

Urban Environment Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean

This joint strategy is a response to the increasing demand of local and national authorities to reduce urban environment degradation in Latin America and the Caribbean Region. In this highly urbanised region environmental degradation affects primarily the poor as they are extremely vulnerable to environmental hazards and their severe impacts on public health.

The strategy builds on experiences developed by both agencies in urban environment planning and management. It aims to support municipalities and cities in preparing urban environmental assessments, based on the **UNEP GEO Cities Project** and its methodology for assessing the state of the urban environment. During the first phase, UNEP will assume the leadership in supporting the preparation of GEO City Reports in order to supply local governments, policy-makers and the public in general with reliable and up-to-date information about the urban environment, thus providing a foundation on which policy-making can be based. This in turn will help to strengthen national and local capacities to continuously monitor the state of the urban environment.

Once the environmental assessment of the city had been completed, the support will concentrate on improving urban planning and management processes by selecting priority issues; identifying strategic options shared among all concerned actors; formulating urban-environmental action plans to be included in municipal and physical planning; and implementing such plans. During this phase, given its experience, UN-HABITAT will play a central role. The experience gained in more than 40 cities all over the world through the **Localising Agenda 21 and Sustainable Cities Programmes** will be strategically important. This

experience will be made available to local and national governments in the region by providing technical support and tools needed to support urban environmental planning and management processes.

The strategy, which was agreed upon at the beginning of 2004, is currently being implemented in Brazil, Peru and Cuba. In each country, 3 to 4 cities are being supported. These will serve as a basis for further replications. Other countries are also expected to join in the future.

The implementation of the strategy will be financed with resources from both agencies in the form of seed money. This will be complemented by national and local funding. The strategy will enhance cooperation between national and municipal governments as well as allow national ministries responsible for the urban sector and the environment to establish or strengthen their cooperation and joint efforts. This would result in better coordinated support to municipalities. It is also envisaged to offer an attractive framework for regional funding mechanisms and for attracting bilateral and multilateral donors interested in supporting a concerted initiative on the urban environment in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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Expanding non-motorised transport for improved urban mobility

Bayamo, Cuba

In 2003, the Bayamo environmental profile assessed that 80 per cent of public transport sector was provided by horse-carts. However, still the horse-cart service was very limited in its outreach. The northern part of the city especially where 60 per cent of the population lives (including the most vulnerable citizens), was left without any public transport. This issue was strongly debated at the city consultation and a working group subsequently prepared a strategy and an action plan to offer transport covering the entire city. It took a lot of efforts involving all concerned actors including the municipality, local communities, horse-carts and bicycle-taxi operators, to agree on how to improve transport services. In the beginning of July 2004, new stations and routes were inaugurated by the Belgian Ambassador to Cuba. Now a greater number of citizens have access to public transport based on horse-carts and bicycle-taxis and urban mobility is expected to be further improved for bicycles and pedestrians.

Bayamo has proved that motorised transport is not the only solution!



Morocco pioneers Local Agenda 21 approaches

in the Arab States Region



Starting in Essaouira, Morocco has embarked upon an extensive exercise in pioneering Local Agenda 21 approaches in the Arab States Region. The Moroccan Government, together with UNDP and the Localising Agenda 21 Programme, is currently supporting three major cities (Marrakech, Meknes and Agadir). Local Agenda 21 projects in these cities started in 2003. Environmental profiles were prepared and the city consultations took place the same year. Since then, working groups have been engaged in developing strategies and action plans on issues such as access to basic urban services, tourism and cultural heritage management, and water management. It has been estimated that working group efforts so far represent about 1,000 working

days in each city. This systematic and participatory effort led to the preparation of action plans, which were debated during the Strategy Consultations in March/April 2004. With an average of 500 participants, these consultations were an opportunity for newly elected municipal authorities to reconfirm the importance of Local Agenda 21. The LA21 initiative provides a coherent and shared framework to guide urban development, environmental management and poverty reduction. It has also been extended further to urban centres in the Marrakech Region. This will offer an opportunity to work on urban-rural linkages and to contribute to the regional planning exercise, bringing local and environmental perspectives into it.

Due to the success of ongoing projects, there is a very high demand from municipalities for support in the preparation of their Local Agendas 21. The government is currently establishing support mechanisms that will facilitate effective response to this demand.

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Bobo-Dioulasso finds a strategy on Basic Urban Services

On Wednesday 9th June 2004, a consultation took place in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, on improving access to basic urban services. This consultation brought together about 100 actors from one of the neighborhoods of the town (Sector 21) with technicians and political leaders. This initiative promotes a greater involvement of communities in basic urban services delivery and management, with the ultimate objective of reducing urban poverty through public-private partnerships.

Today, only 10 per cent of the household waste is collected and many families do not have proper access to safe drinking water. The Mayor of Bobo-Dioulasso, Mr. Koussoube underlined the need for regaining the former image of the city as a clean city and ensuring good living conditions for all citizens. He pointed out that this project will provide experience to be replicated in the other neighborhoods of the city and subsequently in other cities of Burkina Faso.

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more about BUS at www.irc.nl



In a final declaration all participants stated: "We commit to continue working together for the search of solutions allowing general access to basic urban services. We all will contribute to the necessary actions which will be identified to do so."

Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM) in Kisumu



Boda Boda originated from cross-border black-market trading using bicycles.

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Boda bodas are a common phenomenon in Kisumu. They are cheap, relatively fast and stop wherever the passenger wants to get off. The problem is that they are not safe, mainly because of the missing corresponding infrastructure and of ignorance of the various road users regarding road regulations .

This was one of the reasons for the selection of Kisumu, as the first **SUM demonstration city**. Kisumu is a middle size town with approx. 350,000 inhabitants in the western part of Kenya, on the shores of Lake Victoria. Kisumu is the leading commercial, trading, fishing, industrial, communication and administrative centre in the Lake Victoria basin. In the coming months Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP) will work in close collaboration with ITDG, IHE-UNESCO, Kisumu City Council and stakeholders from various areas to develop an Environmental Profile. This will focus almost entirely on mobility and transport and on interventions to support the bicyclists in Kisumu.

Supporting the *boda bodas* means not only improving the air quality and the environment in and around Kisumu; it is also a **key element of the poverty reduction strategy**. *Boda bodas* provide employment to many people in Kisumu, and they offer cheap transportation to even more people.

In December 2003, the first mission of a series of missions to Kisumu took place to learn more about the opportunities and needs of this lake town. The Development of the Environmental Profile (EP) was initiated.

After the EP is developed, there will be a **SUM-city** consultation involving the different stakeholders such as pedestrians, *boda boda* drivers, *matatu* operators, private sector and the police. During the workshops, these stakeholders will be expected to come up with concrete action plans to address specific issues. These action plans will form the basis of interventions to support Kisumu in becoming a sustainable urban mobility city, where it is safe, cheap and healthy to use non-motorised transport.

Introduction of Partner: InWEnt

In order to be able to respond better to the demands of cities aiming at more sustainable urban development, the Sustainable Cities Programme and InWEnt - Capacity Building International, Germany have agreed to **use InWEnt's practice-oriented professional training**, international dialogue and exchange programmes **to improve urban management capacities among the partners** of the Sustainable Cities Programme. This would help in strengthening South-South-cooperation within the Programme and linking it with partners working with InWEnt and other relevant networks. A number of practitioners from SCP partner cities have already been shortlisted for training courses in Germany.

InWEnt was established in 2002 through a merger of Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft e.V. (CDG) and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE). The new organisation can draw on five decades of experience that both organisations have gained in the field of international cooperation and dialogue. It focuses on experts, managers and decision-makers from business and industry, politics, public administration and civil society from all over the world. Funded primarily by the German federal and state governments and multilateral organizations, nearly 35,000 people participate in InWEnt's training and capacity building activities a year.

InWEnt invites all partners of SCP to give feedback about their priorities for action in the field of urban management and their assessment of training needs for decision-makers from local governments and infrastructure providers.

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inWEnt
Internationale Weiterbildung
und Entwicklung gGmbH

SUM

Partner

Sustainable Urbanisation at World Urban Forum II

Barcelona is preparing for the 2nd gathering of UN-HABITAT's World Urban Forum between 13-17 September 2004. Held every two years, the Forum is a key global initiative to address and keep abreast of the main challenge of the new Millennium - our planet's transition to an urban world. The theme of this year's forum is:

"Cities: Crossroads of cultures, inclusiveness and integration?"

Dialogue on Urban Sustainability

This session is organized by UN-HABITAT in close collaboration with UNEP. It is a follow-up to WSSD, focusing on increased commitment of all development partners to support a coalition of joint efforts, particularly in the area of urban environment at the local, national and global levels. It is linked to the MDGs, CSD12 (water, sanitation and human settlements), and other global environmental discussions.

A culture of partnerships can help in making sustainable urban development meaningful and achievable through more Resources and Action, better Implementation and Impact. "Sustainable Urbanisation" has no ready-made menu that cities can follow. There are no easy answers or shortcuts. Instead, UN-HABITAT has chosen to look at Sustainable Urbanisation as a process of challenges and responses - which must be considered under a broad framework of "improving urban governance".

This includes areas as effective decentralisation, empowerment of stakeholders for decision-making and meaningful participation, adequate basic urban services, social justice and inclusion, balanced environmental impact, gender concerns, local capacity development and mobilisation of local resources.

Sessions to note down:

Dialogue - Urban Sustainability

Wednesday, 15th September,
10 am to 1 pm
room 111+112

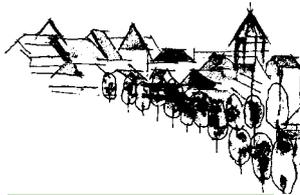
MILES - Managing Information on Local Environments

Thursday, 16th September,
10 am to 1 pm
room 120

Tourism, Sustainable Urbanisation and Poverty Alleviation

Thursday, 16th September
3 pm to 6 pm
room 120

Events



WORLD URBAN FORUM
FORUM URBAIN MONDIAL
FORO URBANO MUNDIAL

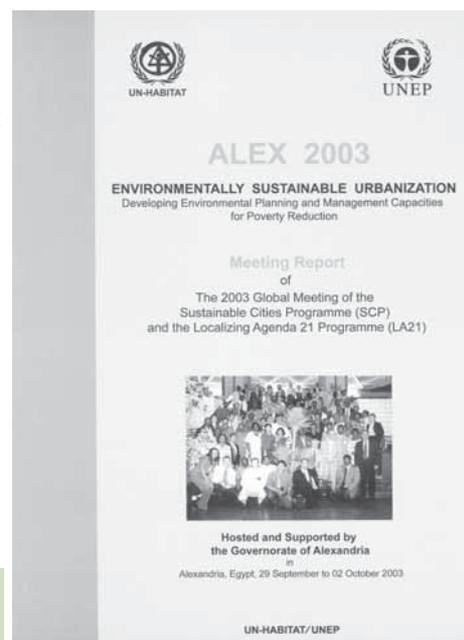
Alexandria 2003 Global Meeting Report with CD-ROM

The 2003 Global Meeting of the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP) and the Localising Agenda 21 Programme (LA21) took place in Alexandria, Egypt, from 29 September to 2 October 2003. It focused on "Environmentally Sustainable Urbanisation", with special emphasis on developing environmental planning and management (EPM) capacities for poverty reduction.

"Alex 2003" brought together over 200 participants from a wide range of city practitioners, analysts, policy-makers and the donor community from all over the world. The proceedings were documented and are now available as a publication as well as on a CD-ROM.

The report can be downloaded at
<http://www.unhabitat.org/programmes/SustainableCities>

It also can be ordered at
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Publications

