



THE E-NEWSLETTER FOR THE CITIES ALLIANCE

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We invite Cities Alliance members and partners to submit articles on their activities, with a strong focus on impacts and lessons learned there from. For further details on providing such submissions send an e-mail to [us](#).

NEWS

Mayors of Major African Cities Voice Concerns Over Climate Change

At a two-day conference hosted by UN-Habitat in Nairobi, Kenya, mayors from 33 capital and major cities of Africa met and voiced their concerns regarding the potential damage caused by the effects of climate change to their cities.

They argued that despite their relatively low contribution to global warming, African cities are being disproportionately affected by rising emissions.

For instance, the mayor of Banjul, capital of Gambia, observed that a one-metre rise in sea level near his city would result in a 50 percent loss in landmass coverage. Since most of Banjul is one metre below sea level, such a scenario would pose a serious threat to human settlements, health and food security.

The mayors promised to enhance their efforts to develop adaptation and mitigation plans for African cities. At the conclusion of the conference, they issued the Nairobi Declaration, in which they resolved to integrate these plans in city development strategies.

A contact group with members drawn from the five regions was elected to ensure follow-up actions to the Nairobi Declaration. The mayors also resolved to raise the voice of African cities by participating actively in the ongoing global climate change policy development process, towards the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen later this year, and beyond.

Speaking at the end of the meeting, UN-HABITAT Executive Director, Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka said the regional conference had provided a new impetus to the local government movement in Africa. "I am comforted that this conference has not been yet another forum for making laudable proclamations. The outcome is a realistic call for collective action," she said.

Participants at the conference also included Ms. Elisabeth Gateau, the Secretary General of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and Ms. Grace Ekpiwhre, the Chair of the African Ministerial Conference of Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD).

For more information on the African Mayors conference on Climate change click [here](#).



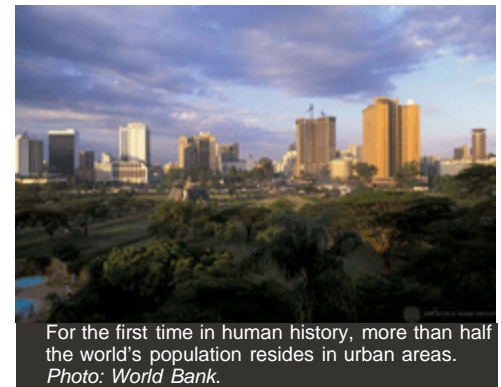
Despite its low carbon footprint, Africa has been unduly affected by global climate change. Photo: World Bank.

The New World Bank Urban Strategy: Changing with the Times

The World Bank has embarked on a process of updating its urban strategy.

The new strategy reflects upon key developments over the past decade, assesses the impact of interventions and policies that worked (or failed) during this period, and provides insights into new

directions and adjustments that may be needed in the coming decade.



The most fundamental rationale for an update at this time reflects a paradigm shift in the way the developing world, the World Bank, and its donor partners must begin to think and act in addressing the opportunities and challenges of rapid urbanization.

The current World Bank Urban Strategy – “Cities in Transition: World Bank Urban and Local Government Strategy” – was issued in 2000. It was a well-received document that proffered thoughtful approaches to addressing the challenges facing growing cities, with a focus on four key pillars. The emphasis of Cities in Transition was on four key pillars: bankability, competitiveness, good management and governance, and livability. That strategy still remains an important conceptual framework in supporting cities over the decade ahead.

However, over the past decade its messages and strategic focus have been outstripped by new developments, such as the climate change agenda and food security. There has also been a renewed interest in addressing issues related to energy efficiency and measuring the impacts of globalization and rapid urbanization.

More information on the new urban strategy of the World Bank can be found on their [website](#). The site serves as a common platform for exchanging ideas, information and experience about urban development policies and practices around the world. The discussion generated on this website is expected to help shape the new World Bank Urban Strategy and, pave the way for mutually beneficial partnerships with developing cities and other stakeholders in the years ahead.

Lending a Hand: Helping the World's Poorest Cope with Climate Change

The Global Initiative on Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change will help the world's poorest communities adapt to climate change.

More than 150 representatives of donor agencies, international NGOs and research institutes pledged their support to the initiative at the Third International Conference on Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change.

The event was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from February 18-24.



The organizations backing the initiative include International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the Stockholm Environment Institute, Oxfam International, the Development Fund of Norway, Action Aid, World Wildlife Fund, CARE International, the Bangladesh Center for Advance Studies, and many others.

They have recognized adaptation at the community level as an urgent response to the threat of climate change. A series of international conferences have been planned to enable experts to share information about what works best and how adaptation strategies

in one part of the world can be replicated and scaled-up elsewhere. An online platform will also support the cause.

The move was announced by Dr. Saleemul Huq, senior fellow in the climate change group at the IIED. "Climate change is already having serious impacts on the lives and livelihoods of people in poor communities around the world," says Huq. "These people urgently need to adapt at the community level by making changes to the way they live and work. The polluters that have caused this problem should accept their responsibilities and help these communities to adapt by providing compensation in the form of funding, technology and technical expertise."

The next international conference will be held in Tanzania in September of 2009.

For more on the Global Initiative on Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change [click here](#).

Successful Cities Alliance Slum Upgrading Project to be Replicated in Recife

The European Union (EU) has agreed to co-finance a project to reduce poverty in Recife, the capital of the northeastern Brazilian state of Pernambuco.

The venture draws from the Technical and Social Support Project (PATS), a successful slum upgrading project in Salvador, Brazil that was supported by the Cities Alliance with the Bahia state government. The Bahia project is described in detail in the Cities Alliance publication [Alagados: The Story of Integrated Slum Upgrading in Salvador \(Bahia\), Brazil](#).



The EU will finance 75 percent of the \$1.3 million project, which will focus on six slum communities in the Recife-Olinda metropolitan area. The project proposal was put forward by the municipality of Olinda and the AVSI Foundation.

The Recife project will have a strong civil society component, with the aim of increasing access to social services and spur job creation, particularly for young slum dwellers. Additionally, an advocacy component will articulate the need for an integrated social and territorial approach to slum upgrading that can be replicated throughout Pernambuco.

The social development planning and activities that will be developed as part of the Recife project will ultimately be integrated into slum upgrading programmes financed by the Brazilian government and the World Bank.

In related news, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva highlighted the government's support for its poorest citizens in a February 4 interview with the BBC.

"We have the biggest investment programme of shantytown urbanization, basic sanitation and house building that Brazil has ever had," the president told the BBC.

Megacities: Challenges and Opportunities

A workshop on "Megacities: Challenges and Opportunities" was held at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, DC on February 4.

At the workshop, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to launch a new knowledge

partnership between the World Bank's East Asia Region and the University of Southern California (USC).

Following the signing of the MoU, a range of panelists discussed specific issues related to megacities and how they fit in with the World Bank's urban agenda.

The rapid rate of urban growth, climate change, disaster risk reduction, and metropolitan governance were all discussed in detail.

Other key points that emerged from the panel discussions were:

- Megacities are not entirely negative. While there are challenges related to dealing with them – including pollution, vulnerability to disaster, transportation, crime and poverty – they play a positive role by driving economic growth.
- It is impractical to think that cities can simply impose solutions to slums from the top down. In order to really make an impact, slum upgrading efforts need the active support of the slum dwellers that are directly affected.
- Cities produce nearly 80 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. However, these cities also have the capacity to bring about innovative policy measures that help minimize the effects.

The MoU is expected to formalize the partnership between The World Bank and USC, and open the way to increased joint research undertakings, knowledge sharing, and exchanges of expertise.



James Adams, Vice President of the World Bank's East Asia Region (right) signs the MoU with Jack Knott, Dean of USC School of Policy, Planning and Development.

Transforming Mumbai into a World Class City

The Mumbai Transformation Support Unit (MTSU) recently issued a report on Phase I of a massive, wide-ranging initiative that would help turn Mumbai into a world-class city.

In the Foreword to the well designed publication, Mr. UPS Madan, Project Manager, MTSU called it "a report card of sorts, seeking to showcase and share with all the efforts made by the MTSU over the past two years; it is also indicative of what we could have in store. Here is a much bigger body of work behind us than we have covered in this document."

The MTSU was established in 2004 by the World Bank, the Cities Alliance, USAID, and the Government of Maharashtra under the aegis of the All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIILSG).

The initiative provides support for more than 40 projects to improve economic growth in Mumbai, reduce poverty and enhance quality of life for residents, especially slum dwellers. The projects focus on physical and social infrastructure, environment, housing,



governance, strategic planning and economic growth. They range from slum rehabilitation to rent control to the construction of a new international airport at Navi Mumbai.

Tangible results during this phase include the following:

- The formulation of a housing policy for the state of Maharashtra (declared in 2007).
- The repeal of an obsolete act that put a ceiling on urban land holding.
- The beautification and upkeep of historic neighborhoods and buildings.

For more about the MTSU, please visit its [website](#).

World Bank Urban Week 2009: "Innovations in Urban Space"

The 2009 Urban Week was held at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, DC March 9-12. This year's theme was "Innovations in Urban Space."

The program included an Urban Forum and a series of learning events on topics including urban poverty, housing and land, and urban environment and climate change. The event, which is held annually, provided the opportunity for colleagues to share information, network, and exchange views with colleagues and partner organizations.

Julian Baskin, Sr. Urban Specialist of the Cities Alliance presented examples from South Africa and Angola, highlighting the intricate relationships of stakeholders involved in slum upgrading programmes.



Julian Baskin, Sr. Urban Specialist of the Cities Alliance highlights the importance of negotiations to slum upgrading.

He stressed that negotiations within communities are just as important as those between them when it comes to implementing successful projects. Through the use of specific examples, Baskin showed that by clearly demonstrating the benefits of participation, stakeholder involvement in projects could be maximized.

Public Policy Forum and Consultative Group Meetings – Barcelona, Spain

The City of Barcelona and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) hosted the Cities Alliance's 9th Annual Public Policy Forum (PPF) January 20-21.

This year's PPF focused on ways to improve the effectiveness of global development aid from the perspective of local government. The event was followed by the Consultative Group (CG) meetings January 22-23.

Participants of the PPF included Cities Alliance members, representatives of various donor agencies, local and regional governments, development institutions, and members of the Cities Alliance Secretariat.



The Cities Alliance Consultative Group meetings were held at Barcelona's City Hall.

They agreed on the need to improve city management to combat poverty at the global level by focusing efforts on the poorest neighbourhoods. There was also renewed emphasis on empowering the local actors of urban development.

At the opening of the Forum, the mayor of Barcelona, Jordi Hereu, declared, "Cities are ready to fulfill their responsibilities to the most disadvantaged among their citizens. We cannot, however, be truly effective unless we reinforce joint plans and strategies with all the actors involved in development, and for this there needs to be an agreement between local and national governments and multilateral organizations."

In addition, it was proposed that UCLG and the Cities Alliance jointly convene a biannual stakeholders forum to discuss urban policy development.

Billy Cobbett, Manager of the Cities Alliance Secretariat, thanked both the city of Barcelona and UCLG for hosting the PPF, made more significant by the fact that Spain is one of the newest members of the Cities Alliance. "The focus on development effectiveness in the PPF goes back to our founding mandate as captured in the Alliance charter, to help enhance coherence of effort," said Mr. Cobbett.

Hartwig Schafer, Director of Strategy and Operations at the World Bank's Sustainable Development Network Vice Presidency, reinforced the fact that one of the most effective ways to reach the poor was through local authorities. Mr. Schafer reiterated the World Bank's ongoing commitment to urban development cooperation, and to its partnership with the Cities Alliance.

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