* (the *ciudades perdidas* of Mexico City). These are peopled by those who live and work on municipal garbage dumps, living virtually on and off the garbage. Tolerated by the dump administration, people build their shelter in and from the city’s

refuse.

* *Roof dwellers (turgurios de azoteas* in Mexico City). In a number of Latin American countries, people rent space on flat roofs of single-family houses or apartment blocks, and build themselves shacks. They are usually located in dense areas, close to places of work.

* *Pavement dwellers*. These are the absolutely homeless who live and sleep on the streets, often in spaces they have 'claimed' to be their own. Calcutta and Bombay each have an estimated 300,000 or more pavement dwellers, and they exist in many other cities. A variation of this group is formed by abandoned or runaway children who live off the streets and have no fixed home. The most publicized group, though not necessarily the largest, are the *gamines* of Bogotá.

* *Mosque dwellers*. In some cities, in Western Asia in particular, people without a permanent home sleep in city mosques. Some mosques in Cairo are visited every night by up to 2000 people.

* *Converted structures*. All manner of structures once used for other purposes have been claimed for low-income housing. Such structures include palaces abandoned by the rich in parts of Western Asia: where one family and its retainers once lived, there may now be 30 or 40 families, each occupying a small part of an interior courtyard, a bedroom, or a kitchen outbuilding.

* *Inner-city slums* (the *tugurios* of Latin America cities, *chawls* of Indian cities, *medinas* of the Arab world, and shophouse tenements of South-East Asia). This is not a type of accommodation but rather a generic term representing a wide range of accommodation.

* *Squatter settlements* (the *bidonvilles* in former French colonies, *barong-barongs* in the Philippines, *gecekondus* in Turkey, *barriadas* or *pueblos jovenes* in Lima, *favelas* in Brazil, *jhuggi-jhompri* in north India, and *kalchi abadis* in Pakistan). Squatter settlements are also referred to as spontaneous settlements, in reference to the absence of governmental aid and control; uncontrolled settlements, in reference to their lack of regulation; shantytowns, in reference to the poor quality of construction; popular settlements, in recognition of the fact that they are inhabited by low-income people;

While far from comprehensive, the above list serves to show that there are many types of low-income settlement and that, within broad types, there may be so much variation as to defy generalization. Each type or subtype has its own delivery system, each has its own unique set of organizational, social, economic, and environmental characteristics and patterns, and each fulfils different types of settlement needs. Treating all types as a single category serves to compound confusion and makes it impossible to understand the dynamics of large settlements in the developing countries and their housing markets.

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), *The Residential Circumstances of the Urban Poor in Developing Countries* (New York, Praeger, 1981).

Even where governments are sincerely disposed towards fostering grassroots participation in determining the development of human settlements, historical and contextual factors often constrain the capacity and willingness of communities to participate. High expectations about what newly established governments can deliver to their citizens sometimes result in communities' being unwilling to participate in activities such as mutual-aid construction of settlements infrastructure, which they think government ought to provide. Frequent political changes damage the potential for community participation, because programmes of a participatory nature do not have enough time to nurture the commitment and participation of hesitant staff and sceptical communities before they are scrapped and replaced by other approaches.

In most developing countries, the very centralized administrative systems that have been developed or inherited are not well-suited to the task of developing partnerships with communities at local levels. Generally, local municipal authorities are staffed with technicians who have not been trained in participatory skills or who have not been delegated the discretionary or decision-making powers necessary to enable them to engage communities in effective collaboration. The status accorded to community development departments and to community development workers also is all too often relatively low, and budget allocations reflect that status.

D. Principal community actors

A quantum leap in strategic planning is now needed to provide options and channels to resources for poor communities, particularly in urban areas, to enable their participation in integral and sustainable development of human settlements.

This will require governments to demonstrate strong political will, supported by a sound systematic plan for sensitizing officials and technicians and for implementing national “enabling” strategies that bring together the governmental, for–profit and voluntary sectors in new partnerships in the creation of housing, essential water and sanitation services, transport, and employment opportunities.

The next section discusses where the members of the not–for–profit partners are likely to come from in poor urban communities.

E. Community–based organizations

Locally initiated and self–managed community–based organizations (CBOs) have begun to spring up all around the world. The emergence of these initiatives is an especially hopeful sign for grassroots participation in the “partnerships” among government, private for–profit commercial sectors, and the nonprofit (voluntary) sector, advocated by the Global Strategy for Shelter. Home and neighbourhood building has long been carried out by people motivated mainly by the need and desire to provide shelter for themselves, their families and their neighbours. In developing countries a major portion of all goods and services including “owner–built” housing, is produced by the “household economy”. It is the community character of this third component of the partnership that has to be strengthened; its relationships with the government and market–based systems are the critical issues that need to be addressed.

Each community, of course, has its own history and characteristics. The types and composition of organizations also vary by community. Some organizations come together around an issue, and others may perform a coordinating function for a spectrum of actions taken in the community. Whatever the form, it is useful to know the origins and composition of the group.

- Is the organization representative of the community? If the community is heterogeneous, i.e., a cultural, ethnic, racial, income–level mixture, does the organization reflect this diversity?
- What are its objectives?
- Does it function in a participatory way?
- Does it reach the unorganized, as well as the organized poor?
- What are its achievements?
- What is needed to strengthen its organizational capacity?
- Is it receiving technical and/or financial support from external agencies, e.g., donors, government, NGOs?

Box 4. Fundamental residents involvement

“The most visible and striking evidence of the ability and willingness of the urban poor to develop their own housing can be witnessed in squatter settlements. Although they should not be idealized, squatter settlements constitute a living environment better adapted to the priorities, needs and resources of the urban poor than many low–cost housing schemes. These settlements originate from people in need of shelter who take the law into their own hands, occupy a vacant piece of land and build their houses without permission of the authorities or titles to the land. It is the basic form of self–help – fundamental resident involvement in planning, implementation and management.”

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), “Community participation in the Execution of low–income housing projects” (Nairobi, 1984).

F. Women and women's organizations

In most cases, the more effective of these community organizations are those of, by and for women. Even where there is general agreement that human settlements development requires the participation of entire communities – men, women and the youth – too often the traditional concept persists of women solely as “beneficiaries” of social services in their circumscribed role of wives and mothers restricted to the home. This view renders invisible all that women are already doing to build houses and improve community life. It also, in effect, reduces by at least half the community resources that can be included in human settlements programmes and projects.

Women are given prominence in the goals of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the year 2000, not only as beneficiaries of services to fill their needs, but as full participants in the development process. UNCHS (Habitat) goes even further, advocating that women become the principal actors in low-income communities if they are not such already. From its experience in shelter and what it has learned from women's studies concerning development in general, UNCHS (Habitat) realizes that women are often the best entry-point for effective implementation and maintenance of community action. It is also increasingly evident that when women participate in and benefit from the development process, their children benefit as well; very often it is because of the successes women have achieved in improving the home and family living that men have also become involved in community action.

It is, therefore, important that the community strategy reflect an awareness of the danger for human settlement and housing policy of accepting the old stereotypes alone. The perception of women solely as wives and mothers ignores their role as producers and community managers. When we speak of the special needs of women in the development of human settlements, all categories of involvement must be addressed.

Women as wives and mothers are the primary users of space both in their homes and in the local community. Settlement planners and house designers seldom, if ever, consult primary users, i.e., women, at this stage of development. Policy-makers need to review questions of landownership, tenure and the credit rights of women. All these are usually accorded to men, if to anyone – even when women have, in fact, the responsibility for their families. There has been a phenomenal growth in numbers of women heads-of-households throughout the developing world.

Women's needs as producers differ from those of men both spatially and in the type of employment they undertake. Women are increasingly engaged in informal-sector income-earning activities in their homes. Others, who may be entering the formal industrialized sector, need child-care facilities. Policy-makers, planners, and architects often fail to take these special needs of women into account in formulation of legislation for zoning, in the design of domestic workspaces, in scheduling public transport facilities, and in providing child care.

Women as community managers are usually the hidden motor behind most community activities; organizing other women for action such as child-care, nutrition, health, and community centre facilities. Depending upon the type of settlement and level of organized activities, the concerns of women, after land and house construction, revolve around group action for schools and clinics for their children, water, energy, sanitation and roads – i.e., physical infrastructure. Women's organizations, mothers' clubs and other groups are actively grappling with daily subsistence problems in most rural and urban communities in developing countries.

Although activities to work on these services are often recognized and applauded as an extension of women's role in the home, planners generally lack awareness of women's effectiveness as community organizers and prefer to negotiate with men when planning and implementing human settlements projects in a community. Yet it is demonstrably the full involvement of women in the process – from decision-making to implementation and maintenance – that will help make a project sustainable over time, to the benefit of the family and the community.

This brief review of women and human settlements development is to call the attention of professionals and policy-makers to the need forgoing beyond perfunctory references to the importance of women's participation. Their own work can be far more effective if at the start of any intervention they: (a) ask women – the primary users of housing and basic services – about their needs and ideas; and (b) create innovative ways of affecting traditional male attitudes towards women that evoke positive collaboration within the community.

Box 5. Ecuador: women and low-income housing

A specific example which incorporates all the aspects of urban growth, problems of housing and service provision, the involvement of the poorest sectors in the petty urban productive system, and the special situation of women, is the Co-operativa de Unidad Popular (CUP – Popular Unity Cooperative) in El Puyo, the main town in Ecuador's Amazon region.

The Cooperative is based upon mutual aid, self-management by members and the use and production of certain building components. On the basis of this, a small productive enterprise was established. ALAHUA's (Latin America Association for the Development of Habitat) technical and social development staff offered advice to an integrated development programme in El Puyo.

One of the objectives proposed by ALAHUA, and agreed to by the popular organizations involved (CUP and the Organización de Pueblos Indígenas del Pastaza – OPIP: Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Province of Pastaza) as well as the Municipality, was training and the creation of new jobs. The CUP housing project falls within the overall programme.

As the main natural resource of the region is wood, it was proposed as the main building material to be used. The houses, with certain services, would be built by means of mutual aid, but, in addition, productive enterprises were to be set up with management resting in the hands of residents' organizations. It was proposed to establish a workshop for the production of wooden building materials, a construction and assembly company, and a company producing blocks and prefabricated foundation elements.

Seventy per cent of the Cooperative's members are women. Most are heads of households. Since many men are employed in oil exploration in remote jungle regions, their wives see them only a few times a year. It was the women who initiated the idea of the Cooperative. Some washerwomen demanded housing improvements from the local authority, including the granting of land tenure. They were told that, to obtain this, they would first have to form an organization. This led to the establishment of the Popular Unity Cooperative.

The most important of the productive enterprises was the Centre de Producción de Componentes de Madera (CCM –the Wooden Building Materials Centre). Women were not admitted to this, since wood-based production, like tree felling, has in this region traditionally been the domain of men. As women were barred from participating, the initial intention that the Centre be run by the Cooperative could not be realized, and it ended up under the control of OPIP. This was in spite of the fact that ALAHUA had designed a system of mutual aid in the production of wooden building components which involved lightweight assembly methods and were therefore capable of being carried out by women.

Another programme was the Taller de Producción de Bloques y Prefabricados para Cimentaciones (Prefabricated Blocks and Foundation Components Workshop). This was most motivated by women of the Cooperative and remained under their control. ALAHUA designed a system of laying foundations which took into account local soil and climatic conditions. This involved a very simple system by means of which light-weight wooden supports (framework) and small containers could be used to carry the concrete.

From the start of the programme, women were especially active not only in getting involved in organizational tasks but also the heaviest work such as site preparation and the production of foundation components. Actual building work showed an even greater participation by the women.

Of all the activities in which the women were involved the most impressive was the production of foundation components. It was not a traditional area of work for them; it involved steel-bending and moulding the components. Later, they made blocks for the fire-resistant walls. This then became the starting point for a small block-production firm of which the women were in charge.

The construction of their own homes, the day nursery and social centre showed the women the purpose of their own contribution to these activities. This led to the starting-up of group training by the women themselves. From the training and their practical experience, members saw that they were involved in a productive activity which could possibly provide a source of income and stable employment in the future.

ALAHUA's technical support played an important role, not only in helping in the training process and obtaining machinery, but also in the analysis of demand for building components in the area. At the same time it supported the efforts of the women's group in pressing the Municipality for assistance.

The work started with ALAHUA lending a block-making machine and ended up with the establishment of a small enterprise with its own machine, obtained through a loan from the Pastaza Provincial Government,

and producing for the national market. The loan was repaid by the production of blocks needed by the Province for its public works.

Until December 1985, eight women worked in shifts to turn out blocks. The way in which the group was organized was in complete contrast to that with the men. While the latter's building components workshop and construction and assembly team were of the traditional hierarchical type (manager, supervisor, foremen etc.), the women established a horizontal form of organization. Responsibilities were shared equally, both in the administration of the workshop and actual physical activity. Income grew and the small firm expanded—although this meant new problems, such as more complicated accounting procedures.

Now 8 of the 32 families who have a house within the Cooperative have a stable income. The Cooperative workshop has been relocated – on its own land – with more space and offering more room to carry out this kind of work.

Source: Case study prepared by Ana Falu of ALAHUA for the “Bulletin” of the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CEUR).

G. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

While CBOs and NGOs together make up the third category of partnership in the enabling strategy, they generally contribute at different levels. The sphere of action of international and national NGOs goes beyond the local level, and their essential principle of action is that all people have the right to control their own destiny. These organizations play an important intermediary role between the demands of community-based organizations for adequate shelter (or other needs) and the local authorities to whom these demands are addressed (usually municipal authorities). This role is translated into action by promotion, by mobilization and by technical, social, legal and administrative assistance.

Recent years have been marked by the establishment of a growing number of international NGOs in the developing countries. Most of these, at least as far as human settlements issues are concerned, have focused their activities on networking, research and training. International NGOs either cover a particular geographical region or offer their services to a number of countries, without geographical limitations. They are generally in contact with national NGOs and are well informed on the work that these NGOs undertake and how well they have succeeded.

One such international NGO, the Nairobi-based Mazingira Institute, sums up these functions: It runs the Settlement Information Network Africa (SINA), which provides a platform for professionals involved in human settlements issues to exchange views and seek information. Its members are government and NGO representatives in English—and Portuguese-speaking Africa. Mazingira organizes workshops and exchange visits which focus on particular topics and allow participants to discuss actual experience. It is also the focal point for the Habitat International Coalition (HIC), Women and Shelter Network.

The Habitat International Coalition is an organization which has long represented NGO concerns in its cooperation with UNCHS (Habitat) and during sessions of the Commission on Human Settlements. HIC organized a global NGO forum in Nairobi, Kenya in April, 1987, which produced a statement (called the “Limuru Declaration”) that discusses the roles of CBOs and NGOs. (The Declaration is reprinted in the UNCHS (Habitat) publication, *Shelter for the Homeless: the Role of Non-governmental Organizations*).

Evidence from HIC projects indicates that NGOs, being third parties, are better placed than State or market organizations to carry out five key tasks:

- (a) Stimulating and promoting the growing demand of people for the support of local initiatives;
- (b) Assisting local groups and communities to organize and develop their own projects and programmes;
- (c) Advising governments on the formulation and implementation of community support policies;
- (d) Mediating between the community and the State and other corporate powers – the primary role of third parties;

(e) Raising public consciousness about the underused capacity of CBOs and NGOs.

There is a growing awareness of the work of NGOs and the various roles they play in relation to people and the involvement of communities in the development of human settlements. However, too often they are referred to in one broad sweep as the NGO “community”. As difficult as it sometimes becomes, distinctions should be made between international NGOs, national support NGOs and community-based NGOs. Answers to such questions as presented below, may help in determining which organizations might function in a given partnership for a specific human settlements project and community:

- What are the objectives of the NGO?
- How long has it been operating?
- What is its demonstrated track record?
- Are their priorities also those of the poor?
- Is it accepted by the community?
- Does it have a truly participatory approach?
- Is it interested in becoming a long-term partner in an enabling policy, or is the justification of its existence a limited local issue which, once solved, will make its continued involvement unlikely?
- What is the source of its funding?

In somewhat broader terms, questions such as these may be relevant:

- In case the critical financial input into an NGO project comes from a foreign government or an international development institution, can an increased level of such support be expected if the role of NGOs is growing in the enabling framework?
- Can the participatory approach that usually makes NGOs effective, be escalated to the level of a national policy?
- What are the different levels at which NGO involvement can be promoted, beginning with a project-by-project approach at the municipal level?

Issues such as these are of great importance if we are to evaluate the role of NGOs in the field of human settlements not only from the point of view of the merits of individual projects and organizations, but, more importantly, from the perspective of NGOs' real contribution to the development process and the requirements for expanding their role.

Box 6. International NGOS in developing countries

Recent years have been marked by the establishment of a growing number of international NGOs in developing countries. Most of these, at least as far as human settlements issues are concerned, have focused their activities on networking, research and training. They are international by virtue of the fact that they either cover a particular geographical region, or that they offer their services to a number of countries, without geographical limitations. Generally these NGOs cannot be seen as a potential source of funding. They receive their funding from bilateral donors or international NGOs and use them “in house” for the implementation of their work programmes. In fact some have established themselves in developing countries specifically because this gives them greater access to donor funding, given existing criteria.

Within the framework of enabling policies, these NGOs can make an important contribution. They are generally in contact with a large group of national NGOs and are well informed on the work that these NGOs undertake and the measure of their success. The research grants that they receive allow them to analyse the work of national NGOs and draw conclusions on their effectiveness and potential future role. The regional exchange programmes, workshops and training courses that they organize allow national NGOs to learn from each other and also promote contact between government representatives and the NGO community. One such international NGO, the Nairobi-based Mazingira Institute, sums up these functions. It

runs the Settlement Information Network Africa (SINA) which provides a platform for professionals involved in human settlements issues to exchange views and seek information. Its members are government and NGO representatives in English- and Portuguese- speaking Africa. Mazingira organizes workshops and exchange visits which focus on particular topics and allow participants to discuss actual experience.

The Latin American Social Science Councils's Commission on Urban and Regional Development and the International Institute for Environment and Development's Latin American programme have been networking effectively for a number of years. Since 1979 over 60 seminars have been held, numerous collaborative research programmes undertaken by research institutions from many countries and newsletters appear regularly to keep network members informed.

As clearing houses for information and support organizations, these international NGOs can provide important support in the context of the development of enabling policy. Equally the NGOs that focus on training can help to lay the foundations for the implementation of enabling policies. Many of them already centre training courses on such issues as community participation and could offer future courses for government officials and NGO representatives on the implementation of enabling policies.

As is the case with international NGOs in general, the possibility of expanding the role of international NGOs in developing countries will depend on an increased level of funding made available to them. Since they do not operate within a project framework they are in a better position to expand their role. Many draw, or can draw, on international staff for their work, something that is not possible in the context of an "on the ground" project that has as its specific aim to undertake activities through and by the community.

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Shelter for the Homeless, the Role of NGOs (Nairobi, 1988).

H. How they participate

If there is agreement with the premise that the best chance for success in working with grassroots communities is to support the communities' own human settlements development priorities, professionals and policy-makers will have to embark upon a "process" for which there is no step-by-step "cookbook." Each community or settlement must adapt to its own economic, social, cultural and political realities. Unfortunately, when it comes to implementing participatory community projects, authorities and their project staff give numerous reasons why participation is impossible. Often professionals believe they know better what is good for the community than the "ignorant" and "illiterate" people themselves, so that there is no need to involve the community in planning and decision-making. Moreover, years of neglect by the authorities and of contempt by professionals have rendered many of the urban poor reluctant to participate in government programmes or to cooperate with professionals. They have come to distrust the intentions of public authorities and they are apathetic towards government initiatives. In turn, this attitude of the people is frequently used by administrations and professionals as a justification for rejecting the idea of participation.

Subsequent chapters will describe the kinds of approaches that certain specific countries have taken to modify the perceptions and behaviour of both sides on community participation. Meanwhile, this section cites some lessons from UNCHS (Habitat) experience with community participation in various countries.

Community participation is central in national plans and programmes to achieve sustainable development. That result is not likely without the participation of the community over time. A participatory development process, involving the communities, although initially much longer in execution than a top-down directive approach, can be less costly and lead to more stability in the long run. It will involve an envisioning process conducted with the community, enabling them to see how the economic, social, policy, participation, communications and personal/family needs of their community will be fulfilled through a development process.

Several terms are used more or less interchangeably when speaking about community participation: mobilization, organization, consciousness-raising, involvement, self-help, consultation, empowerment. Each touches on an aspect of participation, with perhaps subtle distinctions that will become clearer when they are examined for their value in carrying out the development process.

Mobilization and consciousness-raising: One of the first actions of external agencies when introducing a programme/project into a community is "mobilization" of the people. This usually results in recruiting supporters for the idea being introduced, and is referred to as participation. It is only one step, necessary to pull in the entire community for (a) general consciousness-raising about the problem and the solutions being

considered, as well as other concerns and priorities of the community; (b) assessment of the “receptivity” of the community as a whole, to the ideas; and (c) preliminary identification of potential “actors” in the proposed programme.

NGOs which have community links can be very helpful in this and subsequent stages of the process. In the mobilization and consciousness-raising stage, they are more likely to know not only who are the influential members of the community, but also the poor, who are rarely included in the development process – either as beneficiaries, and/or actors. NGOs can be of particular value in encouraging the vocal and active presence of women – from the start, all the way through the process. Women generally do not put themselves forward; and unless there is a conscious effort on the part of professionals and policy-makers to include them, they will be left out.

Involvement: A very useful tool for identifying who in the community will become involved, and how, in the process of planning, implementing and maintaining a human settlements project, is the preparation of a “community profile”. Following the consciousness-raising stage, residents of the community should be involved in the design and collection of data for the profile, as they know the territory. Information about the community may already be documented. Starting with this, gaps in the data needed for the human settlements development process can be identified. For example, if no map of the community exists, residents should help with drawing up one. Previous profiles may not have included the names and composition of organizations in the community. This will also be important data for further stages in the participatory development process.

Organization: It is difficult for the project staff to work in direct contact with the population on a one-to-one basis. Participation of the residents in planning and implementation, therefore, requires some form of organization. In a sites-and-services scheme, the allottees are usually not known until a relatively advanced stage of the project. In that instance it will take some time to form a community as well as an organization, unless (as is advocated by community workers) entire communities are resettled together and contact is made with existing organizations.

As UNCHS (Habitat) notes in its publication *Community Participation in the Execution of Low-Income Housing Projects*, when a project is to be introduced to a community for participation in project execution, one or another of the following situations may exist:

- (a) There is no appropriate organization in the settlement;
- (b) There is an organization which covers either the entire population or only a part of it;
- (c) There are two or more organizations, each covering some portion of the population; they may be complementary, overlapping or competing.

Box 7. The people's development

“Viewed from the perspective of the new outlook, of a truly people-centred style of development, the shantytowns of the Third World no longer look like such disaster areas. They seem more like monuments to the indomitable quality of the human spirit. They show the poor providing housing for themselves against all social and political obstacles... There is, to be sure, a subversive flavour to all self-help activities. People who carry out their own development often end up challenging the authorities. And yet if development is indeed the goal, it is the people themselves who will create it. The evidence for this is nowhere clearer than in housing, in getting a roof against the rain. In spite of everything and against all odds, people will provide their own shelters.”

Source: United Nations Development Programme, “Out of the slums of a new world” (New York, n. d.).

Box 8. Human development defined

Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and change over time. But at all levels of development, the three essential ones are for people to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. If these essential choices are not available, many other opportunities remain inaccessible.

But human development does not end there. Additional choices, highly valued by many people, range from

political, economic and social freedom to opportunities for being creative and productive, and enjoying personal self-respect and guaranteed human rights.

Human development has two sides: the formation of human capabilities – such as improved health, knowledge and skills – and the use people make of their acquired capabilities – for leisure, productive purposes or being active in cultural, social and political affairs. If the scales of human development do not finely balance the two sides, considerable human frustration may result.

According to this concept of human development, income is clearly only one option that people would like to have, albeit an important one. But it is not the sum total of their lives. Development must, therefore, be more than just the expansion of income and wealth. Its focus must be people.

Source: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 1990 (New York, 1990).

The term “organization”, as used here, indicates any community-based organization of whatever character (social, political, religious, women's groups, etc.), through which information and opinions can be exchanged between the authorities and the population and which can provide a basis for participation in planning and decision-making.

If in a generally stable settlement there is no organization which can serve the purpose of participation, encouragement and assistance should be offered to establish one. The fact that an organization does not exist may also be an indication of a wide diversity or heterogeneity of the settlement's population. Special attention and skill are called for to bring diverse interests together around a common vision and plan.

If there is only one organization in the settlement, it would seem reasonable to work with that organization, recognizing the potential disadvantages. An organization may explicitly exclude certain people from becoming members –e.g., for ethnic or religious reason. It may, intentionally or not, look after the interests of particular groups who have influence in the settlement (landlords, shopkeepers, employers) to the exclusion of others. And, even if an organization represents the vast majority of the population, it is important to know who is or may be excluded and why (e.g., widows, single women who are heads of households, or women in general, recent migrants, ethnic or religious groups among the poor).

It may be necessary to start work with an organization which is not representative of the entire population. If a new organization is established or contact is made with existing ones, the best response tends to come from people who, by nature or by position, are already active. They are able to see some direct personal interest in participation and/or have time and money needed to become involved. There may be no choice but to create an organization around these people. However, it is important to keep in mind that they do not necessarily represent the entire population. Efforts should be made to remove all obstacles and ensure that the “missing” population becomes involved as well.

Besides knowing to what extent an organization is representative, it is important to know its relationship to the project authorities. In Zambia, for instance, the political party, UNIP, was the dominant institutional force in the squatter settlements. It was hierarchically organized from national level to group (25 houses) level. The Lusaka Housing Project, therefore, always dealt with this Party organization for participation of the community. There are advantages in working through this process if it guarantees good contact and support from government; at the same time, however, it may not be possible for a party organization to represent the community residents if the latter disagree with the authorities that are responsible for the projects.

If there is more than one organization, a choice may have to be made among them, unless the organizations are willing to form a coalition. That would leave the organizations intact, while creating a new collaborative platform for the community, but would probably require the creating of a board or council acceptable to all and might slow down an already difficult decision-making process.

It is important to note that “organization” is not synonymous with “participation”. In the case of settlements with large populations, a multi-tier organization with shared powers may be necessary. While representatives (elected or selected) are expected to negotiate with the project staff and authorities, in close consultation with the population, it is difficult to ensure that the population is kept well informed and that the representatives express the opinions and defend the interests of the population, and not merely their own views.

Individual participation: Organizations should be encouraged to use participatory methods at all their meetings. The organization and project staff should convene general meetings to allow for updates on progress, complaints, ideas, and report-back from the population at large. The people will find other outlets if

these opportunities are not built into the development process.

Decision-making: The most critical point of participation in decision-making is during the planning stage of the process. Joint planning with the community takes considerable time and energy on both parties. The advantage is that when the final decision has to be made, the proposal will be the work of the community and planners together. The community has a greater investment in the successful implementation and maintenance of the project. This interaction should operate at each subsequent point of decision-making.

Implementation: Participation in project implementation can be through individual self-help, mutual self-help (by groups or households) or hiring workers. Individual or mutual self-help has a much longer history than participation in planning or decision-making. Self-help construction was introduced in the 1950s and reduced the capital cost of housing for low-income groups. However, there are questions connected with these approaches that require examination before they are applied. For example do the families have the technical skills needed? If not, do they have the capacity to acquire them? Do they have time available for participation (some estimates suggest 1 500 hours per family)? Do they have the finances to build their own houses and/or contribute to providing infrastructure?

Finally, participatory modes can encompass all of those discussed above, culminating in what is often referred to as “empowerment”. The dictionary definition of “empower” is “to give official authority or legal power.” Empowerment as defined by community workers is the state of being enabled to take their destiny into their own hands. The implication is that the people have awakened to their own history, situation and potential, have the capacity to analyse in terms of their cultural value systems, and are able to take individual and group action under their own steam. Empowerment, then, should be the goal of all community participation endeavours. It is the hope of the future for the people and their governments.

II. Key Human Settlements Issues and the Scope for Community Participation

“Illegality” and “insecurity” are two concepts that characterise lives of the urban poor in cities. Within this hostile environment, shelter consolidation is a slow and incremental process for the majority who are denied land titles, security of tenure, use of basic amenities and access to building material and credit.

Prema Gopalan and Sheela Patel, “Search for 'sustainable alternatives' by the urban poor”, SPARC, India 1990

A. Housing policy

In most cities of developing countries, the poor have few or no opportunities to acquire a house through a conventional housing scheme. Most housing developments in urban areas are intended for middle-income or high-income groups, and housing schemes that are launched for low-income families are insufficient to meet the enormous demand of the urban poor. Moreover, the houses in these schemes are often still too expensive for the income groups for which they are intended.

As a consequence, the urban poor in developing countries tend to live as tenants in over-crowded and dilapidated slums or as squatters in spontaneously developed settlements erected without authorization from the government and without permission from the owners of the land. At present, millions of people, sometimes more than half of a country's urban population, live as squatters in the outskirts of a city or on land within a city not used for other purposes, e.g., riverbeds, land along railway lines, etc. The residents on these sites should not be viewed only as people in need, but also as a reservoir of human resources that, in partnership with professionals and policy-makers, can transform their communities.

One of the principal conditions for successful squatter-upgrading and sites-and-services projects is a national policy and an “enabling” strategy that addresses the needs of the poor and low-income families and communities in terms of their participation in sustainable human settlements.

Housing and human settlement policies are often a compromise between conflicting aspirations of different groups in a settlement and their respective stakes in the decision-making process. There appear to be at least two prevailing ways of viewing and treating urban growth. One approach views the city purely in terms of

its market value and land purely as a commodity, the value of which must be maximized in order to sustain municipal finances through property taxes. This approach dismisses the urban poor, their informal economy, and their residences as low-value occupiers of urban space. The second approach looks at the city in terms of its use-value as a place to live and produce, and tries to safeguard the traditional social fabric and the residential and economic activities of the informal sector. Squatter settlements make significant contributions to the city as a whole, add to the city's labour force, consume some of its production, and house themselves at little direct cost to the city. This people-oriented approach, however, is steadily losing ground to the more conventional economic analysis, because of increasing pressures on the use of urban land.

As a result of the growing reliance on the economic structure of the city, planning instruments such as building codes, redevelopment schemes, zoning ordinances, and land-use regulations tend to support the large-scale influential businesses rather than the poor and disadvantaged households. Mixed-use restrictions (which contribute to the destruction of traditional crafts and small-scale workshops –to the advantage of corporate manufacturers), banning of street vendors (who are often perceived as a threat to organized trade), and the introduction of various licensing and regulatory devices (which favour formal over informal businesses) all claim priority in the urban space for the corporate economy. It is obvious that the losers from such trends are the informal sector and the people who obtain their work and their housing from it.

This demand for urban space created by corporate market forces has an important impact on the residential-cum-working neighbourhoods inhabited by the poor. It particularly affects women, who earn a large portion of their income in the informal sector and in home-based crafts and manufacturing activities. Removed from their traditional locations, their employment opportunities disrupted, and their transport costs increased, the urban poor in developing countries are often impoverished by the very policies which were ostensibly adopted to benefit them.

Box 9. The Million Houses Programme in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka, one of the three countries participating in the Danida/UNCHS (Habitat) Training Programme for Community Participation, appeared from the beginning as an ideal working ground because of its strong housing policy, a generally “enabling” strategy, and firm commitment to community-level involvement.

From 1978 to 1983, the Government's strategy for shelter was carried out under a Hundred Thousand Houses Programme. This Programme focused on house construction through traditional design and delivery mechanisms and contracts with formal sector enterprises.

The Government encountered problems with this “provider-based” housing construction approach and in 1984 launched the Million Houses Programme (MHP). This “support-based” Programme of housing aimed at reaching large sections of the low-income population over a period of five years.

The urban activities of the new MHP concentrated on the Colombo area, focusing on a process of support which enabled poor communities to build or improve their own houses. The Government's resource contribution was minimal, but was directed towards low-income families, disadvantaged, unserved areas, and informal settlements commonly known as slums and shanties. The assistance usually took the form of small housing loans through the Housing Options and Loan Package (HOLP). The main options packages were:

- * Upgrading package
- * New basic house package
- * Utilities package
- * Sites and services package

Each of these packages had several complementary activities, including regularization of tenure, housing advisory service, community education and organization, and technical/social information.

The MHP addressed women's involvement in the development process and concluded that since most poor women are involved in micro businesses and since there is an explicit objective to reach women, it is important also to encourage small business development.

The MHP, therefore, adopted a broad approach to poverty alleviation in urban low-income communities and also included approaches to credit and income-generating activities. Various donors supported different aspects of the Programme.

The Danida/UNCHS Programme developed a participatory approach as part of the MHP, to demonstrate the principle that the power to determine needs, priorities and solutions rests with the communities, and project officials are supporters or facilitators in this process.

The Global Strategy for Shelter specifically recognizes the contribution of the informal sector to the national economy and encourages governments to address the housing needs of the poor through a coordinated effort of the public, private and community sector.

B. Land

Adequate land supply and the management of urbanized land will be one of the key issues, if not the central issue, of urban development in Africa, Asia, and Latin America in the coming years. Land which provides the physical location for shelter, commerce, industry, roads, transport systems, social infrastructure, and other public services, is the starting point for all human settlements.

However, governmental strategies to increase the supply of land for the poor through public sector interventions have been insufficient to meet the need. Access to legitimate and secure shelter near income-earning opportunities, with an acceptable level of essential services such as roads, water supply and drainage, remains an impossible dream for millions in developing countries. Therefore, an increasing number of low-income people are finding accommodation through informal channels. Arrangements include unauthorized invasions of public or private land, encroachments on marginal lands, and occupation of abandoned properties. The general tendency is for informal arrangements to be increasingly commercialized. The result is that residents are often subjected to harassment and exploitation and are, therefore, reluctant to invest their savings. Commercial arrangements include illegal sale of public land, substandard land subdivision, land rental and land fragmentation. Such arrangements normally require a downpayment to the landholder and recurrent charges for services.

Public-sector intervention often leaves out the lowest strata among low-income groups, because ability to repay is an eligibility criterion for public-sector schemes. These arrangements have a particularly adverse affect on women, because applying this criterion means that households headed by women are seldom deemed eligible for plots in sites-and-services schemes (although actual repayment performance has not been shown, with certainty, to be related to apparent repayment ability).

Poverty and lack of information available to low-income communities place them in a disadvantaged position with respect to both commercial and non-commercial land arrangements. The limited availability of vacant land open to squatter invasions or encroachments, strict enforcement of legal measures by the authorities, decreased supply of cheap rental accommodation in inner-city slums, and the rise in numbers of evictions are factors that have changed the nature of the prevailing informal processes of land acquisition.

Access to land by all income groups is an integral component of urban development strategies if all sectors are to make a maximum contribution to economic and social development. In the past, cities have demonstrated a remarkable ability to absorb large numbers of new migrants. For the most part, this was due not to governmental actions to meet demand for land and shelter, but to the informal arrangements which responded to the needs, particularly of low-income groups. As the land market becomes formalized and commercialized and informal arrangements gradually lose their ability to supply land, public authorities must develop the will and capacity to assume an active role and adopt measures to respond to the needs. Without effective policies to increase the urban land supply and enact regulatory and administrative reforms, the problems will become ever more acute, not only threatening social stability but also undermining the success of urban and national economic development policies.

Relative to the participation of communities, experience in developing countries has repeatedly shown that secure tenure, preferably by title, encourages the urban poor to mobilize resources that would otherwise not be tapped for the improvement of their shelter.

Box 10. Public intervention in urban land markets: new approaches

In some developing countries, governments have experimented with measures designed to influence the behaviour of the urban land market:

* *Land readjustment* has become a vehicle for servicing and rationalizing land delivery at the city's

periphery. Under land–readjustment programmes, unserviced land is surrendered to public authorities which subsequently provide it with basic infrastructure, parks, schools etc. Part of the serviced land is returned to the previous owner who is able to develop it for profit. The remainder of the land is sold by the public agency to private developers at a price that provides for the full recovery of initial development costs and subsequent operating costs. The sale of serviced land to private developers is subject to conditions covering land use, density requirements, and other planning criteria.

If correctly undertaken, land readjustment is able to serve both public and private interests. Land readjustment is practised widely in the Republic of Korea and is also used to a limited degree in some cities in India. Several experiments in land readjustment have been carried out in Kenya, but their impact has been minimal, and the administrative and political problems involved have discouraged planners and administrators from pursuing it. The most serious deficiency is that, as practised in the developing countries, land readjustment makes land available for high–income and not for low–income housing.

* *Land banking* is another approach which some developing countries have introduced. Land banking refers to the acquisition and maintenance by public authorities of stocks or banks of land which are sufficiently large to meet future public–sector development needs. Malaysia and Singapore have implemented particularly ambitious land–banking schemes, designed to secure sites for new towns, while some other developing countries have used land banking to acquire sites with a high potential for housing on the periphery of cities. Chile, Ecuador, India and Turkey have employed this option to build up land reserves.

The paucity of finance has proved an obstacle to the wide application of land banking as well as to other efforts to generate finance through various types of joint–venture arrangements. In Colombia, for example, joint ventures have been established between a government mortgage bank, construction companies, and social security institutions. The mortgage bank, as the owner of large areas of urban land, uses “expensive” money from social security funds to develop land for the construction of housing units, the sale of which produces profits for the bank. These profits are then used to buy new land for urban renewal projects to be undertaken by the bank itself or by private development companies. There is yet little evidence, however, to suggest that the bank’s activities can be directed towards the satisfaction of the land needs of low–income groups.

* *Systems of land leasing* which aim at recovering increased urban land values and at creating land reserves for future development are also being increasingly employed. In Myanmar, all land is State land, and individual rights to land are established by grants, leases, and licences. Leaseholds run from five years to a maximum of 90 years and reflect the use to which the land is to be put and the extent and nature of developments on adjoining land. Landowners in Fiji are prohibited by law from selling communal land: such land can only be made available for use by leasing through the Native Land Trust Board. Leasehold tenure is often the most effective means of controlling publicly held land and encouraging its appropriate use. It calls, however, for efficient administrative arrangements and effective lease conditions, both of which have to be used in conjunction with fiscal and land–tenure measures if the objectives of public land policies are to be achieved.

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), *Global Report on Human Settlements*, 1986 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1987).

C. Construction and building materials

In most developing countries, there is a segment of the construction sector which can best be described as informal or traditional, predominantly providing for the construction needs of the rural and urban poor. This sector, which includes building–materials producers, artisans, small–scale contractors, and a vast array of operators in various aspects of construction, plays a vital role in development. A large portion of the contribution of labour to the construction sector is through the family or the community and is therefore unrecognized and unremunerated. In many urban areas of developing countries, as many as 70 per cent of the people live in buildings constructed by the informal sector, which also produces a large portion of the building materials used by the poor.

Another important facet of the construction sector is the choice and use of building materials. The use of imported building materials, produced with capital–intensive high technology, not only reduces employment in the national construction industry, but also diverts limited resources from employment–generating activities to other sectors. Traditionally, building materials have been readily available to the urban and rural poor, because they have been obtained locally. They took many forms: earth in the form of mud or adobe bricks,

fired by heat, sun-dried or solidified by stabilizing agents (lime, dung, ash, shell, etc.); wood as timber – poles, beams, shingles, rods and branches; vegetable products, such as bamboo, reeds, palm leaves and grasses; skins and cloths; and stones, sands, gravel, lime, gypsum, and mortar.

Box 11. Infrastructure and services

The provision of services is an element of settlement improvement that generally cannot be tackled by an NGO in isolation. Sewerage, electricity supply, garbage disposal, water supply, health care and emergency life-saving services are all elements that generally need to be linked to the larger framework of urban administration. Services also represent the borderline between what can be done on the basis of private initiative and the responsibilities of the State.

There are many examples of communities that have managed to obtain services by lobbying the administration, often in squatter settlements where occupancy is in fact illegal and the State is under no legal obligation to provide services. For example the people of Dharavi, one of the largest slums in Asia, which houses nearly half a million people organized themselves through a community-based organization called PROUD. Successful lobbying resulted in the delivery of water supply, sanitation and garbage disposal.

Some communities assisted by NGOs have played a complex and crucial role in the provision of services to their settlement. For example the people of the “Ex-Fundo Marquez” popular settlement in Lima, Peru, managed and paid for the electrification of their settlement. This involved a complex process of getting settlement plans approved, negotiating with the Government and the State electricity company, dealing with a contractor and, on top of all this, saving the necessary funds to pay for everything. A similar impressive effort of a community, albeit in a different context, is provided by the people of the Baldia settlement in Pakistan who built no less than 1500 latrines and soak pits with technical assistance from the United Nations Children's Fund.

Things do not always go so well. In one instance, some 200 latrines were constructed without prior consultation with the people that were to use them. They were ill-placed, sometimes badly connected to water supply and not maintained. They were consequently not used for the intended purpose but as stills for brewing illicit alcohol. Fortunately the authorities learnt the lesson and adequate attention was subsequently devoted to location and maintenance. One NGO has even managed to make sanitation a paying proposition. Sulabh International, an Indian voluntary organization that has grown into a major operation with 2500 workers and an annual turnover of \$US 15 million, operates pay and use sanitary facilities.

Many NGOs have also made it a priority to develop community centres which provide services to the poor, such as meeting facilities, health care, pre-schools and communal kitchens, among others. Apart from being an important service such initiatives can also lay the foundations for community development work. For example, in the case of Mona Common in Jamaica, the establishment of a basic school was shown as a means of getting to know the adults of the community. Early childhood education was sadly neglected in the area, an issue of great concern to the parents. The development of the school transcended all political lines and allowed everyone to participate in the community-building effort. Developing the school also served as an initial testing ground to find out who was seriously interested in the development of the community and could be asked to fulfil a leadership role when future activities were undertaken.

In a Sri Lankan squatter-settlement upgrading project the development of a communal kitchen by an NGO freed many women of their cooking responsibilities and allowed them to follow masonry and carpentry courses and build their homes. This training and practical experience subsequently gave them access to skilled and semi-skilled jobs in the construction sector, or in other words, a source of income. Meanwhile the communal kitchen was used as a way of raising consciousness on nutritional issues.

In many cases the provision of services is the source of an important partnership between government, communities and NGOs. A partnership where the government provides material and technical assistance, the community provides labour and the NGO coordinates construction and improvement work. These partnerships allow the people to fulfil a decision-making role in the development of their settlement while the government, thanks to the contribution of the people, is able to make meagre resources go a great deal further. Such an approach has also promoted a general change in attitude to the provision of services. There is clear evidence that if people are involved in the provision of services they will make every effort to keep them in good order. If they are not involved, the service becomes impersonal, and consequently, the responsibility of no one in particular.

New industrial products, however, supported by rules and regulations, standards and codes, and financing and credit facilities have recently taken over the market. Some of the new materials have become accessible for popular consumption: concrete blocks, flooring slabs and roof panels, asbestos and steel sheets for roofing, steel rods and window frames; plywood panelling. These materials are often more expensive than traditional materials and do not necessarily provide durable or comfortable shelter.

The majority of developing countries have followed a policy of import substitution, establishing local industries which produce materials identical to those previously imported, e.g., machinery and equipment. What is needed instead is to adapt indigenous low-cost building materials that require minimal amounts of capital and foreign exchange and to use locally available raw materials and skills in small-scale operations. The financial benefits of such a policy could be considerable. Construction prices could be lowered to a range affordable by low-income populations with the use of such inexpensive local materials, since with proper design and treatment, they can last a long time. This could create significant savings in building and maintenance costs as well.

For women, the choice of appropriate building materials is very closely linked to their specific roles and associated needs as entrepreneurs, construction labourers, traders, or users of shelter and infrastructure. In construction work small, light components can easily be handled by women, who, with training, can play an important role in the installation of electrical, plumbing and sanitary systems.

D. Environment and infrastructure

Human settlements require integral development and, upgrading of all physical infrastructure components – e.g., water supply, sanitation, waste disposal, transport communications, and energy – if satisfactory living conditions are to be achieved and social and economic development of the people promoted. There is also a strong but complex relationship between human settlements and natural environments. Inefficient use of natural resources by burgeoning populations is putting resource systems under stress in a broad range of settlements, most visibly in large urban areas. In devastated neighbourhoods it is popular to refer to the “impact of human settlements on the environment,” as though the environment were some independent entity separate from human beings and their way of life. The fact is, however, that human beings live in human settlements, and the real question to be faced is how the environment can support human settlements to the greatest long-term benefit of the people who live in them.

An assessment of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD), launched by the United Nations General Assembly in 1980, indicates that results have fallen short of expectations and coverage has not kept up with population growth, even though much progress has been made in extending the range of development options beyond conventional solutions alone.

The experience in many countries of the failure of infrastructure projects indicates that there is a need to involve the target community at all stages of a project, from conception, through planning and design to implementation and operation. Planning from the community upwards is a practical means of improving a project's chances of success, and therefore of making best use of resources. Public participation can also serve as an input to project financing, usually in the form of labour. The development of community skills to create an informal sector manufacturing capability for the production of essential components at low cost has in some cases led to self-reliance. For this approach to be successful, strict quality standards for materials and components may have to be relaxed.

One of the lessons of IDWSSD was that there are sound reasons for emphasis on the role of women, who are prominent among the poor and unserved, as a resource to enhance the sustainability of basic improvements in water supply and sanitation services. In most societies women generally have the most to gain from and have the greatest interest in improved water and sanitation services, because of their traditional functions of child and home care, and the importance of water, energy and sanitation in the home environment. However, unless specific efforts are made, gender-related constraints often limit the participation of women. The issue though is not necessarily creation of special programmes only for women, but the recognition of the needs, demands and potential of women and the necessity for their conscious inclusion in project planning and implementation – in managerial, professional, community and household roles.

Box 12. Habitat and the environment

“Habitat and the environment are inextricably linked. One of the main environmental problems at present is the habitat of large numbers of the urban poor who lack accessible and secure land, water, sewerage facilities, health and basic services and access to financial and material resources to meet their basic needs. This implies the recognition of the right to a place to live in peace and dignity, and to a healthy and affordable habitat. For as John Turner said in his address at the Right Livelihood Award Ceremony, ‘The shape and forms of our homes and neighbourhoods, the architecture of community, reflect the relationships of people, the ways in which people work and use the Earth’s resources and the relationship between human society and nature.’”

Source: Habitat International Coalition (HIC), *NGO News on Human Settlements*, 1990–No. 1.

Box 13. Eight Lessons from the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1988–1990)

(1) Focus on Poverty: serving the unserved

A large percentage of the world’s population, generally the poor, remains unserved. Reaching the poor with water and sanitation services requires special emphasis on helping them to help them.

(2) Building Capacity: the promotional role of government

There is a need for governments to concentrate less on direct provision of services and more on enabling public and private institutions to deliver services.

(3) Meeting Demand: understanding what services people want and are willing to pay for Users’ perceptions of the benefits from improved sectoral services have not been well understood by sector planners. There is also a lack of understanding of the household itself. This has led to investment in facilities that have been underutilized or that people have been unwilling to pay for, thereby undermining long-term sustainability.

(4) Sharing Costs: appropriate pricing as a means of improving sector performance

Costs are rising and so are the numbers of people to be served. Government subsidies are limited, so costs should be shared. The careful pricing of services is a powerful but often poorly used tool for mobilizing financial resources, and increasing the accountability of service providers to users. It can also inhibit the wasteful use of resources.

(5) Technical Innovation: a range of options to meet demand

Technological advances have greatly increased service coverage by lowering costs and permitting the matching of service levels to demand.

(6) Women: sound reasons for emphasis

A focus on the role of women, among the poor and unserved, can enhance the sustainability of basic improvements in water supply and sanitation services.

(7) Monitoring: extending coverage with achievable goals

At current rates of coverage, the prognosis for extending water and sanitation services to the unserved over the next 20 years is poor; establishing achievable targets and effective monitoring systems are instruments for enhancing efforts.

(8) Coordination: building collaborative networks

The primary reason for collaboration is to make better use of existing resources. Collaboration starts at the country level and is supported by regional and global networks.

Source: Background paper for the Global Consultation on the Safe Water and Sanitation for the 1990s.

E. Settlements financing

The types of investment needed for human settlements development can be classified in four main categories:

- (a) **On-site infrastructure**, including roads, water supply, sanitation, surface-water drainage, street lighting and electrification, and **off-site** infrastructure that connects the site with the city;
- (b) **On-site facilities**, such as schools, clinics, hospitals, churches, police and fire stations, community centres, etc. These facilities are more than physical: they include education, health care, and the social services;
- (c) **Industrial and commercial structures**, such as office buildings, shops, stores, factory buildings, community production centres etc.;
- (d) **Residential structures**, e.g., multiple dwellings, individual houses for rental and/or owner occupancy etc.

Outlays for land, physical infrastructure, and houses together make up the capital costs. For a settlement project to be feasible and sustainable, its residents must be able to pay all or most of the **capital** costs, as well as recurrent costs for services like water, sanitation, and electricity. The problem is that most low-income people cannot pay for these without the help of a specially designed financial scheme, most often in the form of savings or loans. For these purposes people can use their own savings or loans from friends, families, employers, community credit unions, cooperatives and other informal public lenders, banks, housing agencies, local authorities or any other formal public lender. NGOs play an important role in providing support to CBOs for the poor to become self-reliant. They can intervene by helping the community remove obstacles in existing organizations, or create new community-based credit mechanisms. The training of community people to manage these mechanisms can also be done by NGOs.

Women who head households often require special assistance. They have particular disadvantages in securing loans because of low and irregular incomes, lack of collateral, complicated loan procedures, discrimination on the part of male bureaucrats, high interest rates, and lack of legal standing in certain areas. Project authorities may attempt to compensate for the exclusion of women from formal credit facilities by stimulating informal women-only saving cooperatives and by establishing a project loan fund for the specific purpose of house building.

Box 14. Finance

Generally one would think of NGOs as effective in terms of community development, shelter improvement and employment generation, but not the mobilization of financial resources. However, this crucial field is one in which a number of NGOs have found highly innovative solutions.

Probably one of the best known examples is the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, the brainchild of an economics professor of the Chittagong University. Since its launch in 1976, the Bank has become a major operation. Unlike any other in the world, it lends only to the poor, demands no collateral and has an astonishing recovery rate of 98 per cent. Since 1984, the Grameen Bank has been providing housing loans which can be taken when prior loans for economic development activities have been successfully repaid. By November 1986 the equivalent of more than \$US 760,000 had been disbursed in the form of housing loans and used to construct over 1805 houses. A different, though equally impressive approach to finance, is provided by the Sou Sou (penny by penny) Land Limited in Trinidad and Tobago. It operates a traditional group saving system whereby people contribute on a regular basis and take turns to withdraw the total sum of deposits. Sou Sou Land was started as a way of buying land for squatters. It has grown into a major exercise that numbers some 12,000 participants who have invested in the region of \$USS million for the purchase of 1200 hectares of land. A similar experience is that of the Pagtambayayong Foundation in the Philippines. Here people also pool resources to buy land, while the Foundation, as the sum of their small contributions, represents an acceptable partner for financial institutions. All three, interestingly, are the result of one-man initiatives that have grown into very significant success stories as far as finance is concerned. These examples are especially significant as they show how, by combining many small contributions, a major effort can be made and that the poor do in fact represent a viable financial resource.

There are a great many examples of projects where an NGO has seen income-generating activities as the basic prerequisite that will make a shelter project possible, realizing that without a raised level of income people will not be able to afford the planned improvements. In some cases, NGOs have combined the production of building materials with income generation. The Karnataka Slum Dwellers Federation (KKNSS) and the Housing Assistance for Antyodaya Families in Valod, Gujerat, are both examples of such an approach. The Valod project, probably more so than the KKNSS experience, demonstrates that such an approach creates long-term employment opportunities that go well beyond the specific project context.

The case studies in this publication also show that international NGOs often provide the crucial financial input that makes a local effort a reality. Panca Bakti, in Indonesia, the Pagtambayayong Foundation in the Philippines and Valod in India are just a few cases where financial support, either from a philanthropist or an international NGO, has made the project possible. In most instances this crucial input is not a simple present, but provided with clear guidelines in terms of recovery and recipient contributions. Most grants provided by international NGOs in such contexts go to revolving funds that allow the community or the local NGO to continue to develop.

Another area in which NGOs have achieved success is cost recovery. In many larger government programmes there is no personal relationship between the project executors and the beneficiaries, resulting in cost-recovery difficulties. This is especially so if the project does not contain community development components that emphasize the importance of cost recovery and place some responsibility for this on the community organizational system. In some cases reluctance to repay loans or pay rates has been so marked that authorities have found it cheaper just to forget the issue, rather than invest larger numbers of working hours in recovering relatively small sums. Many NGOs, however, given their limited financial resources, have had to put far more emphasis on the recovery process. The most successful NGO projects in this regard have made cost recovery a part of their community development activities and have placed the responsibility for recovery on the shoulders of the community. If the purpose of cost recovery is clearly explained, communities realize that recovery will allow them to reinvest resources and the whole effort is managed by the community. The repayment levels are likely to improve. It should however be pointed out that cost recovery has not always been plain sailing for the NGOs. NGOs have had very real difficulty in weaning communities away from the charity approaches to which they were accustomed in which vested interests within a community can soon destroy new and fragile community structures, with a resulting drop in repayment levels.

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Shelter for the Homeless, the Role of NGOs (Nairobi, 1988).

F. Squatter-settlement upgrading

Squatter settlements should not be looked at as merely a symptom of the housing problem of the urban poor, but rather as their contribution to its solution. There is a growing awareness that demolition of squatter settlements means the destruction of considerable investments in labour and money made by the urban poor. It does not solve any problem, if the poor do not have an alternative to squatting. Authorities gradually realized that, instead of demolishing squatter settlements, they should be regularized and upgraded, so that the existing housing stock is preserved and the housing conditions for the residents are improved. Research on squatter settlements indicated that, once the threat of eviction is removed and the squatters feel secure, they are able and willing to invest their savings in the improvement of their houses.

Box 15. Participation that worked: Villa El Salvador, Lima

In May 1987, a squatter-resettlement project for some 9000 families was established on the fringes of Lima. The residents were faced with the task of developing their houses and community on a stretch of desert land with no services of any kind. It was expected that the settlement would eventually accommodate approximately 250,000 people.

Resettling squatters on uninviting terrain in poor locations is nothing new; nor is there any novelty in the growth of substandard settlements to massive proportions, while authorities look on helplessly or are forced to turn a blind eye, in the case of Villa El Salvador, however, the Government promoted settlement growth, and within five years the desert village was transformed into a strongly organised settlement, with water and electricity connections, street lighting, a community-run bank, a building materials supply depot, kerosene pumps, a nascent popular health centre, and a commonly owned productive enterprise. By this time, it had

renamed itself CUAVES – an acronym for the Autonomous Urban Community of Villa El Salvador.

“Autonomy”, as represented in the decision-making power of an elected community organization, was a central principle in this remarkable experience of community participation. The principle of autonomous decision-making had been encouraged by government authorities after 1968, and it was felt that, through the development of organizations of industrial and rural workers and residents of low-income settlements, a basis would be established for the transfer of political power to the masses. The government would support these organizations but not control them – self-management was essential.

In CUAVES, self-management took the form of a community-organization structure, with leaders at block, residential-group (grouping of blocks), and settlement levels, each level having different responsibilities. With governmental approval and assistance, participation took on a structured hierarchical form: house construction was essentially the role of the plot-holder, blocks of households would collect common refuse (for example), residential groups were charged with the development of communal open spaces (community centres, etc.), and the community leadership formulated policies affecting the settlement as a whole (including employment generation, materials supply, clinic operation, and financing of projects to benefit all residents).

The role of governmental authorities was defined as the partner and “facilitator” – they would provide what the community could not – but an equally important role was to create an environment in which participation could work. Thus, governmental authorities initially offered social workers and community-development support, provided direct access (bypassing middlemen) to essentials, such as cement and kerosene, and made legal provision for a community-controlled bank and health centre.

By April 1976, Villa El Salvador's population numbered approximately 130,000, and its community-participation achievements at block, residential-group, and settlement levels could be summarized as:

- * Construction and financing of over 200 classrooms, mainly of temporary materials
- * Payment of many of the teachers in schools
- * Conducting of an adult-literacy campaign
- * Conducting of health campaigns
- * Establishment of a health centre, with clinic and pharmacy
- * Establishment of a community bank
- * Establishment of a building materials and hardware store
- * Provision of a small bus fleet
- * Operation of a cultural centre
- * Improvement of small parks in open spaces
- * Provision of community centres
- * Setting-up of a self-managed clothing workshop
- * Arrangement of direct fruit and vegetable supplies from the countryside to local markets
- * Installation of kerosene pumps

However, as community efforts grew, so did the demands made upon the Government. Government had provided modern street lighting, half of all families enjoyed access to domestic electricity, water from standpipes was being replaced by domestic connections, and a start was to be made on a sewerage system, but the community demanded increased commitments, on the grounds that it had already provided more than its share. Demands ranged from schools, doctors, and road improvements to employment creation on a massive scale, as well as participation in national economic policy-making. This level of participation, however, extended beyond the limits acceptable to the Government.

The main lessons from the Villa El Salvador experience include:

- * However willing residents are and however independently minded, participation is given greatest scope with the active support of government.
- * Participation in local development as part of a process of national change benefiting the poor is a stimulus to full commitment to community participation.
- * Even “populations of strangers” are capable of collective efforts, if there are perceived common interests, an adequate community organizational structure, and tangible results at the end of participatory efforts.

* Successful participation creates fertile ground for ambitious participatory ventures, from building classrooms to organizing a bank, and when sufficient momentum is created, the process can accelerate.

* This acceleration may lead participation to its ultimate destination: demands for national-level participation.

Source: R. Skinner, "Self-help, community organization and politics: Villa El Salvador, Lima", in P. Ward (ed), *Self-Help Housing. A Critique* (London, Mansell, 1982).

Phases of settlement upgrading projects

(a) Selection of settlement – When a government launches a large-scale squatter-settlement upgrading programme, it formulates criteria to determine which settlements qualify for regularization and upgrading, and which "upgradable" settlements should be regularized for land tenure (title) and accorded priority. The "readiness" of the community, i.e., community organization motivated to participate in the regularization process and infrastructure services, is just one consideration in this critical phase.

(b) Surveying – The collection of data is the first step in planning the regularization and upgrading of a squatter settlement. Various ways of gathering this data are discussed. A profile of the socio-economic situation of the community, including what community organizations exist, and the physical features of the area, including a map, are an essential base of information for project authorities and community participants. The community can play an important role in developing the profile, and help to ensure that women and a women's perspective is included in the analysis of the profile. The survey can also be a good organizing and educational tool for community participation throughout the life of the project.

(c) Community organization – Participation of all residents in the planning and implementation of a squatter-settlement upgrading project requires some form of organization, as discussed in the previous chapter. Identification of local leaders and roles is a necessary and sensitive stage to establish sound linkages at the very start.

(d) Establishment of priorities – Through the surveys and meetings with the community, an inventory of the housing needs and problems of residents can be made, with a view to establishing their suggested priorities. Only with a clear understanding of the relationship between problems, causes, and solutions, will residents be able to make choices from among the options project authorities present.

(e) Concept planning – Once the community and the project authorities have jointly taken the decision on which improvements are most urgently needed in the settlement, they prepare plans on the regularization and upgrading, i.e., identification of constraints and ways to overcome them, such as preservation of the existing housing stock instead of being demolished; and general plans to integrate the settlement into the overall urban services.

(f) Project financing – The costs of the project include the cost of the land, costs of developing infrastructure and services, and sometimes also overheads. The residents have to pay all or most of these costs. Therefore, the total costs must not exceed the paying capacity of the settlement's residents, i.e., the money the people can raise from their daily, weekly or monthly income, and from other sources. In view of the heterogeneity of squatter settlements with respect to income levels of residents, a viably just paying system must be devised with the cooperation of the specific community.

(g) Detailed Planning – Plans are needed, usually covering one neighbourhood, with a map showing details of the proposed infrastructural improvements and, as they may serve as a legal basis for the issuing of title deeds, the exact location, dimensions and land use of individual plots. Along with a list of items on which decisions have to be taken, these are discussed among community members for consensus and presentation to project authorities.

(h) Implementation – Implementation of a squatter-settlement upgrading project entails: (i) regularization, i.e., the issuance of the title deed, and (ii) upgrading, i.e., the construction or improvement of infrastructure and the extension of services. Depending upon the local circumstances, the construction or improvement of infrastructure may require a combination

of work being carried out by community members and contractors hired by the community with the help of project authorities. Local authorities also need to be involved.

(i) Payment of charges – Financing of the project involves community commitment over a long period of time. Many residents take out loans (often denied to women), the recovery of which becomes a problem, not so much of willingness to pay, but of the method of collection. Authorities should develop flexible procedures that do not penalize the poorest groups.

(j) House construction and improvement –The aim of an upgrading project is to create favourable conditions for the improvement of houses by the residents, themselves. The project can assist in this phase, with loans, training and technical assistance, so that the houses can be improved cheaply and efficiently.

G. Sites–and–services schemes

Unlike projects to upgrade squatter settlements (where the residents are on site and develop the settlement themselves) or conventional low–cost housing schemes (where residents buy or rent a completed house), in sites–and–services schemes, authorities prepare the sites and infrastructure, and select residents, who then become responsible for building the houses.

The participatory considerations are similar for both squatter–settlement upgrading and sites–and–services projects, each of which includes infrastructure components. Training modules for infrastructure components were also designed for use in conjunction with the overall upgrading and sites–and–services projects.

The infrastructure modules (e.g., water supply and sanitation, waste disposal, road planning and drainage, credit mechanisms,) offer practical information on each issue and the communities' involvement in their development and maintenance. They discuss community needs, choices of methods and technologies, types of problems that can arise, how to finance, implement, and maintain the systems, and community training and education around these issues.

Several basic questions need to be raised about the participation of poor and low–income families in the implementation of each of these phases: In particular, how can these families be provided with information about the start–up of an upgrading and/or sites and services project? How can they contribute to the project? How can they be ensured benefit from the project? How can they participate in the planning, decision–making and implementation of the project?

It is increasingly recognized that ineffectiveness or failure of projects is most often the result of weaknesses in information and communication processes. The participation of the community takes many forms and has to be guided through appropriate policies. Communication is critical for the formulation and execution of these policies. A communication process involves interaction among all the actors concerned, including the residents of the community, professionals, policy–makers, project authorities and others concerned with planning and implementing human settlements projects. It cannot be assumed that communication will automatically happen; it must be planned for each step of the project, if authorities are serious about listening to the community and respecting their participation.

With respect to the support provided by government authorities, it is necessary to know:

(a) Whether a national policy has been established for the participation of poor, and low–income people in the local projects – with the full involvement of women;

(b) Whether this policy has been communicated effectively to project and local government authorities, and to poor and low–income people in the communities;

(c) Whether government and project authorities have been given an orientation about the desired scope of community participation and its benefits to the community and to the government;

(d) Whether a system has been developed to monitor the project to ensure that the community is involved in the planning and implementation of each phase.

Later sections of this publication will include additional discussion of support from government authorities.

Box 16. Income and employment generating in human settlement programmes

Low-income settlements, such as slums and sites-and-services schemes, are often characterized by lack of formal employment opportunities. It is recognized that only a small percentage will obtain employment in the public sector or in medium-size and large-scale enterprises in the "formal" sector. The majority, particularly women, are looking for employment and income in the informal sector, i.e., small-scale businesses and home-based micro-enterprises.

The human settlements in which people live and work provide the economic, social and physical context which facilitate or impede their ability to generate and increase income. "There are indications that many governments are now moving towards an enabling strategy to mobilize resources and apply entrepreneurial skills for increased housing and infrastructure production, by establishing legislative, institutional and financial frameworks that will enable the formal and informal business sectors, non-governmental organizations and community groups to make optimal contributions to development... a comprehensive approach to human settlements development... can thus achieve economic adjustment with social justice." (Global Strategy for Shelter)

The UNCHS (Habitat) Expert Group Meeting on Developing a Strategy for Incorporating Income and Employment-Generating Activities in Human Settlements Programmes, Nairobi, November 1989, identified technological, skill formation, and work organization questions that should be addressed at the macro and micro levels in order to incorporate income and employment generation in human settlements programmes.

At the micro level (community and household), the Expert Group Meeting identified *inter alia* the following options and measures for implementation:

- * Encourage sub-contracting between large-scale construction firms and small-scale contractors or community-based construction groups.
- * Provide access to land and make available necessary equipment and tools.
- * Provide opportunity for skill formation, training and apprenticeship, and remove gender bias in work and training.

III. Training Approaches and Methods for Community Participation

"...:an increasing number of governments, encouraged by the accumulation of a profound body of research and example, have abandoned the idea of building finished houses as a way to match housing supply and demand, and are instead looking for alternatives. One of these is the shift toward interventionist rather than project oriented policies, where governments support rather than dominate communities, non-government organizations and local enterprises, to organize, build and manage their own housing environments. These policies have in practice found expression in a variety of ways, not least of which is the current emphasis on skills development. Training, therefore, becomes a tool amongst other tools, with which to build a support policy in housing."

Nabeel Hamdi, Department of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, United States of America.

The development of a support policy implies that it must be based on partnerships. Trust and cooperation are needed between professional project staff and participating low-income communities in order to build such partnerships. All of this requires a skill and sensitivity which are not necessarily part of the experience or background of professional planners or housing experts.

Faced with the task of involving the community in the implementation of national support and enabling strategies, human settlements project staff members are often hindered by a limited knowledge of methods and techniques of community participation. They respond as best they can, sometimes with notable success

and at other times with disappointing results.

Because promoting community participation is a priority concern of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the Centre has initiated a programme to support governments and authorities interested in strengthening their capacity to work in and with communities, in finding solutions to the shelter needs of growing urban populations.

This programme is based on an agreement between UNCHS (Habitat) and the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) to conduct training programmes in organized community participation for the improvement of human settlements. The Danida/UNCHS Programme lays primary emphasis on training professional staff members of local governments and housing agencies in the formulation and implementation of community participation strategies. Once trained, the staff members are expected to become facilitators of community action at the grassroots level.

The overall objective of the Programme is to make training in community participation a standard and permanent feature of human settlement improvement schemes. To this end, the Danida/UNCHS Programme has developed approaches to training which consist of:

- (a) Offering courses in organizing and facilitating community participation;
- (b) Testing methods and tools for use by motivators in community participation;
- (c) Introducing methods to monitor and evaluate training courses;
- (d) Providing on-site advisory services for countries requesting assistance;
- (e) Organizing regional seminars to collect, exchange and disseminate information on community participation.

Danida/UNCHS Programme staff offer technical advice, develop collaboration with local counterpart staff, provide inputs to training workshops, and monitor field assignments. Programme implementation varies by country in accordance with the local situation, including such considerations as types of institutional arrangements and the prevailing views of training and community participation.

The first phase of the Danida/UNCHS Training Programme was implemented between January 1984 and June 1987. It consisted of a number of "programme" activities (promotion of community participation in low-income housing in general as well as the production of training and information material) and "project" activities (organization and management of training courses/seminars/workshops and on-the-job training through field assignments in various developing countries). The target groups were project staff members and community leaders in the field of low-income human settlements. The first phase resulted primarily in the generation of a wealth of material and practical knowledge on the subject of community participation for urban low-income housing development programmes.

In-house evaluations by UNCHS (Habitat) staff members and assessment by host countries measured the effectiveness of the Programme and the extent to which its objectives were met in the first phase. It was concluded that the Programme met a felt need in client countries that were facing difficulties with community-level management of low-income housing schemes and with promotion of community participation in the context of urban shelter development. Community participation, it was noted is receiving increasing attention worldwide. However, very few agencies offer adequate training and information in this regard.

On the basis of initial findings, the Programme continued into a second phase from 1988 to 1991. The objective of this phase was to make training in community participation an institutionalized element of low-income housing development programmes and projects and, thus, of national shelter strategies, particularly in developing countries.

The Programme was introduced in Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Zambia, where the training modules described briefly in the previous chapter were presented as a starting point for country training projects. The following overview of project implementation in these three countries reveals the diversity of interpretation in what constitutes "training" and of the consequent variety of project approaches taken.

In general, it was found that the Danida/UNCHS centrally designed training modules can provide overall guidance and resource information on the issues that need to be considered in community participation in settlement-upgrading and sites-and-service projects. However, in all cases, including Zambia, where these modules were formally applied in scheduled courses, there still is a clear need to adapt and tailor training materials to the local situation.

In Bolivia and Sri Lanka, however, the projects adopted an innovative view of training as such, that is gaining an increasing following, i.e., a view of training as an informal participatory process, or a learning-by-doing approach (sometimes referred to as Implementation Training) to bringing about change. To prepare professionals and policy-makers to involve the community in human settlements development, the training itself in these countries was designed as a "participatory process". There were, of course, differences in the processes designed by the Bolivian and Sri Lankan projects tailored to their respective specific circumstances. The three-country programmes are briefly discussed in the following section.

Box 17. A Trainer's Manual

The Danida/UNCHS Community Participation Training Programme has produced *A Trainer's Manual* that is a guide to the use of the training modules described in chapter II. Its purpose is to develop and enhance the skills of those who work to involve poor and low-income communities in the planning and construction of their own settlements.

The selection of learning activities in the manual, the advice on procedures and the preference for a participatory style in training as well as in the actual promotion of housing activities at community levels are based on the following assumptions:

(a) Training is most effective when it uses the experience and skills of those being trained:

- * by involving them in programme planning;
- * by creating learning materials and activities based on their work situations.

(b) Training is most effective when it actively engages the trainees in exercises which are designed to develop the competencies needed for successful work performance.

(c) The best way to encourage trainees to incorporate community participation in their own field activities is to incorporate participatory methods in their training. It would be contradictory if the training of people to adopt participatory approaches was itself non-participatory.

The manual was designed, and primarily used, for training professionals in formal course settings in the application of training methods covered in the course, for the promotion of community participation in the development or upgrading of low-income human settlements. Experience with the training programmes, however, has underscored the need to adapt the series of Danida/UNCHS publications on settlement upgrading and sites-and-services to local conditions, and to create additional country-specific materials that involve the communities in the process. This suggests the additional need for a country training programme using the Trainer's Manual, to review it for any related adaptations that might be needed to assist the officials or community leaders with the adaptation of the publications for use in the promotion of community participation in specific human settlements projects.

To complement the training modules, the Programme has developed video packages based on direct experience acquired during training courses. This audio-visual material and the training modules are available at UNCHS (Habitat) for use by local governments, housing agencies and community groups.

It should be kept in mind that for the implementation-training or learning-by-doing training approach, identified in chapter III as the most effective, it would also be helpful for local training programmes to conduct a training needs assessment, in order to design a set of guidelines for training local trainers that are specifically suited to the informal training process.

Country project experience

A. Bolivia

The Training Project for Community Participation in Improving Human Settlements has been set up as a unit within the Ministry of Urban Affairs in Bolivia. The project has a national coverage in training communities, technical personnel and decision makers involved in the Government's low-income housing programme. In this programme loans are provided to families of building cooperatives for self-construction or

contracted–construction of housing. These cooperatives have to engage technical teams (*contratistas*) consisting of an architect, an engineer and a social worker to guide them through the planning and implementation process of the construction of their homes. The Danida/UNCHS project started with the training of the technical teams of about 83 housing projects. The major aims of this training were to optimize the activities of the *contratistas*, to establish effective channels of communication between all parties involved and to develop a standard package of information on the legal, technical and social aspects of the low–income housing programme.

In an early stage of the project an analysis of specific training needs had been carried out, providing basic information on the characteristics, requirements and potentials of the housing projects. A necessary next step was the development of training materials that covered the issues identified in the needs assessment. The project staff were selected, not only for their competence in developing these materials, but also for the commitment to community participation and to the informal on–site training process and methods. Staff members also master Quechua and Aymara, the principal Indian languages, in addition to Spanish.

A wide variety of training materials were developed through an interactive process between the staff, the *contratistas*, and the residents:

(a) *Flipcharts and training manuals*

- Requirements for self–construction projects
- How should we organize ourselves?
- Women's participation in self–construction projects
- The contract of credit
- The use and maintenance of the house
- Production of soil–cement blocks
- How do we care for our house

(b) *Posters/calendars*

- 1990 calendar on prevention of accidents in the home
- 1991 calendar on house maintenance activities
- Poster on hygiene at home for health protection

(c) *Other audio–visual materials*

- Cartoon magazine on “My house, my health”
- Puzzles and games
- Flannel graphs
- Booklets on water and sanitation
- Social dramas and story telling

These materials are prepared by Project staff, with the assistance of local artists, and are used on–site with the community, its organizations, residents and their children, They also serve as the basis of more formal orientation sessions carried out at various levels by the Project.

The staff worked with the *contratistas* to help them understand the objectives of community participation and how the above materials should be used to involve residents directly in the process of developing their settlement. They also provided on–site technical assistance for the application of the materials in the community. For example, the architect *contratista* learnt how to elicit the assistance of the community with such tasks as laying out the physical plan of the houses and their location on the allotted land. The social worker learned how to employ the creative thinking and energies of the community, for instance, by such actions as organizing a contest among the children about how they envision their house and neighbourhood, with a committee of parents to select the best, by organizing dramatizations for health education on waste disposal.

The Project staff also developed workshops and seminars for regional and national technical teams and Ministry personnel towards a better understanding of the problems and needs of the community and how the community participates in the housing programme. The aim of these training workshops has been to select and apply appropriate forms of education taking into account the heterogeneity of the social groups and the regional and cultural differences within Bolivia.

In addition, the Project made efforts to respond to the special needs of women. A locally produced training manual, "Women's participation in self-construction projects," is designed to sensitize men to women's role as wife, mother and community manager, in an effort to motivate men to share in these tasks as equal partners and to include women in the human settlements project activities. In fact, women should be the main actors in the design of the house. The Project has also run training sessions specifically requested by women and, when necessary, exclusively for women.

As other special needs became apparent, short courses/seminars were also designed around specific issues, i.e., in connection with future sustainability of the housing projects – fund-raising methods, project proposal writing, etc.

The results of the Training Project for Community Participation are difficult to quantify –if training is regarded as a process of change over time, not a product. To give an indication of the volume of training activities table 2 is taken from a project progress report of February 1991.

Table 2. Summary of training activities, July 1988 –February 1991

	1988-91	1990-91	Total
Number of workshops (community level)	67	178	245
Number of participants	4 003	3 394	7 397
Number of workshops (technical level)	8	2	10
Number of participants	434	71	505
Training course (Project team)		6	6
Number of participants		4	4
Workshops for school children		32	32
Number of participants		8019	8019
Total training sessions			297
Total direct beneficiaries			16 455

Further, despite the limitations of the context in which the Training Project has operated the Project has in the second phase:

- Carried out training for 103 projects located in eight of the nine departments of the country, benefitting a total of 5888 families, that is, 41,216 beneficiaries;
- Prepared training materials adapted to the three geographical areas of the country in Spanish and local languages, suitable therefore for a wide range of socio-cultural groups;
- Consolidated a training methodology of participatory learning based on the characteristics of the country context;
- Extended an integral approach to training for human settlements based on the linkage between housing, health and the family;
- At the institutional level, established an inter-institutional network which is the first step towards institutionalization of training as a key component in human settlements planning and social development programmes;
- At the community level apart from the quantitative results expressed as numbers of beneficiaries reached, has strengthened the community organization base to the extent that it is possible to identify sustainable actions by the communities in terms of:
 - Acquiring services;
 - An improved ability to negotiate with authorities the formation of committees to maintain services

– A strengthening of traditional forms of cooperation and mutual help (the *Pasanacu*).

The Project has contributed greatly to a generally increased awareness within the Ministry of Urban Affairs, and other governmental and non-governmental agencies, of the importance of the full participation of communities in the development of human settlements. Another important contribution of the Project was to highlight the lack of a legal framework for the loan scheme, analyse the obstacles and subsequently hire a legal adviser to design the loan contracts and train appropriate officials in their interpretation and use.

The training of the *contratistas* as trainers in the communities has had a direct impact on the motivation and skills of the communities in the 103 building projects with which it has been involved. Before Project intervention, residents accepted housing without basic services. Through learning-by-doing activities and building on existing organizations the Project has increased the confidence of the residents to identify their needs, formulate demands and seek appropriate solutions not only to shelter, but also to health, employment and other needs. They are now directly involved in formulating basic service proposals for community improvements, i.e., basic sanitation, health, education, assistance for small business development, and others. In addition, as a result of interaction with the Project, the FSE resolved not to finance housing without basic services, and has also recognized the need to provide training to staff on social aspects of project planning.

In view of the fact that this report is being presented at the end of the second phase, it is worthwhile presenting some points which would be important to take into account in the formulation of a possible extension of the Programme:

- Based on the experience of the second phase two aspects merit attention in terms of the conceptualization of a Training Programme in the Latin American context.

First, training and community participation in human settlements cannot be seen as ends in themselves but rather instruments by which communities can improve their living conditions. In designing the objectives of a training programme it is therefore fundamental to recognize the existing tradition of cooperation and reciprocity which exists traditionally within communities in Bolivia. As a result, training will only be meaningful for communities when it is combined with the implementation of specific development programmes, that is housing construction, upgrading, installation of services, income generating activities etc.

- Training for improvements in human settlements is largely a hands-on learning process. The same is true for training or sensitizing technicians –architects, special workers and engineers – can only come to appreciate the role of community participation and how it operates, by being directly involved in community programmes.

Secondly, it is also important to make a distinction between participatory learning and formal training. The former involves a process of involving the participants in the analysis and identification of problems, proposing solutions and carrying out effective actions. In the latter, the trainer instructs or imparts knowledge to a group of participants. This approach is not invalid, indeed, a large proportion of learning is based on giving/receiving new information. Nonetheless in the context of the UNCHS Training Programme for Community Participation in Human Settlements Projects, the trainer and the trainee are not fixed roles. The relationship is one of mutual learning, that is, the trainer learns from the knowledge base, the customs and culture of the community, as well as imparting information or new ideas to the community.

Box 18. Community development councils

An important element in carrying out the human settlements project cycle in Sri Lanka is the formation of community development councils (CDCs). The CDCs evolved through the practice of what was called “participatory housing” in the early 1980s in Sri Lanka, and was adopted as a prototype to be generalized, when the Urban Housing Sub Programme of the Million House Programme began in 1985. The main focus is on the urban poor – through the *sevana sarana* workshops, where concentration is on street families, canalbank dwellers, railway line dwellers, women headed households, elderly and disabled.

The CDCs are established in most existing low-income settlements. Their role has gained importance over time as support to a grassroots process of translating demand into housing delivery. The National Housing

Development Authority (NHDA) has been instrumental in increasing CDC involvement in the decision-making process and in project execution and management. In the first four years of the Urban Housing Sub-Programme, procedures have been established and made operational, to transfer to the CDCs a number of tasks in the project cycle ranging from action-planning to the execution of contracts for the construction of services, to the formulation and monitoring of community-building guidelines. The key to the success of the process is the active participation of individual householders and the strengthening of community action and management at the settlement level.

NHDA has devised a strategy to achieve programme aims of the CDCs through the creation of an independent, practical, in-the-field forum and set of resources. An all-island, self-sustaining CDC Resource Centre should house and facilitate various NHDA, NGO and other agency efforts to strengthen CDCs in a way that is not divorced from their work nor externally imposed or controlled. This forum should complement, not compete with, existing training institutes and activities. It would be the focal point of a programme of project support and capacity building for urban low-income community-based organizations and their network of leaders and *praja sahayakas* (community agents).

The Project's plan for sustainability, is to institutionalize the concept of a community participation process at all levels of government and non-governmental interventions, rather than to establish a training project, *per se*. The forward-looking strategy is to identify potential social promoters within the community and move towards linking them with local and regional authorities (town councils, development corporations) in order to build local frameworks to sustain the training process. The Project role, therefore, is that of a bridging agency for the concept of the training process, linking communities with local institutions and involving support of the central Ministry of Urban Affairs.

Given the above, an interinstitutional strategy which brings together the principal actors-community-based organizations, cooperatives, non-government organizations in coordination with State and private institutions – is the most likely arrangement to undertake the Danida/UNCHS Training Programme and achieve its immediate objective, that is, that community participation becomes an institutionalized element in low income housing and shelter strategies.

Institutionalization in this sense is conceptualized not as the establishment of a permanent entity but rather through an inter-institutional and inter-sectorial strategy; the goal is that community participation will be adopted as a central principle of development programmes.

B. Sri Lanka

Since 1985 the Danida/UNCHS Training Programme has been working with the Urban Housing Division of the National Housing Development Authority (NHDA) in Sri Lanka, where it is making a direct contribution to the Urban Housing Sub-Programme of the Million Houses Programme (MHP). The fact that as a matter of national policy the Government has a firm commitment to devolve to the community level all the operations related to the housing process provides an excellent framework for a training project in community participation in this country.

In the second phase of the Programme (1988–1991) the Training Project was integrated into NHDA and aims at supporting NHDA in its efforts to formulate participatory strategies and methodologies for support-based housing programmes for low-income groups. This is a process-oriented approach to housing programmes that emphasizes decentralization of decision-making, implementation, and management as a fundamental principle. The NHDA conceptual framework is supported by a set of procedures and guidelines for direct action of communities and householders in project planning, execution and management. The approach is called the Community Action Planning and Management Strategy (CAP) and is made operational at the settlement level by interactive workshops, organized in cooperation with community development councils. These workshops use an informal learning approach and require on-going community inputs at every stage of the project cycle.

The cycle starts with two-day workshops, organized to introduce the CAP approach and to prepare a development programme for a settlement. A representative group of community members, health officials and planners participate at this workshop. The key mechanism in this process is the so-called “options and trade-offs” concept. Each problem may have several solutions, and options may call for different trade-offs. The professionals have an important role to play by making the tradeoffs and their implications clear to the community, while the selection of the option is left entirely to the community and individual families. This interactive process typically goes through the following steps:

1. Identification – What are the problems?
2. Strategies – What are the approaches?
3. Options – What are the possible actions?
4. Planning – Who does what, when, and how?
5. Monitoring – How to follow-up, what to learn?
6. Presentation – How to make everyone aware of the proposals?

In this approach people are organized for action for change, rather than being engaged in formal courses, role-plays, or simulation games. Supporters (the officials) and implementers (community representatives) are partners in a learning and problem-solving process which is directed and generated out of participatory workshops. The Project uses the term “implementation training activities” as an umbrella heading under which training workshops and exchange visits take place. “Action is the best leader, and learning by doing is the best teacher.”

Such a two-day workshop is a core activity since it (a) provides the community with an opportunity for obtaining a holistic view of its socio-economic situation and to identify its main concerns and priorities; (b) exposes the community to the opportunities available for life improvement as well as the constraints and obstacles that need to be overcome; and finally (c) initiates the preparation of an action plan to deal with the problems of priority concern.

At the end of the two days a settlement upgrading plan prepared by the community members in partnership with the officials is ready for implementation. However, during implementation certain issues require detailed planning and discussion. Whenever an issue is confronted a short half-day issue-specific workshop is held by the officials and community members to discuss, think and work out how the problem is going to be resolved. Some of the routine hardware and software issue-specific workshops are:

(a) Hardware workshops

- Planning principles and technical guidelines for land regularization 1/2 to 1 day
- Community building guidelines and rules 1/2 day
- Orientation to housing information services day 1/2 day
- Small house loan disbursement and recovery day 1/2 day
- Community contract system 1/2 day
- Community management and maintenance of services 2 to 3 days services

(b) Software workshops

- Savings and credit options for enterprise 1/2 day
- Orientation to thrift and credit cooperative societies 1/2 day
- Principles for enterprise plots 1/2
- Orientation to women's mutual help groups 1/2 day
- Pre-school management 1/2 day
- CDC leadership orientation 1 day
- Orientation of mothers to: child development 1/2 to 1 day

At every workshop, discussion and interaction with the community generates information – information for community decision-making. Therefore, Community Action Planning and Management can also be considered as an information-generation process for communities to think, decide and act effectively.

This non-formal and training/learning process enables low-income groups to become involved in action for change, using their own real-life conditions as the framework in which learning takes place, in contrast to formal training in classroom settings or hypothetical case studies. This information has also been used as the basis for preparing publications on these issues, which in turn can be used at other software and hardware workshops. The overall number of workshops held during 1988–1990 suggest that the CAP process made a significant contribution to the capacity build-up of urban low-income communities in the second phase of the Project.

Table 3. Implementation training workshops (CAP)

	1985–87	1988–90	Change

Number of workshops	44	157	+ 113
Number of participants	1 127	4956	+ 3 729
Number of women participants	?	1 271	?
Number of settlements Involved	14	55	+ 31
Number of urban local Authorities	9	18	9

Another important development is the sizeable decline over time in the unit cost per workshop participant, a factor which should greatly facilitate the multiplication of this methodology on a national scale, and ensure its sustainability.

Table 4. Unit cost per workshop participant (SLRs)

1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
197	161	46	27	30	31 ^a

^a Settlement-level workshops only

Through the interactive learning process (non-formal training/learning concept) the Project has been instrumental in helping NHDA develop the skills of both officials and community representatives to integrate these participatory approaches and techniques at the following levels.

- (a) Settlement
- (b) Urban local authority
- (c) NHDA district office
- (d) NHDA urban housing division

The NHDA field workers from the function as facilitators at the community level. There is no formal training of trainers *per se*. Several officers at NHDA have been "sensitized" in the concept of community participation; they are now at a stage where they carry out the implementation training activities independently of the Project advisors. In this approach, it is emphasized that the objective of training is the formation not just of large numbers of trained individuals, but of trained leaders of organizations who can effectively formulate and execute housing policies and programmes.

The key issue in the training approach and methods used in Sri Lanka in settlement-level implementation and decision-making, is that choices about implementation training activities should be flexible and open-ended. This allows community members to have a stake in the settlement, using their own circumstances as the framework in which learning takes place. Participation of the community is more likely when options are identified by officials, and choices are allowed to be made on-site. This not only benefits the community, but the officials as well, because tackling settlement development on a community scale tailors action to the community's own style and capacity and facilitates the level of both speed and scale.

Box 19. Community contracts

A special feature of the Urban Housing Sub Programme in Sri Lanka, is the Community Contracts System. The concept has been treated in rural areas since 1980, and was applied to urban squatter communities in the mid-1980s.

Community contracts are an innovative attempt to involve the communities in the construction of their physical infrastructure. The National Housing Development Authority (NHDA) has contracted out to the communities the construction of such common amenities as footpaths, drains, community halls, bathrooms and toilets. Briefly, the procedure is as follows: the community forwards a request for a development project to the NHDA extension officer. In some cases with a physical plan prepared by the community, in others, with designs provided by NHDA. A bill of quantities is subsequently prepared by NHDA. The community development council (CDC) appoints a construction committee, agreements are signed, and an advance of the contracted sum is given to the CDC. The CDC proceeds to hire skilled and unskilled labourers within the community, who executes the construction work.

This type of contracting has had an impact on increasing employment for skilled and semi-skilled community members, providing on-the-job technical, administrative and management training to the community, and at the same time, maximizing the quality of work, as the community has a stake in the product. Furthermore, the earnings and profits stay within the community. The maintenance and repair of these facilities is greatly

enhanced since the community was involved in the planning and construction and will feel a greater responsibility for the amenity. Workshops on the community contract system procedures have been carried out at the settlement level.

During 1986–1990, over 100 such community contracts worth about SLRs 5.4 million had been awarded by NHDA. A 1989 analysis of the experiences with community contracts revealed several concerns, one of which was that in the five-year period only 10 settlement-level workshops on the issue of community contracts had been held. This led to the development of a set of procedures for open accountability in the ward and execution of these contracts. Among these procedures was the requirement that a half-day workshop must be held in the settlement before any contract is given out and that the contract must be signed by the community leaders at the end of this workshop. Adherence to these procedures has been spotty, indicating the need for continual monitoring as an important feature of community contracts.

Community contracts and the creation of a network of community extension agents (*praja sahayakas*) operating through a Community Resource Centre (CRC) are innovative attempts by the Sri Lankan Government to treat low-income communities as 'resources and sources'. With the formation of the Women's Mutual Help Groups (WMHG) in 1989 by the *praja sahayakas*, women's development issues entered the activity plan of this Project. It should be noted that there is a relatively high percentage of women-headed households (estimated to be around 40 per cent) in the slums and shanties of Colombo. In addition, women in low-income settlements face daily pressures of indebtedness from money-lenders, drug and alcohol addiction of their menfolk, and erosion of the nutritional status of children faced with a sharp rise in food prices. The WMHGs are self-managed small groups engaged in savings and credit and other activities effecting women and children in particular. An emergency loan fund is operated by each group using the regular savings of the members.

Another important development under the *praja sahayaka* programme was the assistance provided to community members to gain access to bank credit to finance micro-enterprises. This enterprise-support programme was tried out in three communities through the CDCs, where about 50 people obtained bank loans. There were some initial difficulties in the repayment of loans as there was little peer pressure or assistance with the process of repayment. The *praja sahayakas* are exploring alternative frameworks for the programme, such as the organization of homogeneous small groups of people having more or less similar economic interests.

The urban programme in Sri Lanka which started out basically as a housing improvement programme (confined to the development of physical infrastructure) has over the years, and with the encouragement of the Project, gone beyond and diversified its activities to become a livelihood improvement programme of the urban poor. It is important to recognize that besides housing there are many other entry points into livelihood and environmental improvement; in fact, virtually any issue of concern to the urban poor communities could be an entry point. The central point is that the process – whatever the entry point – does not stagnate; that it goes beyond the original issue into an upward spiral of learning activities for integral development.

In 1990 a slum and shanty improvement unit was set up within the Colombo Municipal Council. The Community Action Planning and Management (CAP) methodology is the guiding principle for this unit in working together with the low-income communities. The knowledge and experience built up in the Urban Housing Division of NHDA has been transferred to this unit through a number of key officials, who are heading and working in the unit. Further dissemination of the CAP approach has taken place through learning-by-doing. At present the unit has worked out a plan of operations to gradually cover the majority of slum and shanty areas in Colombo City.

Box 20. *Praja sahayakas*

The DANIDA/UNCHS Training Programme contributed to the creation of *praja sahayaka* posts (PS) – community or extension agents – an innovation undertaken as a pilot project in response to a need for strengthening the activities of the CDCs. The PSs (men and women) are usually people from a low-income community who have worked as activists in shelter improvement programmes in their communities or neighbourhoods, and are willing to go beyond to work as extension agents in other communities. In addition to the knowledge and experience in shelter programmes, they are expected: to have proved ability to operate fairly, and in cooperation with governmental and non-governmental agencies, and not to have involvement in partisan politics. They are expected not to gamble, or to indulge in addictive drugs or excessive alcohol consumption.

The *praja sahayakas* provide links among the CDCs, as well as to external development networks. They also

work with special emphasis programmes, i.e., community mobilization, women's development, and community economic development. They assist community members set up community-based organizations (CBOs), raise awareness of settlement problems, search for solutions, and assist in implementation of projects. They promote openness in the administration and maintenance of the CBO community activity. The PS also monitors and reviews community development activities.

In a relatively short period (between March 1989 when they began, and January 1991), they demonstrated their potential as extension agents and succeeded in building a sound base for future action with the development of their own community-based organization – the Praja Sahayaka Service (PSS). It has been recognized that the use of community leaders in project implementation signifies an important step in the capacity build-up of communities and the implementation of project activity hitherto carried out by the NHDA officials had been brought closer to the communities. *Guidelines for Praja Sahayaka Working in the Community Development Programme*, was published by NHDA, Ministry of Housing and Construction in March 1989 and will help strengthen and expand the PS network.

The creation and facilitation of this type of people's organization is not normally done by government or by a United Nations agency, but more usually is a function of development NGOs. Although middle-level managers have been reluctant to transfer decision-making and power to a people's organization, it should be noted that the top management of NHDA has given positive support to the independent development of the PSS.

Support from the Training Project to this municipal unit is minimal and will gradually be withdrawn to ensure sustainability of the operations beyond the period of external assistance.

The main tools of institutional support to community action being developed in Sri Lanka are the community resource centre (CRC) and the community agents (*praja sahayakas*). To address clearly the issue of consolidation of project methodology and institutional arrangements, consideration is being given to placing a training team into the appropriate government unit to provide training support to the CRCs and *praja sahayakas*. Community support will be encouraged through NGOs and establishment of women's funds, and back-up institutional support provided by NHDA and the recently established Urban Programme Unit of the Ministry of Decentralization and Public Affairs. Through this structure, it is expected that communities can manage their own development agenda and determine the type of support needed from governmental and non-governmental agencies.

C. Zambia

The Government of Zambia adopted a policy in the field of low-income housing in 1972 for the integrated upgrading of squatter settlements. In 1974 a special Housing Project Unit was established in Lusaka, in conjunction with the World Bank's first sites-and-services projects; but despite the existing policy, only a few projects were realized. In 1983 the Government, through its National Commission for Development Planning, requested UNCHS (Habitat) assistance with training in community participation.

With the start of the first phase of this Project, an attempt was made to standardize and make permanent the training of middle-level government staff in the improvement of urban settlements and to create a cadre able to develop and carry out the improvement of settlement and sites and services programmes.

The Division of Decentralization of the Office of the Prime Minister was designated the coordinating and implementing agency. Because the Zambian Project followed the route of training through "formal" courses using the UNCHS (Habitat)-prepared modules discussed in the previous chapter, it was logical for the Division to lodge the Project in an existing training centre, the Chalimbana Local Government Training Institute.

The Training Programme adopted on-the-job training as its methodology. To support this concept, appropriate training materials have been developed, as discussed in the previous chapter. They cover a wide range of techniques for community involvement in project execution. The subjects of these training modules ranged from technical issues in dealing with community participation, such as water supply, sanitation, drainage and waste management, to organizational aspects like community leadership, problem-solving and decision-making, and modules on project support communication issues, dealing with the production of information materials, the use of audio-visuals, conducting meetings etc,

The training was organized in the form of on-the-job learning in active on-going projects in a combination of five to six weeks of formal course workshops and about seven to eight weeks of on-site non-formal field training in the settlement projects. The project process generally included the following steps:

1. Selection of settlement
2. Obtaining the Council's consent
3. Introduction of Project to leadership
4. General leadership briefing
5. General residents' briefing
6. Formation of residents' committee
7. Community surveys
8. Prioritization after survey analyses
9. Briefing on the priority project
10. Preparation of community project document
11. Household registration
12. Establishment of a community site office
13. Formation of a field team
14. Allocation of council funds
15. Community investments
16. Opening a project bank account
17. Banking community money
18. Estimating community project costs
19. Construction of prototypes
20. Project implementation

In this process the Council staff (initially guided by the Project) is responsible for undertaking the step-by-step sequence of activities. They are faced with a variety of problems ranging from simple administrative and communication issues to more complex project management and technical skills. The best way of learning to take these responsibilities is by doing. A checklist of activities has been developed to guide the trainees through this process. The Training Institute is providing back-up services and is monitoring the progress of the individual project activities.

This on-site training directly involves the district Council officers and the communities themselves in carrying out settlement upgrading. The interaction is aimed at the realization of consistent and permanent improvement programmes in low-income settlements and the further consolidation of community participation training as an integral part of the Government's policy on housing for low-income people.

This approach has raised a new series of practical communication issues at the district council level. In a country without a history of community participation, the Project operated largely through the political structure of a one-party system. Section, branch and ward chairmen, are normally identified as community leaders. However, the local political leaders, by the nature of the selection procedures, are not always spokespersons for the community's real needs; (in particular, women and women's perspectives are not well represented at the district level.) The Project, therefore, introduced popular elections of "residents' committees." Still, branch and section leaders are elected to several committees, while others have no political members at all. These factors reinforce the need for non-formal on-site training and for the elaboration of learning-by-doing training materials that support involvement of the residents in defining their priorities and options.

Training materials are being produced locally to complement the core curricula used in the training courses. They are being designed to foster effective interaction between the district councils and the settlement communities through the entire project process. This material had to be adjusted for use by participants in the shanty townships who have a low literacy level. Special manuals, picture stories and flip-charts and local case studies were developed on subjects such as road planning, women and land, the use of audio-visuals, project document writing, ventilated improved pit latrines, revolving loan funds, production of fibre-cement roofing sheets and solid waste management.

Fifteen trainees from seven district councils (community development and housing officers) were trained in 1988, 1989 and in 1990 (of the 45 trained, 10 were women). In 1988, 60 per cent of the training officers remained involved in settlement upgrading training programmes, 70 per cent in 1989, and 80 per cent in 1990. The increase is related to the introduction of a pre-condition in the form of a written agreement between the Permanent Secretary and the District Councils, that the officers will be provided incentives to continue to work in community settlements. These agreements are monitored by the Project.

The principle of on-the-job training and the strong relation between residential training in the institute and implementation in the field not only proved to be difficult but also exposed the direct and underlying problems in the urban councils and Zambia's settlement upgrading programmes. The clear identification of these problems by the National Steering Committee of the programme and the proposed solutions by this Committee have contributed to setting up an effective strategy of shelter development in Zambia. A National Seminar on Human Settlements Development through Community Participation and continuous sensitization of senior government officials have helped in institutionalizing these new approaches. The commitment to settlement upgrading and community participation as a strategy to achieve these goals has gained a remarkable support in the seven urban district councils during the second phase of the training project.

At present 15 different upgrading projects are undertaken in the seven urban district councils involved in the Training Programme. The population of these areas ranges from 5000 to 30,000 people per settlement, reaching a total of 180,000 people (30,000 families). An estimated 20 per cent of these families is actively involved in the upgrading process.

The project experienced difficulties in carrying out community-based activities in combination with human resource development in a situation which can be characterized by a "wait-and-see" attitude by communities: what would the Government provide for them? It was identified that the collaboration between council staff and the communities was hampered by the lack of proper attitude, communication and other skills among the council staff. In order to understand that situation better the relationship between the council staff and the community was analysed. After Independence in 1964, the councils continued to operate in mainly the same decision-making pattern as was practised before. This meant that communities hardly participated in any decision and that the Council staff took decisions on behalf of the communities. In the early years after Independence the Government of Zambia had been in a position to provide most services and facilities (roads, water-supply, clinics, schools) free to communities. Less revenue from copper exports combined with a rapid urban population growth reduced the provision of services and facilities drastically. However, the people still expect the same from the Government and its employees. These issues have been addressed in the Training Programme and a marked difference in attitude of the participants was noted thereafter.

As the projects in the district councils developed, the Community Participation Training Programme needed to elaborate or diversify the training in two directions. First, the more applied community development training of council community development officers, who only had basic knowledge, and secondly, technical training in appropriate technology of water supply, sanitation and road planning needed to be extended.

The field experience of the participants has clearly identified a need for further elaboration of these subjects. In a third phase of the Training Programme these additional required skills will be catered for not only within the curriculum of the Community Participation Training Programme, but also by collaborating with other training institutions in Zambia, alerting them on these practical requirements and assisting them with the development of suitable training materials in these fields.

In the third phase of the Training Programme, a further expansion of the settlement upgrading activities is planned in three ways:

- (a) By penetrating more into the communities currently involved in the training programme and getting more residents directly involved in decision making, financial contributions and physical participation;
- (b) By engaging more settlements within the existing seven district councils in community-based upgrading projects;
- (c) By starting up projects in other district councils, including them in the Training Programme.

This third phase of the Training Programme (1991-1994) should also institutionalize the training in community participation to the extent that Zambia will be able to undertake this training without external assistance. The trend to that effect is right, the training capacity is increasing over time and also the Government's commitment in financial terms would make it possible to take up the Training Programme as a permanent feature of low-income human settlements development.

Conclusion

These three Projects of the Danida/UNCHS Community Participation Training Programme have demonstrated the need and, given appropriate local arrangements, the feasibility, of assisting governments with the

incorporation of community participation concepts and plans in their human settlements “enabling” policies.

Each country situation and stage of human settlements policy/programme was distinct and influenced the approach taken by the Danida/UNCHS Training Project. Some general conclusions that can be drawn on training approach and methods include the need for:

- (a) Government endorsement of an “enabling” human settlements policy and the articulation of its support for full community participation in its housing/human settlements projects.
- (b) Recognition of the importance of human resource development, including preparation of government officials at local levels to put into effect the national community participation policies, which must be accompanied by clear communication with local authorities on the importance attached to community–based organizing, on the need for linkages with non–governmental organizations;
- (c) Institutionalizing the community participation concept in related government ministries and agencies, plus a plan to operationalize training for community participation based upon the assessment of training needs;
- (d) Centrally prepared training modules, which although theoretical and designed for universal application, can serve as references for designing country–specific formal and non–formal training materials;
- (e) Locally prepared training materials, in local idioms, that are the basis for an interactive learning process, or implementation–training (the Bolivian and Sri Lankan approaches are primarily in this mode, and Zambia has recognized the need for a move in that direction);
- (f) A gender analysis of the training needs, approach selected, staff and trainees identified and the materials used;
- (g) An inter–regional exchange of the training approaches and methods used in order to improve the training process both in depth and breadth.

IV. National and Local Strategies for Community Participation in Human Settlements Development

“In order to ensure that appropriate approaches are adopted by all the actors involved and that their activities are mutually supporting, an integrated national strategy is necessary. The institutional arrangements for drawing up a national shelter strategy must ensure political commitment at the highest possible level and an understanding of and contribution to the strategy on a sufficiently wide basis.”

The Global Shelter Strategy to the Year 2000

National shelter strategies are the necessary next step after the Global Strategy for Shelter. The central and most powerful principle of the GSS is the “enabling” principle, which urges national governments to harness the full potential and resources of all government and non–governmental actors in the development of human settlements. UNCHS (Habitat) has set in motion a comprehensive support system of international and regional workshops, publications and technical assistance to governments in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of national shelter strategies. This support system recognizes the critical differences in the nature and scale of countries’ shelter problems and the roles and performance of their public–sector housing–related agencies. As a result, not only national, but also local strategies are needed, in order to build on positive developments in the shelter sector. Community participation is a cornerstone of the national and local strategies for human settlements development.

Some countries have a longer history of governmental and non–governmental participatory policies and practices than others. Countries that have not had a tradition of involving their citizens in decision–making and development processes will inevitably need new institutional arrangements to carry out their strategies successfully. Even countries with a strong tradition of participation can benefit from new and innovative

institutional arrangements that open a negotiation process among all the actors involved, particularly in low-income communities.

“Political will” is universally identified as the principal requisite for implementation of any national strategy or programme of the magnitude of the Global Strategy for Shelter. For a government to manifest its will that low-income communities participate in its human settlements process, however, more than rhetorical references are required. Also needed are clearly stated policies on community participation, operational plans with defined responsibilities and, accountability systems with recognition for those who succeed.

A. Policies

One of the most tangible ways for a government to demonstrate its commitment to community participation in human settlements policy is to use an approach that is integral and participatory in the formulation of policy. From the beginning, the planning would: (a) include women as well as men (and particularly the poor of all ethnic groups); (b) respond to women's perspectives as well as men's on the use and function of private and communal living and working space; and (c) ensure the coordinated services of agencies that take into account the practical family needs for water, sanitation, waste disposal and recycling, health, child care, and education. With particular relevance to housing, institutional forms of discrimination would be eliminated by creating equal rights to land ownership and equal access to credit. There would be opportunities for employment and/or income-generating enterprises for both men and women, with access to transport and markets. Community-based organizations involving women's groups would be included in national and local government planning and implementation of programmes favourable to sustainable development and respect for the environment.

A clear formulation of the policies underlying a national strategy is an indispensable first step, but an important corollary is the design of a system of information and communication that reaches out to all levels of government and to low-income communities. Too often, low-income populations, particularly women, are excluded from the information chain. If low-income men and women do not have knowledge of the plans, programmes and resources available to improve their communities and are not aware of their actual and potential roles, as well as of the constraints to participation in human settlements programmes, they are unlikely to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens. A communication system implies a two-way flow, that is, knowledge of policies and plans made available to the people, with a mechanism for them to provide feedback to officials about their concerns and recommendations.

Multiple economic imperatives press in on developing countries because of the global economic crisis and national security issues – structural adjustment, trade imbalances, arms build-up, and national debt. Therefore, it is essential that human settlement policies be designed with an understanding of the links between these policies and the overall economy. If policies affecting the shelter sector are favourable, the sector contributes to the economic development, and the gains of economic development are translated into sectoral improvements. If the wrong policies are in place, the links will fail; and both sectoral and overall objectives will suffer. Advances in meeting the challenges of urban growth and the development of healthy human environments depend largely on national priorities.

Box 21. The emergence of new attitudes and new strategies

Over the last 15 years, increasing numbers of governments have recognized that a concentration on “public housing” was having little impact and that squatter eradication simply exacerbated the problem. There was also a growing recognition by governments that people's migration is a logical response in the search for employment opportunities (or for earning an income which just permits them to survive); many studies have shown the high concentration of new productive investment in relatively few (or just one or two) cities within each country and the extent to which government policies or investments have tended to favour such a concentration. Illegal settlements in cities are thus understood as the logical response of city dwellers solving their own accommodation needs. And the exclusion of the low-income majority from the legal land market is recognized as the fundamental cause of these settlements. The dynamism shown by those who organize the construction of their own housing in illegal settlements, first noted by such researchers as Turner and Mangin in the early 1960s, is better appreciated. So, too, is the fact that public projects, whether for public housing or for sites-and-services schemes, often ill-match the needs of many low-income individuals and households in terms of location and cost (even when subsidized).

There seem to be certain crucial public interventions which together form a coherent strategy for addressing the problem of poor housing and living conditions in third world cities. Among them are:

- (a) Recognizing the legal right of those living in illegal settlements to be there (as in many municipalities in Peru or urban centres in the United Republic of Tanzania or Zambia): this should be complemented with the public provision of basic infrastructure and services guided by their inhabitants' expressed priorities and with their collaboration in implementation;
- (b) Reformulating building and planning codes so that these do not demand unrealistic—ally high standards which lower—income groups cannot attain;
- (c) Support for the widespread production of cheap building materials and common components, fixtures and fittings – as has been tried with some success at project level, although not at city or national level;
- (d) Release of unutilized or under—utilized land and other measures to ensure land sites for housing are available which provide legal alternatives to squatter settlements (as in Managua, Nicaragua, and several Tunisian cities); in this case, care should be taken to ensure sufficient space for sports, recreation and children's play and a good connection to the main centres of employment or income for lower—income groups. Of course, basic infrastructure and services should also be provided;
- (e) Strengthening of local/city governments to ensure steady improvements in the provision of water, sanitation, storm drainage, garbage removal, health care services, roads and public transport to new and existing residential areas. While this will usually demand changes in national governments' attitudes to local government roles and responsibilities, note should be taken of the innovative ways in which conditions were improved by the government of Curitiba in Brazil in the late 1970s (Rabinovitch, J., “Does this bus lake us anywhere? The case of Curitiba”).
- (f) Recognition that government support to community groups formed by lower—income residents can provide the most coherent and effective way of improving existing “illegal settlements” and developing new low—income settlements; direct support to community groups has been tried with some success in Hyderabad, India. This can provide the means for coordinating the different inputs of the various sectoral government agencies or ministries since the community groups' representatives coordinate these different inputs in their district or neighbourhood;
- (g) Changing housing—finance systems so these make available cheap loans to lower—income groups and to community groups without unrealistic demands for collateral. A foundation supporting mutual self—help housing in El Salvador found a very low rate of arrears or defaults on loans despite the low income of those participating; the sense of community and household responsibility within the project – since the participants helped establish priorities as well as in the construction – was one key reason;
- (h) Pilot schemes and institutions to find the best approach to resolving complex tenure problems for long term tenants; the aim being to increase tenants' control over their accommodation and give them the possibility of purchasing their accommodation – either individually or collectively. In many countries, special programmes will be needed for central city tenements; new approaches to this problem are being tried by a slate foundation in Salvador, Brazil, in the rehabilitation (with self—help from the tenants), in the transfer of ownership to the tenants, and in job creation.

Various governments have accepted in part this kind of approach – although none has recognized that its effectiveness depends on coordinated action in each of these eight areas of public intervention. There is no experience to draw on which puts together all of these in a single city, let alone within a “national programme”.

Source: Jorge E. Hardoy and David Satterthwaite, “Shelter infrastructure and services in third world cities”, *Habitat International*, vol. 10, No. 3.

B. Operational plans

Human settlements development deals with a series of interlocked issues: physical elements – shelter, transport, finance, work, food, sanitation; social elements – education, health care, environment; and the cultural fabric of a country – its family and community life. The interdependent nature of these conditions may contrast sharply with the orientation and structure of existing institutions charged with operations. These tend to be fragmented, and to work within relatively narrow, independent mandates and closed decision-making processes. “The real world of interlocked economic and ecological systems will not change; the policies and institutions concerned must. This new awareness requires major shifts in the way governments and individuals approach issues of environment, development, and international cooperation.” (*Our Common Future*)

One shift that is gradually occurring is to be seen in the moves by many governments toward decentralization and the devolution of responsibilities from the central to other levels of government, and towards institution-building, particularly at local and municipal levels. Decentralization has come to be viewed as “a political concept responding to local demands for self-determination and is characterized by dividing power into tiers such as the centre, provincial and district spheres of authority. In this process, different powers and activities are entrusted with institutions at different levels which in turn are governed by representatives from those levels.” (*Institutional Arrangements for Regional Development Planning*, UNCHS (Habitat), Nairobi, 1989)

The devolution of responsibility from centralized to local agencies does not, however, automatically translate into interaction among agencies and sectors for integral development. Nor, does it necessarily mean that local municipalities are willing or prepared to devolve any of the decision-making for a participatory human settlements process to local communities.

The experience of the past decade indicates that it is important to strengthen local authorities. When they are weak, human settlements development and community participation are bound to suffer. There are many causes of weakness, including inadequacy of funds from the central government, inability or unwillingness to generate local revenues, poorly developed capacity for operational and fiscal management, scarcity of a trained workforce, and lack of career prospects for those who choose to work at the local level. It is at this level, however, that policies and plans for community participation in human settlements are implemented; and it is here that the burdens placed on settlement institutions are growing most rapidly.

In the *Global Report on Human Settlements, 1986* it is urged that governments consider carefully the critical role of local bodies in the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies and operational plans for human settlements. Measures to support local government require an additional flow of resources from central government, as well as the broadening of local revenue-raising powers. However, a number of measures, mostly of a legal nature, can be taken which do not necessarily imply the allocation of additional financial resources. Some of the measures identified in the *Global Report* deal with planning, administration, and training; as described below.

While governments must pay primary attention to the most pressing and visible problems to meet the basic needs – land, basic shelter and minimal services – of their growing populations, they cannot lose sight of the equally important long-term need for effective administration. Some of the basic principles of sound administration are:

- (a) Organizational structures in tune with their defined functions;
- (b) Power and authority commensurate with well-defined responsibility;
- (c) Managers accountable for specific programmes;
- (d) Service delivery constantly monitored, and standard systems of rewards and penalties;
- (e) Continuity and stability of personnel, supplemented by on-going training.
- (f) Availability of qualified staff, plus appropriate arrangements to encourage secondment and exchange of staff.

The centralization of contacts with the public has overloaded the administrative capacity of metropolitan and other large urban centres, producing inefficiency and the unproductive use of essential staff. The *Global Report* suggests that the decentralization of these services, such as payment of taxes and fees, applications for licenses and permits, requests for connection to essential public services, and the handling of inquiries and complaints, can be accomplished by establishing administrative offices in residential neighbourhoods, staffed in part by volunteers from community organizations.

Establishing such neighbourhood municipal offices could provide:

- (a) Improved delivery of administrative Services;
- (b) Direct contact between local government officials and residents;
- (c) Reduction of public-contact functions at central offices, enabling employees to concentrate on vital planning and administrative functions;
- (d) Information on neighbourhood issues and problems from the community, on the basis of which policies can be reviewed, negotiated and formulated;
- (e) Openings for community participation in staffing basic administrative services, which can increase the efficiency of local government by freeing personnel for other purposes.

Box 22. Central support for effective decentralization in Venezuela

In Latin America, local authorities have been enormously strengthened in recent decades by quasi-autonomous municipal developing institutions (MDIs) set up with central government funds, often supplemented by financial or technical support from multilateral or bilateral aid agencies. MDIs provide stable and efficient mechanisms through which national and international institutions can confidently channel funds for the development of municipal infrastructure. By developing their own expertise and often their own training and technical advisory facilities, MDIs have helped to transform previously moribund local authorities into dynamic vehicles of change.

One of the best examples of MDIs is the Foundation for Community Development and Municipal Improvement (Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad y Fomento Municipal, FUNDACOMUN) created as a development and coordinating agency to give technical and financial assistance to local governments and low-income urban settlements. Its current activities are developed within the context of the sixth National Plan and Joint Social Programmes. In the area of social development, the main objectives of FUNDACOMUN are the improvement of living conditions in low-income communities and promotion of community organization in order to enhance participation in the process of local development.

The administrative mechanism and implementation instrument through which projects are implemented "comprehensive planning" – has three basic aspects:

- * Interinstitutional coordination based on a consistent and concerted multisectoral effort to solve the problems of depressed low-income urban settlements
- * Direct community participation in assessment, planning and implementation
- * Practical projects supported by financial and technical assistance from public and/or private organizations

In the area of social development, the comprehensive plan is the administrative mechanism of the joint social programme which addresses all the factors in related marginal areas. These include infrastructure, adequate housing, training, education, culture, and participation in the benefits of the production process. Its programmes include:

- * The establishment of community facilities which serve as centres for social integration and intergovernmental coordination, for the delivery of basic services, such as health, education, nutrition, security and recreation
- * Programmes for progressive habitat improvement which include planned layout for the development of low-income areas, basic infrastructure provided by the public sector, and improvement of the area through community effort
- * Low-income credit programmes for upgrading dwellings. Financing is provided jointly by FUNDACOMUN and by the National Housing Institute (Instituto Nacional de la Vivienda-INAVI). Loans are available only for families in the poor urban *barrios* in settlements designated by the integral plans and in accordance with the priorities established by the community of each *barrio*.

In the area of municipal development, the purpose is to improve local government efficiency. Technical and financial assistance to local governments is given by FUNDACOMUN by means of agreements in a variety of areas, including administrative reforms, budgeting, public services, legal assistance, urban planning, land registration, community development, training, and employment generation. Special consideration is given to improving city management and public services in small and medium-size cities.

In the area of training and human resource development, the need to implement programmes to complement actions in the municipal and community development areas encouraged FUNDACOMUN to create, within its own structure, the Centre for Studies in Local Development and Municipal Management (Centro de Estudios de Desarrollo Local y Administración Municipal – CEDLAM). CEDLAM has already trained thousands of municipal employees at managerial, technical, administrative, and service levels, as well as community organizers. In the area of information, FUNDACOMUN has created the Centre for Documentation and Information on Marginality and Municipal Development (Centro de Documentación e Información sobre Áreas Marginales Municipalismo, CEDISAM), a permanent service of production, dissemination, and exchange of information, which understands information to be an instrument for development. In the area of international cooperation, FUNDACOMUN participates in technical assistance, training, research, and information exchange with the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), the Brazilian Institute of Municipal Administration (IBAM), and the Spanish Institute for Studies on Local Administration (IEAL).

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Lordello de Mello Diego, "Modernización de los gobiernos locales en América Latina", *Revista interamericana de planificación* (SIAP, June 1983).

C. Accountability

Accountability of the government to the governed is an essential aspect of democracy. But national strategies designed by central planners who have little personal familiarity with the workings of local communities and municipalities often make a poor fit between the needs of a given community and the services offered. To help remedy this defect, local strategies should be designed by local officials, in concert with their assigned community – which can serve as the basis for designing the national strategy. It will be easier to hold local officials accountable for meeting the goals and objectives of a strategy when they have had a part in its design. The same human factor of self-esteem that underlies the concept of community participation is at work on other levels, including that of local government.

It is also a basic principle of good administration that responsibility should be accompanied by authority, but with that authority goes accountability to the source of authority, the people. Local strategies should explicitly indicate expected results; in the case of community participation, it is a question of just how the process of involvement and benefits will accrue to the men and women of the community.

When local authorities have demonstrated success with community participation in carrying out the human settlements strategy, they should be given recognition through a system of rewards –which can take many forms depending upon local resources and customs, e.g., public citation, promotion, honorary award, monetary bonus, salary increase etc. Those who do not deliver on the stated policies and strategy of the country are penalized at least by being denied these rewards. If over time they do not achieve positive results, they might be further penalized through other means such as transfer, demotion or discharge.

It should be recognized that while government employees have a degree of job security, their income is generally low: and the incentive to deliver high quality performance on the job is also low. In addition, the responsibility of involving members of the community in human settlements programmes for which they are responsible appears to many as a handicap and an extra burden. They often assume that knowledge about

what is good for the people resides exclusively in the expertise of the professionals, and not in the people they serve.

“Should they take the time to have the community develop a plan of action, or should they make it themselves to get the task done as quickly as possible? Will they get more credit by emphasizing the community's participation or by emphasizing their own? The signals regarding preferred behaviours in a centralized, service-delivery agency are usually quite contrary to those appropriate for a participatory approach. Consequently when an agency tries to switch from one approach to the other, the signals that the existing systems convey become obstacles to generating community participation. Reorienting these systems is a major challenge facing any manager who desires to encourage personnel to use a participatory approach. One key need in the reorientation appears to be a shift from an emphasis on activities to an emphasis on results” (Frances F. Korten, *Bureaucracy and the Poor* (1983)).

D. Training

The complex issues involved in human settlements development, particularly at the local level where projects and programmes are implemented, call for considerable training. The spectrum of such training should be very wide, reflecting the scope of human settlements concerns, and should create the technical skills to meet all needs, from the operation of services to the formulation of policy and programmes at the highest levels of administration. What is important, however, is for training to be practically oriented and related to relevant policy areas. Moreover, the objective of any training programme should not be just large numbers of trained individuals but trained and effective organizations which can efficiently formulate and carry out human settlements policies and programmes. Low performance levels in a public agency cannot be remedied simply by injecting a handful of individuals trained outside the system. Rather, this must be accomplished by training and management processes internal to the organization which affect all staff from the point of recruitment on. An effective agency, therefore, is not simply the sum of its individual parts, but is composed of individuals who are moulded by the organization to interact and perform their tasks along pre-established lines in order to reach collective goals. (UNCHS (Habitat), *Global Report on Human Settlements*, 1986)

An important step towards bringing human settlements development up to scale, therefore, is to improve existing institutional arrangements, management and personnel development. Consequently, operations and maintenance of central and local institutions is the focus of the Urban Management Programme of the World Bank and UNCHS (Habitat) with funding by United Nations Development Programme.

To foster low-income community participation in urban programmes, UNCHS (Habitat) has initiated the Training Programme for Community Participation as a major instrument to assist governments with the implementation of their shelter strategies. And because the Governments of the three countries where this Programme is operating (Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Zambia) have adopted a decentralization policy, the Programme focus is on training of key local officials.

In Bolivia, in addition to “training-by-doing” of professionals who are in direct contact with individual settlements, the project held internal seminars for the Ministry of Urban Affairs to help analyse existing obstacles in the human settlements programmes, e.g., lack of a legal framework for the loan scheme, as well as other institutional problems. The Ministry is exploring with the regional development corporations set up by the Government at the sub-national level, with the municipal councils and with non-governmental organizations, possible training and other support arrangements for community participation.

Box 23. Public-sector management: democracy and pragmatism in Botswana

The vast, pastoral country of Botswana has experienced one of the fastest rates of urbanization in the world. Before independence in 1966, Botswana had only two small towns and a number of large villages. Since then, the old towns have grown rapidly, a capital city has been founded, and two other towns have been established near mining developments in the north of the country.

The stated objectives of Botswana's development policy are rapid economic growth, economic independence, sustained development, and social justice. Considerable achievements have been made in terms of economic growth as Botswana moved quickly from a traditional economy based on cattle rearing to a dualistic one led by a small but vigorous modern sector. However, the impressive quantitative and qualitative gains of economic growth have not fundamentally changed the life of the rural population.

Public-sector management in Botswana must be examined in the light of two fundamental qualities that characterize the political process in the country: democracy and pragmatism. The nature of governmental procedures and practice in Botswana not only allows a dialogue on policy-making but also ensures a remarkable degree of policy-making but also ensures a remarkable degree of bureaucratic accountability to Parliament. Botswana's system of public management is rightly considered one of the most successful in Africa, if success is measured by the capacity of a system to formulaic and implement strategies and programmes for economic and social development.

While still a developing country, Botswana stands out in many respects – it has a functioning democratic system, the lines of authority are defined, civil servants are accountable to parliament, control over financial management is enforced, plans and planning are linked to budgetary control, technical assistance is utilized effectively, parastatals are managed on commercial principles, and by and large there is order, logic, efficiency, and probity in the conduct of governmental business.

Botswana's practice of open discussion and of interaction between professional analysts, senior civil servants, and politicians is an essential component in understanding the nature of development planning in Botswana. The consultation process is not limited to central government: it starts at the village level (the kgotla meeting and the village development committees) and is also present at the district level (district councils and district development committees), and substantial efforts are made to ensure that the consultation process is integrated from the village through district to central government and back again. There is a dialogue at all levels with regard to the plan and the budget until agreement is reached on realistic levels of expenditures. Policies contained in the plan are not immutable, although modification of the plan or substantial alteration in one of its projects has to be fully discussed and justified.

At the local level, there are three types of authorities: the tribal administration, the land boards, and the town and district councils. All of them play an important role in providing service, executing statutory functions, and – especially in the case of the councils – assisting in the formulation of public policy. They are considerably more healthy than the local authorities in most other African countries. Yet, despite this reasonable record compared with other African states, all three types of local authority are far from healthy. They are still poorly staffed, under-financed, and barely able to carry out their statutory functions without considerable assistance from central government agencies. Efficiency in public-sector delivery has yet to descend to the local level, even though the structures to allow it have been established.

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Global Report on Human Settlements, 1986 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1987).

In Sri Lanka, the Government launched a programme to improve the performance of urban local authorities. The objective is to achieve a higher level of performance by urban local government through a process whereby the central Government rewards accomplishments through financial assistance. A Centre of Excellence was established by the Ministry of Local Government, Housing, and Construction to provide urban local authorities with assistance in general management, resource mobilization, financial management, and operations and maintenance. This effort gives urban local authorities a generally free hand to prepare their performance improvement plans according to their local preferences and resources.

The Danida/UNCHS Programme in Sri Lanka supports the decentralization policy by working closely with the urban local authorities (ULA) in what was described in chapter III as implementation-training and interaction with community development councils (CDCs), which are rooted in small organized neighbourhood mutual-help groups. The crucial test of the success of their participatory process has been the build-up of capacities of the communities for autonomous action and organized initiatives for self-development. On the one hand, the ULAs which the Programme has trained have been willing to effect a devolution of functions (contracting out some service functions to CDCs); and on the other hand some CDCs have worked to acquire a legal status to serve as a contracting party. With the establishment of the Community Resource Centre (CRC) mentioned in an earlier chapter, this capacity-building should greatly strengthen the process.

The overall picture of Zambia's settlements, both rural and urban, is that of a neglected area of development left to the initiative of individuals. The creation of village productivity councils (VPCs) in the 1960s was an attempt to move in the direction of decentralization, but their unexplained extinction left Zambia with no cogent policies or strategies to address local settlements problems and issues. The Government's decentralization policies have yet to extend beyond district centres to emphasize local autonomy and initiative in human settlements. The Danida/UNCHS Programme, working in concert with a Decentralization Division steering committee of chief district council officers, instituted the Zambian training programme through the Chalimbana Training Institute. They have trained council officials, local leaders and residents in about seven participating councils in a range of human settlements issues pertaining to community participation.

Box 24. Residents control

“Many deprived communities, especially in Third World countries, have shown how much more can be done with limited resources when dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contributions in the design, construction or the management of their own homes and neighbourhoods. It is when people have no control over nor responsibility for the key decisions in the housing process that built environments so often become barriers to community and to personal fulfilment as well as being a burden on the economy.”

Source: John F.C. Turner, “The roles of non-governmental and community-based organizations in the improvement of human settlements”, (Nagoya, 1987).

E. Partnerships

Finally, national and local strategies, based on the fundamental feature of an “enabling” concept, require the government (public sector) to create incentives and facilitative measures that will induce other actors to take more active roles in housing production. The private sector (for-profit corporations, as well as community-based, noncommercial, non-governmental organizations) need to be stimulated in this direction. This group of actors broadly represents the political, economic and social dimensions of a society (and more specifically, in the context of this particularly its settlements process) but it is the State, or public sector, that opens the way for partnerships, with policy and support measures, for all to make their essential contributions to a just, free and healthy society.

The other actors, the private sector, contribute to the economic and social aspects of a country in notably distinctive ways. The commercial business sector is now generally the closest partner of the State *vis-à-vis* land, markets, finance, and commercial construction. Non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, also part of the so-called private sector, are commonly ignored and “sometimes actively suppressed by corporate state and market systems and their centralizing techniques.” (Turner, 1987)

This publication stresses the necessity of strengthening NGOs and CBOs as vital actors in the productive and creative life of a community and country. These organizations are vital forces in northern industrialized countries, for example, in the United States,

“... they exemplify and fulfill the fundamental American commitment to responsible citizenship in the community. The non-profit sector still represents about the same proportion of America's gross national product – 2 to 3 percent – as it did forty years ago. But its meaning has changed profoundly... it is central to the quality of life... central to citizenship, and indeed carries the value of the society and American tradition” (Peter Drucker, 1990).

NGOs and CBOs have unfortunately been assigned negative terms as non-governmental or non-profit, when in fact, as Drucker points out, these organizations are positive human change-agents. They are concerned with relationships between people and the processes that result in improved living conditions. Their relationships with the State and market-based systems are critical to the partnerships needed for the sustainable development of human settlements.

It is in the best interest of a country to ensure that its national and local strategies create a new balance of power among the State, the market, CBOs and NGOs. NGOs are in a particularly good position to carry out functions that can facilitate the development of human settlements.

NGOs and CBOs have multiplied in recent years, giving rise to a degree of confusion on the part of authorities about how and with which organization to establish links. Some NGOs are affiliates of international NGOs, while others are self-organized national organizations. Many of these organizations do not have a specific shelter focus but work in related areas such as health, childcare, or credit. (John Turner discusses these distinctions in his paper “The roles of NGOs and CBOs in the improvement of human settlements”.)

Previous chapters gave examples of the CBO and NGO relationships with government projects which have cooperated with the Danida/UNCHS Programme, particularly in Bolivia and Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka, for example, several poor urban communities have gone beyond the involvement of CBOs in planning and implementing human settlements projects. The communities have also developed a capacity for carrying out small infrastructure contracts: upgrading the road network, improving the sanitation system, or constructing public wells. The Government is also encouraging the formation of new NGOs (community resource centers)

to support local CBOs.

UNCHS (Habitat) believes that NGOs play significant supporting roles in working with community-based organizations and help CBOs in their development efforts. NGOs are often originators, enablers, and implementers of new ideas and models. Their research and other activities have contributed much to the understanding of the nature and scale of shelter problems. In many instances, NGOs and CBOs have succeeded in demonstrating alternative solutions to meeting shelter and services needs through specific projects or programmes, and these in turn have sometimes pointed to approaches which have a national policy impact. Their collaborative efforts as coalition builders are now evident in many countries, as such coalitions seek to influence government policies and priorities.

At the international level, the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) is an NGO which speaks on behalf of national shelter NGOs and CBOs in their dealings with international organizations and agencies. It was set up after the Habitat Conference in 1976 as an ad hoc committee of about 180 NGOs. An International Year of Shelter for the Homeless Global Forum in Nairobi in 1987 adopted the "Limuru Declaration," which set out the shelter NGO position on the role of NGOs and CBOs in self-help alongside the enabling role of governments. It has also been actively calling attention to the growth in the number of evictions in poor communities, as well as the problems of a tightening rental market. NGOs also launched a plan of action on women at an HIC meeting in 1988 at New Delhi, India, which called for setting up of a global Women and Shelter Network to represent the shelter interest of women in CBOs worldwide. This Network has established links with the UNCHS (Habitat) strategies and programmes to support local governments and communities in the development of human settlements.

In addition to government understanding, there is a need for international agencies concerned with human settlements to promote community organizations representing residents in a manner that facilitates effective forms of collaboration with them and with NGOs. Ways must be found and procedures established which reduce domination by State agencies and stimulate residents to take up the community participation challenge as an organized effort. Such ways include legal steps which guarantee spheres of autonomy for recognized organizations, the involvement of NGOs in jointly planned and executed projects, and the allocation of parts of project budgets to NGOs, as well as directly to communities, in support of their own development priorities.

Box 25. The role of NGOS

"The present decade has been marked by the emergence of a growing appreciation of the important role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in supporting development efforts in many countries. This is especially true in the field of human settlements where international and national NGOs support the poor and disadvantaged in their efforts to improve their living conditions."

Source: Arcot Ramachandran, Executive Director, UNCHS (Habitat), Nairobi, 1988.

The central issue of a community support policy is the effort to promote community and neighborhood organizations, with a specific stress on inclusion of the many women's groups that are somehow made invisible when it comes to policy and resource interventions. It has been demonstrated that user groups, the majority of whose members are women, are able to develop the organizational forms required to initiate and perform complex tasks even when there is a scarcity of financial resources.

Organized capacities for self-help and mutual aid are today recognized in informal settlements, but public authorities almost everywhere have so far given very little support to the development of residents' groups and community-based organizations in urban neighbourhoods.

The idea of transferring development decisions and use of public funds directly to community-based groups in urban areas will no doubt be a difficult one for some governments to accept. The degree of acceptance will, in part, be conditioned on the importance attached to the principle of enabling strategies and by the determination to see negative trends reversed. It will also be conditioned by the formal arrangements that govern the transfer of resources. These must require that community groups be fully accountable for any funds they receive and that sanctions be exercised against "improper use." Community-based groups would, in other words, need to be accepted sooner or later as planning and implementation bodies that share in decisions on how public funds obtained from local, national and international sources can best be used.

In a related discussion of feasible strategies for urban management, the UNDP *Human Development Report* of 1990 recognizes that "NGOs and CBOs can provide much valuable organizational support and expertise to municipal governments because of the greater trust that donors and the people have in their administration of funds". Based on this appreciation of the importance of community-oriented human resource development,

promotion of the urban management programme should incorporate community-based strategies, appraise the actual contribution of community organizations to the delivery of basic services, and strengthen the organizational and technical capacities of these organizations.

The growing recognition of the importance of the human factor in national development has prompted the Administrator of UNDP to put forward a proposal to its Governing Council for the establishment of a special fund for micro-capital grants to communities and their organizations. Assistance to communities through "microfunds" would enhance their capacity to carry out development activities of their own and to benefit more from services provided by the public sector.

Small-scale capital assistance is already incorporated into many projects supported by various United Nations agencies such as UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNFPA or ILO, either as whole projects or through components of integrated projects, with the aim of channeling this assistance directly into the hands of poor people. Finally, General Assembly resolution 44/211 stresses the need for maximum participation of populations, local communities, and private organizations and encourages the entire United Nations system to promote direct support to communities at the grassroots level, in order to bring the poor directly into the development process.

Such a step would have the potential of transforming the position of the urban poor from recipients or target groups to responsible partners. The progressive transformation of community-based groups into local-level planning and implementation bodies would open the way to forms of participation responsive to the requirements of the poor and establish a forum in which self-help could, over time, become self-determination and community control over community development.

Box 26. Sustainable development

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs."

Source: The World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (Geneva, 1987)

IV. Towards Self-reliant Communities

**Go to the people
Live among the people
Learn from the people
Plan with the people
Work with the people
Start with what the people know
Build on what the people have
Teach by showing: learn by doing
Not a showcase but a pattern
Not odds and ends but a system
Not piecemeal but integrated approach
Not to conform but to transform
Not relief but release**

James Y.C. Yen, founder of the Rural Reconstruction Movement in China.

A. Summary and recommendations

As the weaknesses of the trickle-down and service-delivery approaches to human settlements development gradually become evident to development professionals and policy-makers, interest in community

participation grows and gains greater attention. The phenomenal growth in urban populations, particularly of the urban poor in developing countries, combined with the negative consequences of structural adjustment policies brought on by the economic crisis, are providing added imperatives for governments to find alternative resources and methods to solve their shelter and environmental problems.

A simple truth often forgotten, but currently re-emerging, is that the primary resource of a country is its people. And people, when they become the subjects of their own development, rather than its objects or the beneficiaries of others' benevolence, can design environments based on ideas emanating from the community that then supply the motivation for their own implementation and maintenance. To awaken the richness of this resource, however, calls for a shift in consciousness of participatory development from "having" to "being." That is, to the material and biological needs of survival, such as food and shelter, is added the need to grow and expand toward a new conception of what it means to be human. Cultural, spiritual, and aesthetic expression would be viewed as basic needs which, when satisfied, would provide meaning to life, and would give meaning to the material activities that are carried out to provide the biological sustenance of life. This shift in consciousness would provide a new perspective on the potential of the human actor in the development process. (UNDP, "Popular participation and environment", draft paper, May 1988.)

In this connection the "enabling" role of government is to help people who are in need of help, by providing a vision of the direction in which the country is headed, encouraging families, politicians, businesses, religions, educators and the media to promote community values. At the community level this is achieved by strengthening what people are already doing effectively for themselves. These efforts must also be supported by government attention to the basic causes of the problems of the poor. Particular emphasis will have to be placed by government on a strategy for action in the specific areas of:

- Macroeconomic policy
- Institutional coordination
- Legislation and regulation
- Data collection and analysis
- Financial resources and mechanisms for shelter and infrastructure
- Land
- Shelter
- Infrastructural development
- Building materials and technology

The Danida/UNCHS Training Programme for Community Participation in Improving Human Settlements, was developed to help governments incorporate the community participation component into their national strategies. The Programme is embarking on a third phase of its demonstration projects in Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Zambia in the middle of 1991. The following recommendations for professionals and policy-makers interested in community participation for the improvement of human settlements are based mainly on the evaluations and lessons learned in the first two phases of the three-country Programme.

Box 27. People must be at the centre of all development

We live in stirring times. An irresistible wave of human freedom is sweeping across many lands. Not only political systems but economic structures are beginning to change in countries where democratic forces had been long suppressed. People are beginning to take charge of their own destiny in these countries. Unnecessary state interventions are on the wane. These are all reminders of the triumph of the human spirit.

In the midst of these events, we are rediscovering the essential truth that people must be at the centre of all development. The purpose of development is to offer people more options. One of their options is access to income –not as an end in itself but as a means to acquiring human well-being. But there are other options as well, including long life, knowledge, political freedom, personal security, community participation and guaranteed human rights. People cannot be reduced to a single dimension as economic creatures. What makes them and the study of the development process fascinating is the entire spectrum through which human capabilities are expanded and utilized.

Source: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 1990 (New York, 1990).

They are listed under two headings: institutional approaches, and training methods to foster community participation. The recommendations are indicative rather than comprehensive. It is hoped that they will encourage local initiatives and innovations that will open the way for democratic involvement of communities

in the establishment of self-reliant human settlements.

B. Institutional approaches

Summary

While community participation is increasingly touted as an essential component in the development process, there is little evidence of support of this concept on a scale commensurate with the need. It is, however, clear that governments need to shift their role from being providers of services to being promoters of them by encouraging local governments, the private sector, and local communities to participate fully in the development process. At the same time, as governments switch to an “enabling” strategy, it is important that they recognize they must not abandon their responsibility to see that poor communities develop the capacity, resources, and opportunity to participate in the fulfilment of basic needs and the provision of infrastructure and required services. Governments should also be ready to fill in gaps when the communities are not yet in a position to participate in meeting basic needs.

For its part, the Danida/UNCHS Programme centred its attention on education and training to give people, institutions and governments a basic understanding of community participation and how it functions in the development of human settlements. In the process of implementing training for community participation in Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Zambia, some recommendations concerning institutional approaches have emerged that may be helpful when considering similar projects in other countries.

Recommendations

1. The objective in any given country should be not merely to institutionalize a training programme, but to institutionalize the concept of training for community participation. This was a lesson that emerged in varying degrees in the three Danida/UNCHS projects. Although these projects were linked with distinct government agencies, (the Ministry of Urban Affairs in Bolivia, the National Housing Development Authority in Sri Lanka, and the Chalimbana Training Institute in Zambia), each saw training as an on-going process involving partnership arrangements in which community and public/private institutions must participate. The concept of training for community participation needs to be recognized and adopted across agencies and at all levels of policy-making and programming.

2. The vehicle for introducing and installing this concept will vary from country to country, but it must begin with a government commitment to a human settlements strategy that involves local government and community participation. Policies of decentralization and devolution of responsibilities and powers to municipalities can facilitate creation of sustainable links with district/municipal councils which can implement human settlement projects and training through community participation – as they did in the three country projects.

It must be recognized that any genuine devolution of power and decentralization of activities entails some reduction of the power and decision-making authority now vested at the top; a new kind of “development politics” is therefore needed, which requires consensus about what development means. What are its objectives and targets? How does it use natural resources? How do people participate in it and benefit from it? How can power be devolved to communities so that they can decide about their community resources, production processes, planning, markets, technologies, etc.? When such a series of development exercises is properly and intelligently determined, their totality will grow into a pattern where democratic participation will become a reality. (A. T. Ariyaratne, Sri Lanka, 1989)

3. A core of interested individuals at the top decision-making level, as well as at the intermediary “hands-on” and community levels, is needed as the “hinge” for introducing and putting into operation the concept and for launching a successful training process for community participation.

4. Community participation must be incorporated into the design of urban management programmes, and the wider imperatives of urban management policies and initiatives should be fostered within the training process for community participation.

5. A serious commitment should be made to work with NGOs and CBOs, in the development of human settlements and in the support of community participation. These include, among others, grassroots groups, national and international organizations, religious institutions, professional associations, and financial

agencies.

6. In order to discover the “entry points” for community participation in squatter–settlement upgrading and sites–and–services projects, knowledge of the physical, economic, social, and cultural situation of the target community is an essential first step. The Danida/UNCHS (Habitat) Programme approach is to undertake preliminary participatory research and surveys to enable projects to start from the reality base of the community.

Pertinent in this regard is the significance that should be given to the fact that “Women count –but are not counted.” The low value attached to women's work requires fundamental rethinking: if women's work were more fully taken into account, it would become clear how large a role women play in development. Therefore, UNCHS (Habitat) emphasizes that much better gender–specific data on development are required. Research and survey instruments for community analysis need to be designed so that they capture the diversity of a community, including gender differences, in the data collected. It is commonly acknowledged that the adjustment burden of developing countries has been borne in large part by women. At the community level, it is women who hold things together. To make up for lost family income, they have increased production for home consumption, worked longer hours, slept less and often eaten less to keep the family going.

Preliminary research also helps identify existing CBOs with which to collaborate in building community participation into human settlements projects. In many communities, where Women's Mutual Help Groups have been formed, these have provided an important entry into the community. None of these factors should be overlooked in community analyses and in plans for the improvement of human settlements.

7. To bring improvements in human settlement development to scale innovative connections should be established among various constituencies. For example, new NGOs are being created in Bolivia and Sri Lanka that will provide technical assistance to community groups and help develop informal training for the sustainability of community action in human settlements. Such NGO assistance can also help develop networking among CBOs and partnerships between communities and “interested” professionals, such as lawyers, architects, educators, doctors, and child specialists.

8. Community participation involves societal change which conflicts with the status quo and is particularly problematical for political, legal and bureaucratic structures. Therefore, carefully tailored strategies will be needed in dealing with the broader society in order to avoid obstacles that could seriously hinder a participatory approach. For example, in the bureaucratic structure the approach can be defined so as to maximize flexibility within existing government rules, keeping in mind that the bureaucracy responds best to politicians and reward systems. As the community has little effective means of exerting pressure, perhaps a special status might be developed for community participation programmes, such as a government corporation or a private organization which might provide countervailing power.

9. Establish self–evaluation mechanisms for whatever approach is taken to community participation, so that there will be regular feedback highlighting trouble spots and areas in need of revision. At the same time, an external evaluator, perhaps an NGO, can be assigned to evaluate the process and results, rather than just the activities undertaken. Measuring the impact of overall strategy and, in particular, the impact on the community as a result of a participatory approach, is critical to the sustainability of the programme.

In an evaluation of the project in Sri Lanka, it was pointed out that the urban programme, which started out basically as a housing improvement programme (confined to the development of physical infrastructures), has over the years gone beyond and diversified its activities to become a livelihood improvement programme for the urban poor. It is important to recognize that besides housing there are many other entry points into the improvement of livelihood; virtually any issue of concern to the urban poor communities could in fact be an entry point. What is important is that the process does not stagnate; whatever the entry point – that it goes beyond the original issue into a spiral of activities to achieve a self–propelling dynamism. When evaluation is built into the project, it is possible to detect the appropriate time and direction of changes needed.

C. Training methods

Summary

Training is not a “magic wand” that transforms people and groups into effective agents of change. It is, however, one of the tools that can be employed to increase awareness and capacity, for making the shift from

top–down to participatory community development. The very nature of participatory community development, however, calls for a participatory training process. The Programme has demonstrated various approaches to participatory training that help the principal actors discover ways to support the participation of communities in the development of their own human settlements.

These three country projects provided training to a variety of actors, but principally to the following:

- At the top–level of policy–making, seminars and workshops were held to provide orientation on the meaning of community participation, how it operates and what its benefits are. This helped improve understanding of the project and improved the prospects for cooperation in making it work at the local levels.
- At the local level, official intermediaries with responsibility for hands–on action and community workers were not only provided an understanding of the concept of community participation and how it operates, but were also assisted with steps to involve the community in human settlement development programmes. Community workers were, in effect, trained as trainers. Training was an active (informal) rather than a passive (formal) tool, integral to programme and project implementation; structured to varying degrees, but open for participants to discover their ideas and options for themselves. As this informal training itself, was a participatory process, the trainees contributed to the content of the programme with adaptations to the local culture and shape of the project. This resulted in mutually beneficial and innovative interaction between officials and communities.

It became evident that unless officials are motivated to act for community ends – training them to involve the participation of the community is not likely to be effective. That motivation can come from an internal conviction of the importance and potential of each human being able to shape his or her own destiny and contribute to the common good, or from an external incentive such as the reward expected from following policy directives, or from a combination of the two. The motivation for low–income people to learn is usually a combination of an awakening sense of their self–worth and their desperate desire to build a better life for themselves and their families.

The learning process is opened up when personal resources are energized and people are offered the opportunity and skill to bring about change. An informal and interactive learning process allows people to learn from one another in the context of the situation that needs changing. This is at first an unfamiliar and somewhat daunting approach to training for most people; but after experiencing it and seeing it work, people find the process itself motivating them to continue. It is a departure from the strict, formal classroom courses that test the wit but not the wisdom of most ordinary human beings, and it can spark the creative energies that lie dormant in many people.

That is not to deny value to any use of more formalized training or prepared materials. The core curriculum discussed in chapter II, for example, provides reference material that includes the range of issues involved in the development of shelter and infrastructure for squatter settlements and sites–and–services and can be used as a “starter” package for countries introducing the concept of training for community participation. The core curriculum may be used in more formal settings for participatory training of trainers, with the caveat that even in this context the material should be locally adapted, as it had to be in Zambia, where the project used the core curriculum to a greater extent than the other two projects. Additional local materials were produced by the Zambian project for direct work with the communities, an action that might be advisable for other countries as well.

Recommendations

1. The first step should be a training needs assessment to help determine who should be trained and their characteristics and functions, as well as who among them can become the “core training team” to follow–through on the overall training process. The content and methods of training to be used in each case would also be indicated by the assessment. With this basic information, local training materials and processes can be designed.
2. Community analyses, discussed under institutional approaches, should provide the foundation for identifying the people and groups with whom the interactive training process will be carried out at the community level. But each country must discover its own methodology – probably through trial and error. However, the experiences of others, such as use of the Community Action Planning (CAP) methodology and its attendant components in Sri Lanka can provide important lessons (see chapter III).

In Sri Lanka, the Training Programme identified the community development councils (CDC) with which it worked to develop the CAP methodology as an instrument of promoting initiatives for the development of settlements among the poor. CAP seeks to provide an opportunity, as well as a broad framework, for communities to decide and act on their problems as identified and prioritized by poor people themselves. Over the years the project succeeded in creating a core group of officials with expertise in the use of this method. The core group, however, is limited in number. And, although the communities have not yet achieved the level of self-reliance and countervailing power to be able to obtain through CAP the goals they set, the hands-on local officials have ceased to think and act as bureaucrats and are people-oriented – a considerable behavioural change. The methodology is generally accepted, and efforts are underway to refine it and apply it on a wider scale.

3. NGO and CBO involvement in training aspects of human settlement strategies should be given priority attention by government planners and programme implementers, as well as by donors. In Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Zambia, evaluators stressed the need to focus on the roles of NGOs and CBOs (including women's organizations) in future phases of the training programme, specifically to open the way for government and donor agencies to establish contractual agreements directly with those organizations deemed to have the capacity to perform such services as:

- Organizational support to governments in carrying out local shelter strategies
- Local skill training
- Assistance to communities in management of revolving loan funds
- Assistance to local groups with savings and credit schemes
- Assistance with self-employment enterprises
- Coordination among CBOs
- Creating bridges of opportunity between local communities and local government and the private sector
- Establishing partnerships between the community and “interested” professionals

4. In the design of training for community participation in settlement projects, mechanisms should be incorporated for organized and sustainable economic, social and human development initiatives to continue after the physical upgrading has taken place. Establishing an on-going responsible citizen community base results in a more cost-effective system, a healthier environment, and a better life.

5. Countries that adopt a policy to incorporate community participation in their national and local shelter strategies can call upon UNCHS (Habitat) to share its experience with training for community participation, and if needed, request its technical assistance. In turn, UNCHS (Habitat) welcomes information and insights from countries' experiences with approaches they develop to foster community participation in human settlements development.

6. UNCHS (Habitat) is establishing a knowledge bank on what it has learned from its own Programme and the work of other agencies, governments, and organizations about this subject. Interested parties could draw upon the bank for the development of their own approaches to community participation, and in turn, deposit what they have learned for others to share. UNCHS (Habitat) should also develop linkages with regional research and urban management institutes and training centres to expand the state-of-the-art in community participation concepts and methods, through mutually beneficial arrangements.

D. Benefits of community participation

One prerequisite to having a community awakened to sharing the burden of developing its living environment, is providing (if it never existed) or restoring (if it was taken away or destroyed) a belief that the community itself can have an impact – often a decisive one – on the quality of its life. If it shares not only the burden of work and thought but also the power to determine the direction in which life-improvement efforts go, the benefits that are likely to accrue to people as individuals and to the society as a whole are enhanced.

Perhaps the most measurable benefit in this period of rising demand and shrinking resources is the cost reduction to the public sector, through the community's taking responsibility for sharing the cost by its voluntary labour and by the payment of charges for such services as water, garbage collection, energy and transport.

Less tangible perhaps, but more beneficial in the longer run, are the gains for society from the development not only of healthier geographic communities, but of closer-knit "communities of interest," that take responsibility for a sustainable and equitable economic, social and political society.

This publication, focusing as it does on a single aspect of a subset of the problem of global poverty, has a commensurately limited scope. Nevertheless, that single aspect – inadequate shelter – affects about one quarter of the world's people, most of them (but by no means all) in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Of the projects described, one is in each of these regions.

It is clear from those descriptions that the assessments of the projects and country conditions in which they are being conducted confirm the premise of UNCHS (Habitat) that active participation by the residents of the affected communities is absolutely essential for even limited success in settlement projects. And unless the people have a stake in that success and know that the project managers and policy-makers are accountable to them, they will not contribute their own time and other resources.

The Global Strategy for Shelter states this point unequivocally:

"The fundamental policy change will need to be the adoption of an "enabling" approach whereby the full potential and resources of all the actors in the shelter production and improvement processes are mobilized; but the final decision on how to house themselves is left to the people concerned."

Recognizing where that "final decision" is lodged is the essence of democracy – the form of social organization in which people choose those who will determine the policies that will govern the actions of the people and hold those who are chosen accountable to those who chose. The enabling approach thus applies not only to decisions about shelter policy, but to all matters affecting the quality of life of people.

To improve that quality of life is the purpose not only of shelter projects, but of all development programmes. It is increasingly recognized by the development community that in order to be sustainable development has to be equitable and, therefore, participatory (by those whose quality of life is to be improved). The major 1990 reports of multilateral agencies in the development field (especially UNDP's *Human Development Report*) underscore this conclusion.

So, too, in a modest way, do the empirical observations of this document. There is no doubt that, whatever the contribution of planners, specialists, government officials, and other people "outside" the targeted beneficiary community, the training programmes, design projects, and construction activities would not have worked as well as they did without the active participation of members of that affected community. If there is a "bottom line" to this publication, it is that community participation works; and it works because it is right.

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Annex

DANIDA/UNCHS TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN IMPROVING HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

List of training modules

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SQUATTER SETTLEMENT UPGRADING

Aims at making community participation effective in the 10 stages of planning and implementing squatter–settlement upgrading projects, with the purpose of executing projects that match the needs and resources of the squatters.

HS/69/84
44 pp.
E.F.S.

SITES AND SERVICES SCHEMES: THE SCOPE FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Aims at making community participation effective in the 10 stages of planning and implementing sites–and–services projects, with the purpose of executing projects that match the needs and resources of their residents.

HS/38/84
44 pp.
E.F.S.

HOW PEOPLE CAN AFFORD SHELTER

Aims at making community participation effective in determining affordability and organizing cost recovery for low–income housing projects such as squatter–settlement upgrading and sites–and–services schemes, with the purpose of executing projects that match the residents' capacity and willingness to pay for them; includes exercises.

HS/131/88
52 pp.
E.F.S.
ISBN 92–1–131057–1
(Replaces HS/68/85, Cost Recovery and Affordability)

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE EXECUTION OF LOW–INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS

Aims at making participation of women effective in the 10 stages of planning and implementing squatter–settlement upgrading projects and sites–and–services schemes, with the purpose of strengthening the position of women in such projects; identifies opportunities and limitations of women's participation.

HS/75/85

64 pp.

E.F.S.

ISBN 92–1–131005–9

MUTUAL AID: HOUSE CONSTRUCTION THROUGH BUILDING GROUPS

Aims at making mutual aid effective in the planning and implementation of low–income housing projects, with the purpose of making better use of the human and material resources of house builders; discusses opportunities and limitations of mutual aid, as well as methods and procedures for organizing building groups; includes exercises.

HS/98/86

56 pp.

E.F.S.

ISBN 92–1–131017–2

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FOR ROAD PLANNING IN SQUATTER SETTLEMENT UPGRADING

Aims at involving squatters in road planning for the improvement of their settlements, with the purpose of creating roads and pathways best suited to the needs and constraints of such settlements; includes a role play.

HS/46/84

56 pp. + 4 maps

E.F.S.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LOW–COST SANITATION

Aims at making community participation effective in the planning and implementation of sanitation for low–income settlements, with the purpose of designing and building sanitation systems that are affordable and can be properly maintained by the users; includes case studies from various countries and examples of successful low–cost systems; also includes a role play and exercise.

HS/94/86

79 pp.

E.F.S.

ISBN 92–1–131010–5

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND LOW–COST DRAINAGE

Aims at making community participation effective in the planning and implementation of drainage systems in low–income settlements, with the purpose of designing and building drainage systems that are affordable and can be properly maintained by the users; includes examples of successful low–cost systems and basic calculations for simple drain design.

HS/97/86

59 pp.

E.F.S.

ISBN 92–1–131016–4

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN LOW–INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS: THE SCOPE FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Aims at making community participation effective in the management of solid household waste in low–income urban settlements, with the purpose of obtaining optimum resource recovery and reducing the cost of refuse collection; includes exercises.

HS/96/86
46 pp.
E.F.S.
ISBN 92-1-131015-6

COMMUNITY CREDIT MECHANISMS

Aims at involving residents of low-income housing projects in the creation of savings-and-loans associations, with the purpose of increasing the affordability of house building and improvement; includes exercises.

HS/150/89
44 pp.
E.F.S.
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WATER SUPPLY IN LOW-INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS: THE SCOPE FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Aims at making community participation effective in the development, implementation and maintenance of water supply systems in urban low-income areas.

HS/152/89
60 pp.
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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: A TRAINER'S MANUAL

This manual is intended for designing, delivering or evaluating training programmes for professionals promoting community participation. It is a guide to the use of the training modules prepared by the Danida/UNCHS Training Programme, outlining the principles of participatory adult education. Included is a toolkit providing an overview of training techniques, checklists and exercises.

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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PROJECT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION

Aims at making community participation effective in low-income housing projects by means of communication activities designed to support the planning and implementation of such projects. The module consists of four parts:

PROJECT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION (I): BASIC PRINCIPLES

Explains the principles of effective and participatory communication and discusses the types of supportive communication required in the 10 stages of squatter-settlement upgrading projects and sites-and-services schemes; includes exercises.

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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING

Aims at making community participation effective in low-income housing projects by means of problem-solving and decision-making techniques designed to support planning and implementation of such projects. The module consists of three parts:

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Explains principles of effective problem-solving and decision-making; includes exercises and role plays.
HS/159/89 39 pp. E.F.S. ISBN 92-1-131083-0

PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING(II): LEADERSHIP

Deals with effective leadership in support of low-income housing projects; includes exercises and role plays.

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List of bibliographies

BIBLIOGRAPHY ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Lists documents concerning community participation in the improvement of the living conditions of the urban poor in developing countries; also lists documents in related fields such as health and education.

HS/27/83
75 pp.
E.

BIBLIOGRAPHY ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION(II)

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CATALOGUE OF TRAINING TOOLS AND MATERIALS

Provides a first overview of appropriate training tools and materials which would support the practical application of community participation as a technique for carrying out shelter activities at the local level. The collected materials have been developed in different parts of the world for the purpose of training government officials and community participation.

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Deals with the possibilities and limitations of community participation in low-income housing projects, the difficulties project staff encounter in implementing participation and the attempt made to overcome these problems. The paper is a useful introduction to the more specialized training modules on community participation.

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COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND LOW-INCOME HOUSING

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HS/132/88
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The Danida/UNCHS Training Programme

The Danida/UNCHS Training Programme for Community Participation has a primary emphasis on training the professional staff members of local governments and housing agencies in the formulation and implementation of community-participation strategies. Once trained, the staff members are expected to become facilitators of community action at the grass-roots level.

As a rule, the Danida/UNCHS Training Programmes are held 'on location' in settlements projects. This makes it possible to adapt the training to the actual needs of the professional staff members involved in the projects and to obtain feedback from the communities.

In addition, the Training Programme for Community Participation aims to facilitate exchange of experiences of community participation in low-income housing projects both through training courses and through the dissemination of information. The immediate objective of the programme is to make training in community participation a permanent feature of human-settlement improvement schemes. To this end, the programme has developed approaches to training which consist of:

- The arrangement of courses in organizing and facilitating community participation;
- The testing of methods and tools for use by motivators in community participation;
- The introduction of methods to monitor and evaluate training courses;
- The provision of an on-site advisory service for countries requesting assistance; and
- The organization of regional seminars to collect, exchange and disseminate information on community participation.

The Programme has developed a range of training materials, both printed and audio-visual, for use in workshops and training courses.



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