

# CAP NEWS

**The Newsletter of the Commonwealth Association of Planners**

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## **Planning Institute of Australia Launches Planning Assistance to Pacific Nations and to Sri Lanka for Tsunami Recovery**

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) is developing an exciting range of initiatives in International Planning Assistance. These are aimed at working with and assisting Commonwealth nations in the Pacific. They will focus especially on developing regional initiatives for small island developing states targeted by the 2002 World Summit  
*(Continued on page 2)*

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on Sustainable Development, and assist Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami

The PIA has formed a partnership through immediate post tsunami initiatives with the Institute of Town Planning, Sri Lanka (ITPSL) and the Minister for Urban Development and Water Supply, to assist in targeted planning projects in Sri Lanka. A Tsunami Taskforce was set up in March 2005 after PIA and CAP representatives participated in a Sri Lankan government supported post-Tsunami Reconstruction workshop in Sri Lanka.

The Minister's request focused on strategic planning at the national, regional and local level, settlement planning, urban design and coastal planning for areas affected by the Tsunami. The Minister specifically asked that programs of assistance include a strong component of capacity building for Sri Lankan planners, based on a long term education and training program.

The recently renamed International Division of PIA has taken up this planning assistance challenge both in Sri Lanka and in the Pacific region. Roger Brewster has been appointed PIA CAP Representative under the Division President Mr Gary Shiels. He told CAP News, "This is a challenging responsibility and I am grateful to be supported in the role by the expanded CAP team and the PIA National Office. These initiatives are breaking new ground for the PIA and will focus our attention on the issues of the small developing states of the Commonwealth in our region."

PIA is seeking to join as many like-minded partners as is possible, with an understanding of the planning needs and aspirations of developing nations. The President Marcus Spiller said "We are seeking those who wish to see positive outcomes delivered where they are most needed in Sri Lanka as identified by the local planning community, not only in this post-Tsunami reconstruction period, but also beyond."

He continued, "PIA believes that a strong, cooperative arrangement will not only build local capacity, but result in valuable and enduring frameworks for sustainable development. PIA certainly sees this proposed programme of activity as part of a long term commitment to the people of Sri Lanka. We believe that what is needed post-Tsunami, is not a series of 'quick fixes', but the formation of a strategic partnership of organisations built on sound relationships in Sri Lanka, which will deliver locally relevant outcomes now and in the years to come."

CAP have also had discussions with the Commonwealth Secretariat about how best to take technical co-operation forward.

***Roger Brewster***

## **Students Help Tsunami Victims**

In March, twenty-one American students had the unusual opportunity to take part in the rebuilding of a fishing village in Sri Lanka that had been devastated by last December's tsunami. These planning and architecture students are part of a spring-semester field study program in south Asia offered through Ball State University since 1999. They helped the efforts of the Green Movement of Sri Lanka (the funding agency), the architect, Madhura Prematilleke, and the community to build permanent housing for them. This was essentially a community (re)building effort through participation in their processes.

Led by Dr. Nihal Perera, Dr. Wes Janz, and fellow faculty Tim Gray, the students made their way to Kalametiya in southern Sri Lanka. It is a community of 31 families which lost their homes and livelihoods, as well as 11 of its own members. When the group arrived, the survivors had just moved from tents to temporary housing – rows of 10'X10' rooms built in wood.

The student group first participated in cleaning and restoring the lagoon, joined by several NGOs and several hundred locals. The students met with the community, created a children's play area, played with children and adults, and made very close connections with the community. When they started building new houses, all the villagers and many people from the nearby villages showed up. Suddenly the community came alive. During their "Building to Learn" component, the group thus acted as a catalyst in the community rebuilding process.

Adding to this powerful experience, they also visited the worst tsunami-hit towns in Sri Lanka. According to local sources, this was the only student group that was directly involved in the rebuilding of tsunami affected communities, and Kalametiya was the first project to be built by the community.

Before arriving in Sri Lanka, the group took part in "Planning to Learn," in a fishing town (150,000 people) called Veraval, in north-western India. Collaboratively with graduate planning students at the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) in Ahmedabad – a leading planning and architecture school in India, the students probed into the strengths and issues in that community. It is a historic town where the Somnath Temple, one of the six most significant Hindu temples, is located, but the (fishing) port is extremely polluted.

The students visited several towns and learned about the region (where Gandhi lived): they walked from their house in Veraval filling out survey forms as well as learning about people and the environment, made connections to the community and with community leaders, and then made their proposals in English and Gujarati. Over 100

community leaders and activists who attended the meeting at the Town Hall began debating issues on their own terms. Instead of imposing its ideas on the community, the group drew attention to the most important issues raised by various groups of the community and catalyzed a conversation within the larger community. It provided an opportunity for the new Municipal Commissioner to get the help of the community to address some of the issues and the community an opportunity to raise important issues. By getting the community involved, and participating in their processes, the group made a big difference in that city.

By staying in one locale for seven weeks, the students were able to immerse themselves in the society and culture of that community. The experience is life-changing. As demonstrated in their work, by reflection, the participants developed a critical understanding of their own cultures and environments and an ability to locate themselves within an increasingly globalizing world.

***Nihal Perera, PhD***

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## **CHOGM Malta 2005**

CHOGM, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting will be held in Malta at the end of November this year. The week before, i.e. beginning Monday 21<sup>st</sup> there are pre CHOGM meetings. These are co-ordinated by the Commonwealth Foundation. CAP is involved with two of the organisations which are making presentations, BEPIC (Built Environment Professions in the Commonwealth) and CHEC (Commonwealth Human Ecology Council). The

overall theme of the Conference is ‘Networking Commonwealth People’ and there are various sub themes.

BEPIC has a two day event on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> November. Their sub themes are ‘Spatial knowledge and land economy in the achievement of relevant Millennium Development Goals’ particularly using GIS etc, and ‘Professional Associations working together to achieve the Habitat Agenda.’

CHEC has a three day programme on 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November. The first day includes Global dimensions of Human Ecology with Global Initiatives in the Environment followed by Commonwealth Initiatives, then Cultural and Spiritual dimensions. The second day narrows down the theme to Poverty Education and Training including particularly Small Island States. On the third day there are project reports and up to date programmes on disaster prevention and land management. There will be first hand reports of the recent flood relief programmes in Sri Lanka as well as handling the increased amount of waste that society now creates.

The Malta Association of Planners will be actively involved with both programmes and we are looking at a possible study tour of the island for CAP CHEC and BEPIC members on the Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November.

The main speakers so far booked by CHEC include Don McKinnon (Commonwealth Secretary General) Ambassador Salvino Busuttil (Malta) Col G.N.Richie (Global Alliance for Disaster Reduction), Levi Oguike (CHEC Nigeria) Charles Naugua (Kenya Commonwealth Ass. For Social Work), Lino Briguglio (Malta Foundation International Studies) Ruth McLeod and Kim Mullard (Homeless International) Caryll Stephen (Foundation for Water Research UK), Paul Jowett (Vice President ICE UK) Michael Parkes (Senior Urban Advisor, DFID UK). The President of CHEC HE L.M.Singhvi, and Chairman Ian Douglas also of SCOPE will be giving presentations.

BEPIC will be holding their meeting in the Malta Mediterranean Conference Centre on the waterfront, which is being run by the Commonwealth Foundation. CHEC are at the Old University buildings not far away, both of course in Valetta. Malta Airlines offer reasonable fares but they are being taken up as governments are making block bookings. The same applies for hotels so if any CAP members are accompanying their ministers, now is the time to confirm registrations.

***John Anderson***

CAP Secretary General and Vice President (Europe)

# PRESIDENT'S PIECE

*Cliff Hague*

The long delay since the last issue of CAP News is not because CAP has been inactive. Quite the reverse. The main problem is that so much has been happening there simply has not been time to sit down and write a Newsletter.

The Indian Ocean tsunami has been a focus of attention during 2005, but we are also aware of the need to think about re-planning in the India/Pakistan border area after the earthquake there. While New Orleans is not part of the Commonwealth, the news coverage of the flooding there has further emphasised the importance of planning in relation to natural hazards.

UN Habitat is also very alert to issues of post-conflict reconstruction. These are topics on which the expertise of planners needs to be developed. Rebuilding is vital to economic and social recovery after disasters and conflicts. Planning was a major factor in the reconstruction of Europe's cities after 1945.

CAP also held a regional meeting in Cyprus in April, for which many thanks are due to the hard work of the Cyprus Association of Town Planners. The theme of the three day seminar was the conflicts between tourist development and environment. This is a familiar concern in many small islands. There was a good range of papers with speakers from Malta and the Isle of Man, as well as Cyprus itself.

Concerns for hazards and small islands were the focus of the CAP input to the conference in Kingston, Jamaica that is reported in this issue.

I have just come back from Nigeria, where for the first time since the 1980s CAP was able to hold a regional workshop. The event figured on the 9pm national TV news in Nigeria and again many thanks are due to friends in the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners who made the event happen. There will be a report in the next issue of CAP News.

Meanwhile the main focus of our endeavours remains on the World Planners Congress and World Urban Forum. These events will be held in Vancouver next June. They promise to be a once in a generation opportunity to raised the profile of planning, and to work towards a set of new perspectives that reject the technocratic and top-down legacy that still discredits our profession amongst the international development community.

A Declaration has been drafted for Vancouver. A copy is to be found in this issue immediately following this "President's Piece" and on the CAP web site. The Draft Declaration has been agreed by the Canadian Institute of

Planners, the Royal Town Planning Institute and the American Planning Association. The Presidents of the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners and of the Ghanaian Institute of Planners also gave their formal support to it at the CAP meeting in Abuja.

I am now asking all CAP member institutes whether they are also able to support the Draft Declaration, or alternatively if there are amendments that are a precondition for their support. Writing such documents is never easy, especially when the exercise is done "by committee". Inevitably some compromises have to be made.

We want to avoid a UN-style process of wrangling over words when we get to Vancouver. The hope is that the Declaration can be formally adopted at the World Planners' Congress and signed by representatives of as many planning associations as possible. It will then be taken into the World Urban Forum, together with a paper on key principles of planning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our hope is that this process will build much stronger international networks amongst planners, and directly address the challenges that rapid urbanisation, the urbanisation of poverty and the need for more sustainable cities pose for planners.

The World Urban Forum really begins on 1-3 December with the "Jam" that is being organised. This is a 3 day internet discussion. It is really the start of the debates that will continue right through to Vancouver. I would urge all CAP member institutes, as well as individual planners to contribute to the Jam. You can register on [www.habitatjam.com](http://www.habitatjam.com).

CAP will also hold a Business Meeting in Vancouver during the week of these events. Accounts will be presented, along with reports from the Executive, and there will be elections and a chance to change the Constitution.

2006 will be a landmark year for CAP and planning in the Commonwealth. Planning and urbanisation have been given very low priority amongst governments for a quarter of a century or more. However, there is now a realisation that a planning approach is needed to slow the rate of new slum formation, to build a new paradigm of governance in the face of widespread urban poverty and to tackle the problems of hazards and reconstruction. Finding answers and new, better ways to do planning is essential, not just for planning professionals but, more importantly, for the millions of people who dwell in the towns and cities of the Commonwealth.

# WORLD PLANNERS' CONGRESS DRAFT VANCOUVER DECLARATION 2006

We, representatives of the planning profession of the world, dedicate ourselves to working together, and with others, to tackle the challenges of rapid urbanisation, the urbanisation of poverty and the hazards posed by climate change and natural disasters.

We hold that urbanisation must become more sustainable if the global community is to realise the aspirations in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, especially that which seeks to “ensure environmental sustainability”.

We have a responsibility, along with others, to future generations for custodianship of this planet and its habitats, and to those within our own generation who are disadvantaged, especially the poor and those who lack adequate shelter.

We stand for Planning as an inclusive process. Planning is both strategic and local, integrative, participatory, creative, embracing cultural diversity and rooted in concerns for equity.

We advocate that Planning must underpin any approach to managing rural, urban and regional development. It is practised in the private sector, the public sector, by voluntary bodies and community organisations.

We will build the capacity for creating safe, healthy and sustainable settlements by mobilising, sharing and developing the knowledge and skills of planners.

We advocate that Planning, and its values and ethics, are fundamental to good governance and a means to deliver more equal access to the benefits cities have to offer.

We assert that there can be no sustainable development without sustainable urbanisation, and no sustainable urbanisation without effective planning: political will and investment is required for effective planning.

We will promote this Declaration to governments, international development organisations, civil society and other professions in a spirit of global partnership.

We dedicate ourselves to action now, and in the years ahead, in support of this Declaration.

## REPORTS

### CONFERENCE REPORTS

#### B+10

B+10 - nope, it certainly isn't a type of vitamin you should be taking to prepare yourself for the onslaught of the looming Australian winter, but it is definitely something I got in huge dosages during my recent trip to New York.

I was afforded the honour to attend the Beijing+10 Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Government and Women's Machineries around the world as part of the 49<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Commission for the Status of Women (CSW) attended by 165 countries over a two week period of intense deliberations. The name came about in 1995 when an important milestone for international women's rights was reached at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women in Beijing, where the Beijing Platform for Action (BpFA) to advance a global agenda on women's issues was adopted - an internationally agreed plan for achieving equality for women across 12 critical areas (including poverty, armed conflict, human rights, power and decision making, etc) and has 189 signatory nations worldwide. The BpFA provides a standardised reference point by which progress on equality for women worldwide can be measured and allows countries to build upon their achievements since Beijing to enable women to realise their full potential in the dynamic environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The BpFA is reviewed every five years and this year marked the 2<sup>nd</sup> review. Since inception, women's groups from around the world are successfully participating in bringing their issues to the UN through the Beijing Platform process and reviewing how governments have measured up to their commitments to women.



On the first day I attended the launch of the Commonwealth Secretariat Plan of Action (PoA) in an official capacity representing the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) Women in Planning Network (WiP). This was the first official meeting of the Commonwealth Secretariat since the adoption of the BpfA in 1995. The PoA goes beyond the BpfA, complements UN processes and reinforces the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in terms of achieving gender parity. It provides a blueprint for the Commonwealth commitment and its catalytical role in promoting gender equality. The *Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005 – 2015* is available at <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Templates/Colour.asp?NodeID=38116&int2ndParentNodeID=33902> where it can be downloaded.

The PoA has four critical areas that focus on:

- Gender, democracy, peace and conflict;
- Gender, human rights and law;
- Gender, poverty eradication and economic empowerment; and
- Gender and HIV/AIDS.

The underlying principle and echo of that day was “*implementation, implementation, implementation*”. The Commonwealth Secretariat reaffirmed its support of UN Resolution 1325 in advancing women’s rights and gender equality, and emphasised its commitment to strengthening its engagement and brokering partnerships working with all agents to ensure the full and effective implementation of the PoA.

Due to logistical problems I was not able to attend the formal UN B+10 proceedings, however, I was able to attend the parallel civil society events on wide ranging gender issues. At first, I was completely overwhelmed by the magnitude and the mechanics of those side events as this was attended by 2600 highly organised Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). I quickly learned that these CSOs were a giant and well-oiled lobbying piece of machinery where each part formed caucuses and skillfully pushed their own agenda with sympathetic governments to promote and achieve gender parity. The next few days were a steep learning curve and every day I came to understand more clearly the significance of the Beijing Platform process and also learnt to communicate largely in acronyms.

These parallel sessions provided a clearer picture of why CSOs attended this forum to advocate for change in the status of women, and it was disappointing to see so few participants, especially from government delegations attending these sessions. I had feelings of admiration that CSOs from such diverse backgrounds had come together to advocate for a common cause - the global advancement of women. There was a feeling of camaraderie amongst the

CSOs, many of whom knew each other from working together since the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women in 1995, and this came out in genuine expressions of friendship between various CSOs from different countries across the world. Throughout the coming days I became more and more inspired by the dedication displayed by these groups.

Most morning and afternoon sessions were used by the CSO caucus to hold briefings to assess how things were progressing at the official CSW proceedings and what work needed to be done. I found these meetings to be a great forum for witnessing the capacity of such a diverse group to have a unified voice and thereby have greater power in the international policy-making process. The briefings conveyed enthusiasm from all participants, respect and sensitivity for each other and an obvious passion for bringing about change in the status of women.

Much of my time was spent listening to all that was said at the CSO briefings, during presentations at the Uniting Church Centre and over lunch and coffee breaks, trying to gain an understanding of the process and the various roles people took. A fair bit of these discussions centred around the abortion debate, peace and conflict and trafficking in women and children. Because planning is so invisible at that level, much of the discussion was of little relevance to our professional interest.

But, overall the event was a wonderful bridge-building exercise to link with organisations that share the same philosophies. I believe this networking will help move the WiP Network forward in partnering with similar organisations in promoting gender equity and thereby achieving true sustainability. I met so many amazing and driven women whose passion and commitment to the basic human rights of women will ensure that this important issue will never be ignored by the international community. Attending this event taught me the important lesson that individuals at the grassroots level can have their voices heard in an international arena, and that many diverse groups can collectively work together to achieve change for women globally.

My experience attending this high level UN event was both exciting and inspiring, however, I walked away from this conference feeling somewhat perplexed and that there was something missing. I feel some disappointment at the lack of energy and motivation everybody so vividly remembers and draws on after B+5 when women’s groups eagerly returned to their countries to put in place the actions identified under B+5. I feel that the event focused too much on BpfA review, rather than addressing the real issues faced by so many women in their daily struggles - both the BpfA and the PoA are weak in addressing these.

I was also quite baffled as to why planning does not feature much at CSW level. The tsunami disaster, still so fresh in our minds, highlighted the gender specific needs and issues, and the underlying importance of sustainable human settlements, and the other critical issue of recent times, that of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its wider planning implications in relation to rapid de-population and associated pressure on and for social infrastructure; increasing numbers of orphaned children, etc. We need to bring this to the attention of world leaders and decision makers, and the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations (CONGO) that works in a consultative relationship with the UN provides the perfect vehicle for CAP as an organisation to achieve that.

Although CSOs/NGOs are not able to formally participate in UN negotiations, they serve as an effective lobbying mechanism that is a constant reminder of the realities in the world, are active in pressing world leaders to keep their promises and are important in implementing the BpFA and MDGs.

It is imperative that CAP is accredited with the CONGO to enable us access to the UN and enable engaging dialogue at a higher level to raise and thereby lobby for recognition of the importance and need for planning as a means to achieve gender equality across the Commonwealth and beyond.

As a follow-up post B+10, I attended a seminar in Australia by Anna McPhee. Anna is currently the Director Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, Australia. Unlike me, Anna formally participated in the CSW proceedings in New York and presented her experiences and the B+10 findings at the recent seminar. I discovered that Anna shares the same B+10 sentiments as me in that we both feel that the event did not progress the B+5, and that it was primarily focused on the past, got hijacked by the abortion debate and fell short on truly achieving outcomes for equality for women. There was a lack of best practice, reforms and lessons learnt. And despite the greater global push for gender equality the needs of women in developing countries largely remain unmet. Anna also confirmed that there was little discussion on the gaps and challenges at the official CSW meetings.

The new UN resolution gender equality does look at tsunami related gender issues and specific infrastructure needs of indigenous women. Nevertheless, there still remains a lot to be done in achieving gender parity and in the words of UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, "*there is no one or easy solution*".

For so long cities, towns and villages have not been a key concern for the women's movement, and not until the Beijing process is broadened to include sustainable development and Local Agenda 21 will we truly link

equality for women with achievement of sustainable human settlements.

There is a tremendous amount CAP can do to help shape the local, national and global agendas and the political consciousness of participants on the gender issue as it relates to planning and the dynamics surrounding it. I personally believe that there is no other tool more effective for development than the empowerment of women.

I believe that *making places safer for women makes them safer for all of us*.

Let's start to campaign, advocate and become change agents for safer, better planned human settlements and ultimately a better world for everyone. We need to do this by promoting women friendly environments and by incorporating gender specific needs and resources into not only policies, but also programmes. Join me in starting a dialogue and debate on this agenda by contacting:

**Alicia Yon**

CAP Women in Planning Coordinator  
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## **Report on Built Environment Issues in Small Island States and Territories University of Technology, Jamaica , August 2005**

### **Introduction**

The International Conference on Built Environment Issues in Small Island States and Territories was organised by the Faculty of Built Environment at the University of Technology in Kingston Jamaica and held at the Jamaica Conference Centre 3 – 5 August 2005.

The conference was attended by some 85 delegates, mainly from Caribbean nations, but also from UK, USA, Canada, UN ECLAC office in Chile, and myself from Australia.

I represented the SW Pacific Region for the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP). There was a good mix of academics, government and private industry practitioners in the fields of planning, GIS, environmental science, architecture, disaster management, governance and development.

My main purpose was to give a presentation on the concept of *Rapid Action Planning* in relation to natural disaster recovery planning. A copy of the paper is on the CAP website.

### Conference Themes

The conference themes were Land Management, Urban-rural Development, Culture related to Built Environment, Energy and Green Building, and Disaster Mitigation.

The synopsis of papers and discussions are on the conference website and available on CDROM. The website is at: [www.utechjamaica.edu.jm/beisiS/](http://www.utechjamaica.edu.jm/beisiS/)

### Key Issues

Several issues stand out as being important from the small island states perspectives:

- **Energy** - the imminent shortage of petroleum based energy and alternative scenarios
- **Environmental challenges** – increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters
- **Disaster management** – need for more responsive recovery planning in all disasters
- **Resilience** – make communities more resilient to natural, social and economic threats
- **Community involvement** – need to inform and involve local communities in planning
- **Integration** – improved dialogue between policy makers, academics and communities
- **Use of technology** – GIS is a valuable tool for integration and analysis of issues
- **Good governance** – commitment to communication, implementation, accountability

Whilst focusing on small island states, these key issues were considered to be applicable universally. The most urgent issue for all policy makers, planners, developers and the general energy public – that includes absolutely all of us – is to fully comprehend the imminent shortage of petroleum and how we can keep electricity flowing, vehicles operating, the economy running and communities from disintegrating into chaos and conflict in the coming decades of this Century. In addition, disaster preparedness and response must be improved because of the increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters.

These twin scenarios lead to the essential goal to make communities more resilient at the local and regional levels, in the face of threatened breakdown of national and international governance and commerce. For small island states these threats take on the scale of a national crisis, because of the increasing dominance of tourism by air travel and reliance on imported essential goods and materials by sea. It is a looming crisis in which small island states could have a social advantage, in the resilience of communities that can maintain or return to the traditional ways and lifestyle, utilising green building and alternative energy sources. Disaster preparedness and prevention can be improved by scenario anticipation in conjunction with rapid response plans.

However, the role of governance is always important for the community to be assured that limited resources are used wisely in full consultation and accountability by governments that genuinely are for all the people, rather than serving the interests of the few. Academics and professionals have an important role in educating, advocating, warning and if necessary, opposing the policy makers, to avoid or mitigate the potential effects of poor decisions.

### Outcomes

The conference outcomes will be posted on the website and form valuable input into the first World Planners Congress in Vancouver in June 2006.

An insightful comment from a high school student was that such important events should not be held in expensive and relatively secluded circumstances, but should be open to many participants, including senior high school students, who are tomorrow's consumers, parents and leaders. Out of the mouths of the lowly such wisdom comes.

### Roger Brewster

CAP SW Pacific Representative

## Article

### Informal land delivery processes and accommodating growth in African cities<sup>1</sup>

#### Carole Rakodi,

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Between half and three quarters of all new housing in sub-Saharan African cities is built on land that has been supplied through processes that, in one way or another, do not comply with formal legal requirements related to subdivision, transfer or development control. Such urban development processes are undoubtedly problematic, both for the authorities and the residents of the areas developed

<sup>1</sup> The research on which this article is based was funded by the UK Department for International Development. DFID supports policies, programmes and projects to promote international development. It provided funds for this study as part of that objective but the views and opinions expressed are those of the authors alone.

informally: unplanned development results in sprawl, hindering the cost-effective extension of infrastructure and services; some areas develop in areas topographically unsuitable for residential use such as steep slopes and flood-prone areas; unrecognised areas do not generate revenue for local councils; residents experience varying degrees of insecurity of tenure; access by public transport and emergency services may be difficult or impossible; and the services and utilities available to residents may fall far short of what is desirable. Nevertheless, in many respects these channels of land supply are highly successful: they continue to make a much larger contribution to urban development than formal channels, accommodating almost all new low-income and many middle-income households; many of the residential areas have regular layouts; there appear to be relatively few conflicts between actors involved in informal land delivery; and many house owners enjoy considerable *de facto* tenure security.

At the same time, formal titling, urban planning and development control policies and procedures have proved extremely difficult to implement, and the land policy and administration reforms on which many countries embarked in the 1970s have failed to deliver the required numbers of planned and serviced housing plots and have disproportionately benefited higher and middle-income households.

To improve policy and practice, a better understanding is needed of how the informal systems through which half or more of urban residential land in African cities is delivered operate, are evolving and interact with formal land administration systems. This study analysed the characteristics of informal land delivery systems in six medium sized cities in Anglophone Africa (Eldoret in Kenya, Enugu in Nigeria, Gaborone in Botswana, Kampala in Uganda, Lusaka in Zambia and Maseru in Lesotho). Its *aims* were to

- assess the strengths and weaknesses of alternative land delivery mechanisms, especially with respect to the extent to which they enable the poor and women to access land with secure tenure
- increase understanding of the institutions that underpin and regulate transactions and are used to resolve disputes in land

The main *conclusions* were that

- i. Informal land delivery systems are in part a continuation of earlier land administration practices and in part a response to the failures of the formal tenure and land administration systems. These failures include the low levels of compensation paid by government when it expropriates land, as

well as cumbersome and costly regulatory procedures.

- ii. Informal systems of land delivery are the main channels of housing land supply. In the past, in many cities, they enabled all but the poorest to access land for self-managed house construction. Today, non-commercial channels for obtaining land are restricted and the vast majority of households who obtain land through informal channels purchase it. The plots are supplied through subdivision and sale of land held under customary tenure (Enugu, Gaborone, Maseru), by owners and tenants of *mailo* land (Kampala), by the shareholders in land-buying groups or companies (Eldoret), and semi-officially by party and local government officials in and adjacent to regularised informal settlements (Lusaka). It is no longer possible for poor households to access land for new residential building, with a few, often minor, exceptions:
  - membership of an indigenous landowning community (e.g. Enugu, Maseru)
  - settlement in marginal or hazardous areas (e.g. Kampala)
  - allocation of customary land or a serviced plot in Gaborone
  - payment for informally subdivided land in instalments
  - pooling resources to purchase a plot, for example in areas subdivided by land-buying companies in Eldoret
  - some local residents in regularised informal settlements in Lusaka.
- iii. For many new households in contemporary African cities, especially the poor, the only way of becoming the owner of a plot on which to build a house is through the subdivision or inheritance of a parent's plot. In practice, most poor households are tenants.
- iv. Informal land delivery processes are often effective in delivering land for housing, because of their user-friendly characteristics and social legitimacy. This legitimacy derives from the widely understood and accepted social institutions that regulate transactions in these informal systems. These institutions are generally derived from customary institutions, but have evolved over time. In particular, in urban contexts, they have often borrowed from and mimic formal rules and procedures, or take advantage of ambiguities and inconsistencies in formal rules.

- v. Urban growth and development increase the pressure on such social institutions, and in some cases, they weaken and break down, leading to increased tenure insecurity. In such situations, actors in land transactions and disputes seek to use formal institutions to protect their rights and investments. In some cities, informal practices are recognised by the formal legal and administrative systems, leading to recognition of transactions by the courts and often resulting in regularisation of informally developed areas. Elsewhere, despite official policy, accommodations have been reached between some government institutions and their employees and actors in informal processes. The extent to which state institutions recognise informal practices varies between cities and over time and, in the absence of a legal basis for such toleration and cooperation, subdividers and purchasers certainly cannot rely on it. Nevertheless, it is clear that much could potentially be learnt about how to devise more effective land administration and planning systems in African cities by understanding both how informal land delivery processes operate on such a large scale and the ways in which state and non-state actors are starting to work together.

### Policy implications

The findings and their policy implications were discussed in a series of country level workshops involving the research teams, professionals from central and local government agencies and sometimes politicians, as well as in a comparative international workshop. There was broad agreement on the policy implications, although not all those involved in the country workshops would agree with all the policy implications identified below.

- i. Informal land delivery systems play a significant and effective role in urban residential land delivery in African cities and so should be tolerated and accommodated. Their strengths should be recognised and built on. However, their shortcomings should also be identified and addressed.
- ii. To encourage investment in both owner-occupied and rental housing, the tenure security available to those who access land through informal delivery channels should be enhanced. In some circumstances, this may imply individual titling, but wholesale titling is often not appropriate, for three main reasons:
  - Titling massively increases the value of urban land, making it even less accessible to low-income groups.

- There is rarely capacity in the formal regulatory system to adjudicate, survey and register large numbers of individual titles. Rather than issuing titles to a minority of landholders, which increases inequality and the scope for corruption, the resources available should be used more strategically, to guide urban development.
- Owner-occupiers are unlikely to mortgage their homes in order to release the capital tied up in property for other purposes. The reasons include the absence of developed financial systems, as well as the priority households give to livelihood security and their desire to bequeath urban property to their successors.

In many countries, alternatives to universal individual plot titles are already available under existing legislation.

In addition, threats to security often arise from government action, especially evictions.

- Governments should, at the very least, provide basic short-term security to residents in informal settlements and, in the vast majority of cases, should cease to evict settlers and demolish houses.
  - Security can be enhanced by public sector agencies accepting innovations in procedures and documentation that have emerged in informal systems, because these are popularly understood, widely accepted, cheap and procedurally simple.
- iii. The poor layouts and inadequate services that often characterise informal settlements can be addressed by recognising such areas, paving the way for working with subdividers and sellers to improve layouts and enabling the early provision of basic services.
  - iv. As well as making it possible to charge users for services, the registration of occupiers enables local governments to generate tax revenue.
  - v. To build on the strengths and address the weaknesses of informal delivery systems in varying local contexts, the formal land administration system should be decentralised, in particular to provide for local registration of land rights and transactions.
  - vi. Revised compensation provisions are needed, requiring government to pay adequate and fair compensation when it expropriates land for public

purposes from private or customary rights holders. This would

- Deter premature informal subdivision intended to pre-empt arbitrary and under-compensated expropriation (e.g. Enugu and Maseru)
- Improve the operation of some state-led subdivision and allocation processes (e.g. the operations of Land Boards in Gaborone)
- Increase the ability of governments to fulfil public sector goals, such as providing land for infrastructure or industry, without antagonising local land rights holders (e.g. Enugu)
- Enable governments to increase the supply of serviced land for low- income housing.

### Obstacles

The obstacles to more progressive policies and practices include outdated and inappropriate legislation, excessive centralisation, lack of financial and administrative capacity, and resistance on the part of politicians and professionals. Professional resistance was surprisingly widespread. Many professionals interviewed in the studies, including planners, considered actors in informal land delivery processes to be unaware of the need for orderly layouts. Instead, they regarded informal subdividers and builders as ‘law breakers’ who are either ignorant of or deliberately flout regulations. Such professionals are committed to implementing cumbersome administrative procedures, despite their manifest failure, and high planning and building standards, despite their inappropriateness. They are mostly blind to the ways in which dysfunctional arrangements for land administration force prospective home-owners into illegal actions and the attempts of many informal subdividers achieve regular layouts and to reserve land for access ways and social facilities.

There is enormous scope for progressive planners to recognise the positive role played by the actors in informal land delivery processes, to listen to their views on the shortcomings of the formal processes, to learn from their practices and to work with them and their political representatives to develop locally appropriate and acceptable ways of facilitating improved patterns of urban development.

### Publications

Publications emerging from the project can be obtained by contacting Carol Fowler by telephone +44(0)121 414 4986 or E mail [c.a.fowler@bham.ac.uk](mailto:c.a.fowler@bham.ac.uk). They can also be downloaded as pdf files from <http://www.idd.bham.ac.uk/research/researchprojs.htm>

### Informal Land Delivery Processes in African Cities Working papers

1. Rakodi, C. and Leduka, C. (2003) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor in Six African Cities: Towards a Conceptual Framework*.
2. Ikejiofor, C.U. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor in Enugu, Nigeria*
3. Kalabamu, F.T. and Morolong, S. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor in Greater Gaborone, Botswana*
4. Musyoka, R. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor in Eldoret, Kenya*
5. Leduka, R.C. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor in Maseru, Lesotho*
6. Nkurunziza, E. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor in Kampala, Uganda*
7. Mulenga, L.C. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor in Lusaka, Zambia*

### Policy briefs

1. Ikejiofor, C.U. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery in Enugu, Nigeria: Summary of Findings and Policy Implications*
2. Kalabamu, F.T. (2004) *Land Delivery Processes in Greater Gaborone, Botswana: Constraints, Opportunities and Policy Implications*
3. Musyoka, R. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery in Eldoret, Kenya: Summary of Findings and Policy Implications*
4. Leduka, R.C. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor in Maseru, Lesotho*
5. Nkurunziza, E. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes in Kampala, Uganda: Summary of Findings and Policy Implications*
6. Rakodi, C. and Leduka, R.C. (2004) *Informal Land Delivery Processes and Access to Land for the Poor: A Comparative Study of Six African Cities*

## Building Commonwealth *Planning Action*

A summary of a paper developed for the Executive by  
**Roger Brewster**

Rapid and unplanned urbanisation is affecting the world's poorest cities, including the CAP African, Asian and Pacific regions. Municipal administrations responsible for planning and managing these cities need training, technical assistance and policy advice from their counterparts in richer countries and opportunities to learn from each other.

Many international development agencies are developing urban agendas and programming strategies. The implementation of these urban agendas depends on active involvement of organisations such as CAP member institutes.

- CAP can play an important coordinating role in capacity building in under-resourced Commonwealth countries. This was discussed and endorsed at the 2004 Business Meeting.

The current commitment in most CAP Institutes (e.g. PIA) is voluntary and open ended - the participants could easily be swamped with assistance requests, with time and cost management, as well as insurance implications, well beyond any voluntary involvement.

There is a need to build support within the planning profession for international issues and opportunities to inspire the broader base of grassroots membership. This will require building the credibility of CAP member international initiatives, building relationships with other professional, industry and government bodies, as well as civil society and religious NGOs active internationally.

A sustainable, long term role for CAP Planning Action would require an expanded and sustained resource base. Options for building and expanding the resource base include:

- Increasing the willingness of CAP members to re-allocate existing resources to international activities.
- Expanding membership with an international focus.
- Working in partnership with other organisations and donor agencies in order to share their resources.
- Working with government bodies in a position to fund international activities.
- Generating resources through collaboration with international agencies and corporate sponsors.

A number of strategic objectives can be identified for CAP. These might include:

1. Leadership and coordination roles in international planning assistance to achieve more sustainable and equitable human settlements.

2. CAP Member professional participation in international planning and development projects.
3. Education, awareness and capacity building.
4. Grow the CAP Women in Planning Network.

To move towards realizing these objectives, there are 7 vital steps to fulfill:

1. Management and staffing – nothing will happen without people to do it.
2. Financial backing – limited progress can be made voluntarily, but funding is essential.
3. Credibility in program delivery – what is needed, how to do it, project management.
4. Partnership arrangements – take friends with us on the journey.
5. Accountability policies and practices – we will be transparent in all our dealings.
6. Exit strategies – do not get trapped in open ended commitments and dead end projects.
7. Member empowerment through celebrating successes – public relations exercises to tell and share the stories and inspire further efforts.

A small paid professional and administrative support staff would be essential to provide leadership and coordinate/manage the development and implementation of these activities. To achieve such a shift there would have to be sponsorship and revenue generation. Funding strategies might include:

- Expression of Interest with UNDP, ADB, World Bank and other agencies for provision of planning services
- Major aid donor agencies - partnership arrangements - e.g. World Vision, Salvation Army, Anglicare, CAFOD, CARE, Plan International, Red Cross/Crescent
- Seek corporate sponsorship arrangements with major construction firms
- Member institutes - a small share of their sponsorship and grant funding if possible
- Conference and training attendance support funding (e.g. AusAID ISSS)

An important aspect of programme delivery is broad project management and coordination. Member institutes could subscribe to this initiative by encouraging planners to be involved, through raising awareness of the opportunities and setting up databases of interested people.

The Directorate would also need to educate and “sell the benefits” of the programmes to members. These criteria add to the need for full time salaried staff, to be able to devote the necessary time and effort to gain the maximum effectiveness of such an initiative.

## Book Review

### **Removing Unfreedoms: Citizens as Agents of Change in Urban Development**

*Romi Khosla and Jane Samuels*

ITDG Publishing, Warwickshire, United Kingdom, 2005, 88 pages. ISBN 1-85593-606-0 (paperback).

Jane Samuels prefaces this book by insisting that there is an “urgent need to modify international urban development policy frameworks and to modify the current range of evaluation and indicators that are used in order to inform policy makers”. This serves as an encouragement to read further. Nesreen Brewari and Michael Mutter raise a fundamental question in the introductory chapter, “what is the effect of international and national development policies and programmes at the level at which the people feel directly?” Berwari and Mutter note that the current approach to development, notwithstanding the use to Human Development Indicators, is insufficient because the persistent level of poverty in urban areas has not been addressed. Issues highlighted in the Preface and Introduction should set the stage for the rest of the text, however, the reader is quickly disappointed because the arguments in support of Sen’s new approach are not fully developed to be convincing.

The book consists of three parts with thirteen chapters. The first three chapters, which are included in part one, provide historical overview of urbanization from a European perspective. The authors also outline Sen’s theory of urban development in this section. According to the authors, Sen’s central thesis is that for cities to develop effectively, government should not control the direction of growth but rather allow people the freedom to choose. Amartya Sen, the distinguished Nobel Prize winner for economics, believes that for urban development to be successful, five freedoms must be given priority, namely, Social opportunities, protective security, transparency, political freedom and economic facility, must be realised simultaneously. The authors point out that Sen does not see any one freedom as having priority. However, by Sen’s own admission, “we will have to look at the circumstances that produce the kind of analysis and then see which aspect we ought to emphasise now (p.51). This statement suggests a level of priority setting.

Furthermore, Sen states that the government must be committed to “identifying the obstruction to the individual’s ability to take part in social decision making process.” (p.30). I agree with the need for government commitment to identify obstructions. Equally important, also, is the need for government to be committed to removing these obstructions. Unfortunately, the authors, in support of Sen’s thesis, fall short by not highlighting how this can be achieved.

Chapters four, five and six form part two of the text. In these chapters the authors provide detailed explanation of the five freedoms and an evaluation of current indicators of urban development. The authors attempt to provide an alternative to evaluating development based on Sen’s five freedoms. Khosla and Samuels recognise the importance of putting forward a new approach to evaluation because the existing theories of urban development, even the Human Development Index (HDI), rely on quantitative economic indicators rather than the more qualitative social indicators as purported by Sen. Khosla and Samuels argue that Sen’s five freedoms approach can be measured by using top-down, deductive, quantitative methods and bottom-up inductive qualitative methods. For example, the top-down measurement for social opportunity can include life expectancy, birth/death rate. It can also include access to alternative medicine practitioners, exposure to pollution, and stability of dwelling. While these alternative indicators are useful, the authors do not specify how and why they were selected as alternative indicators.

In Chapter Six, the authors’ contrast the current policy approaches of the Department For International Development (DIFID) and UN-Habitat to Sen’s proposed “freedom approach.” The authors concurred that DFID and Sen’s approach are “mutually interlinked,” however, unlike DIFID’s focus on poverty eradication; Sen’s theoretical emphasis is on the expansion of the individual freedom “to live the life that he values.” This concept cannot be measured solely in monetary terms. Comparing Sen’s approach to that of Habitat, the authors point out that Habitat Agenda, as agreed in the Istanbul Declaration, is limited because it is only “advisory and there is not enough coordination, understanding, involvement or obligation from all sectors to address the Agenda’s commitment effectively” (p. 70). Khosla and Samuels raised valid points in this chapter, however, they fail to outline how Sen’s approach would address the limitation of DIFID and Habitat. In Table 2, “A Comparison of Goals”, the strategies associated with UN-Habitat and DIFID are outlined. However, there were strategies associated with Sen’s new approach. Table 3, more aptly compares the strategies. Unfortunately, it is misplaced in chapter 11.

Chapters seven to thirteen are included in the third and final section of the book. In chapter seven entitled, “The Challenge,” the authors attempt to outline the limitation of adopting Sen’s approach. Unfortunately, this chapter was redundant as it was not necessary to repeat the points made about community participation and new evaluation techniques in chapters three and five.

The role of education and culture is dealt with in chapters eight and nine respectively. Education is discussed within the context of value setting and human development. Khosla and Samuels conclude that the individual should play a role in defining what is universal in the learning process. They believe that this should be done without

restraint to any group, particularly minority groups. The authors drew on the experiences in India and Palestine to show the importance of citizen participation in shaping the educational policies, which are often tied to national development.

Unlike most urban development theorists, Sen sees culture as an important factor in the development process. However, Khosla and Samuels do not justify its importance except to outline cases where freedom was not realized because of conflict between groups of varying cultural background.

In chapter ten, the authors attempt to show how Sen's new approach would be implemented. They recognized that in previous chapters there was a disconnection between Sen's discourse and the project implementation. In making an argument for the flexibility embedded in Sen's freedom approach, the authors state that "implementation of the project will be decided as an outcome of participation and a re-ordering of needs" (p. 113). Once again, there is no clear-cut method of how this new approach can be realised, monitored or evaluated.

Analysis of the findings based on the study of the National Slum Dweller Federation, the Mahila Milan Women Saving Group and the Society for Area Resources Center (SPARC) is discussed in chapter eleven. This study was conducted over a three-year period. The project did not evaluate or measure the tangible outcomes. Instead, it was aimed at determining the extent to which the individual was the agent of change. The findings of the research reveal the difficulty in quantifying some of the outcomes.

The findings also highlighted a methodology that can prove useful in obtaining information about a community. Community-led evaluation allows for a survey to be designed based on criteria accepted by the community. The authors argue that a survey designed by the community will yield more accurate and representative information that can then be easily quantified.

The authors note that a significant outcome of the NSDF and SPARC project was the provision of approximately 1700 housing solutions for almost 15,000 slum dwellers (p. 132). In addition, the community is looking to opt out of the municipal system for certain services and governance. According to the authors, the experience of slum dwellers was restricted by the municipal bylaws. These laws restricted planning and building and prevent the slum dwellers from accessing shelter, which they deem appropriate. These laws were put in place without conferring with the communities and do not consider alternative opportunities required by the diversity of persons using the urban landscape. In other words, slum dwellers did not have the freedom to make appropriate land use choices. By allowing the slum dwellers to play a more active role in the decision making process, the "unfreedom" was removed.

The analysis of Afghanistan's Urban Recovery Programme presented in chapter twelve did not provide a clear example of the use of Sen's approach. Unlike the study of the slum dwellers, with clear outputs, the situation in Afghanistan is still evolving. Readers will find this analysis of an evolving process premature. The final chapter entitled "looking ahead," is more of a repeat of chapter three rather than a summary of the applicability of Sen's work.

I agree with the authors that cities are the instrument of change and there is a need to strengthen the city-to-city cooperation across the developed and underdeveloped divide. To facilitate this, there is a need to establish a global monitoring mechanism to measure the cause of underdevelopment. Unfortunately, the authors do not state how this would be done.

Based on the title of the book, I anticipated at least a series of case studies on citizens as change agents in various cities across the globe. Instead, the authors use this medium to explain Amartya Sen's new theoretical approach to urban development. Urban planners, policy makers, community development specialists, the intended audience for this book, will agree to Sen's new approach as put forward by Khosla and Samuels. However, without providing a basis on which this approach can be further developed and implemented they have not convinced this audience of the efficacy of this approach.

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## **Conferences**

### **World Planners' Congress**

17 June – 20 June 2006

Westin Bayshore Resort, Vancouver, Canada

For details see [www.wpc2006.com](http://www.wpc2006.com).

### **World Urban Forum III**

19 June – 23 June 2006

Westin Bayshore Resort, Vancouver, Canada

## **Royal Town Planning Institute The Planning Convention London 2006**

29 June – 30 June 2006

The Queen Elizabeth II, Conference Centre, London

Further details available on the RTPI website at

[www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk).

## **Planning Africa**

24-26 March 2006

Cape Town International Convention Centre

Further details available on

[www.saplanners.org.za/Conference2006](http://www.saplanners.org.za/Conference2006).

## **Planning Institute of Australia / New Zealand Planning Institute Congress**

2-5 April 2006

Gold Coast, Queensland.

For details go to [www.planning.org.au](http://www.planning.org.au).

## **London Women and Planning Forum ESRC Seminar Series Nov 2004 – June 2006 Capital Designs: Women and Planning in Contemporary London**

Further information available from Dr Alison Blunt,  
Department of Geography, Queen Mary, University of  
London. Email: [A.Blunt@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:A.Blunt@qmul.ac.uk)

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