



THE E-NEWSLETTER FOR THE CITIES ALLIANCE

Second Quarter 2009 Edition

IN THIS ISSUE

- [Issue Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Publication Announcements](#)
- [Cities Alliance Secretariat Update](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Cities Alliance Projects Approved](#)

ARCHIVES

FEEDBACK

Click [here](#) to subscribe/ unsubscribe, submit questions, comments, suggestions, event listings, news and resources..

WE WELCOME YOUR ARTICLES

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

Cities Alliance and the World Bank facilitate India-Brazil learning trip

A delegation from India visited the Brazilian cities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Brasilia in May to learn more about the slum upgrading programmes there.

The visit was facilitated by the Cities Alliance and the World Bank within the framework of India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) trilateral agreement on cooperation in various sectors, including human settlements.

Ajay Suri, the Regional Advisor for the Cities Alliance, accompanied the delegation from India which included representatives of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Ministry of Finance, and the Planning Commission, Government of India; the state governments of Maharashtra and Kerala; and the Municipal Corporation of Surat.

They were met by Brazilian officials from the Ministry of Cities, the State Institute for Urban Development, and the Municipality of São Paulo.

Discussions among the delegations mainly revolved around various issues of slum upgrading in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Of particular interest to the Indian delegation was a demonstration of Habisp, an information system to map housing in São Paulo that was supported by the Cities Alliance.

Other aspects related to slum upgrading such as planning, implementation, monitoring, funding, and community engagement were also discussed.

The Indian delegates concluded their trip by visiting several settlements and also meeting with the Cities Alliance Programme Manager William Cobbett and representatives of the World Bank.



(left to right) Mariana Jose, Cities Alliance; Andre Herzog, World Bank Institute; Rohit Mathur, Indian Ministry of Finance; Harish Chandra, Indian Planning Commission; P. K. Mohanty, Indian Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation; Ines Magalhaes, National Housing Secretary, Brazilian Ministry of Cities; Sitaram Kunte, Housing Department, Gov't of Maharashtra; S. Aparna, Commissioner, Municipal Corporation of Surat; R. K. Vats, Indian Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation; Sarada Muraleedharan, Gov't of Kerala; and Ajay Suri, Cities Alliance.

African Ministerial Conference adopts Nairobi Declaration to fight climate change

At a special session of the [African Ministerial Conference on the Environment \(AMCEN\)](#) on climate change, held recently in May. Over thirty African Ministers of Environment agreed to adopt the Nairobi Declaration to fight climate change in their regions.

The Declaration highlights major challenges and opportunities in the negotiations for a more equitable climate regime, and is expected to make a stronger case for support at the United Nations Climate Change Conference to be held in



Cattle drink water in Mali. Photo: World Bank/Curt Carnemark.

Copenhagen in December.

The Ministers agreed to mainstream climate change adaptation measures into their national and regional development plans, policies and strategies.

"It is clear to me that as a continent Africa has needs that managing climate change and the environment have to speak to. I am heartened by the progress made by the negotiators and the political will shown by the presence of the ministers" said Ms. Buyelwa Sonjica, President of AMCEN and Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs in South Africa.

The Nairobi Declaration urges all parties, and in particular the international community, to recognise that increased support to Africa should be based on the climate change priorities for the continent. These include adaptation, capacity-building, financing and technology development and transfer.

Innovative slum upgrading programme making an impact in Chile

Cities Alliance Programme Manager William Cobbett met with Minister of Housing and Urban Development Patricia Poblete during a visit to Santiago, Chile, in May.

During their meeting, Mr. Cobbett noted that there had been significant changes since his last visit to Chile in 2007, primarily due to a slum upgrading programme initiated by the Chilean government that resulted in the recovery of 200 neighbourhoods.

Mr. Cobbett praised the Chilean government's efforts to reach out to slum dwellers and promote dialogue among communities.

"Internationally, this is an extremely rare example of the Government formulating a strategy to explicitly reach out and promote a new dialogue with, and between, communities that had previously been excluded."

He also praised Ms. Poblete's implementation of the programme and welcomed the decision to incorporate lessons learned into a national policy.

"Minister Poblete has shown immense vision and leadership in focusing not only on the physical conditions and isolation of these neighbourhoods—many of which have become ghettos—but also on the need to recognise the citizenship of these residents, and actively promote their rights to the city," Mr. Cobbett said.

Finally, Mr. Cobbett noted that the programme would help provoke a citywide and national debate on the issues of social inclusion, citizenship and poverty reduction.

As part of the programme, the Ministry also generated an inventory of occupational profiles, called "Catalogo de Perfiles Ocupacionales para el Programmea de Recuperacion de Barrios del MINVU." The report was produced with the support of MINVU, GTZ and the Cities Alliance.



Cities Alliance Programme Manager William Cobbett and Minister Patricia Poblete at their May 7 meeting.

Poorer countries need more help to deal with effects of climate change

Over 700 representatives from municipalities and regions from more than 60 countries attended the [Local Government Climate Change Leadership Summit](#) in Copenhagen in June.

The Copenhagen summit is the largest major

gathering of local governments to agree on a common position before the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15) which will also to be held in Copenhagen in December.

The main objective of the summit was to get national governments and the United Nations to agree on a global post-Kyoto agreement on ways to curb the effects of climate change. The summit also provided a useful platform for cities and local governments to highlight their achievements in tackling climate change at local levels.

The representatives at the summit were of the opinion that since the citizens and local authorities will be the ones that are directly affected by the consequences of climate change, they should be an important part of the solution as well.

In conclusion, they recommended that low-income countries most vulnerable to climate-related disasters receive at least \$1 billion in additional financial support.



Bertrand Delanoë, Mayor of Paris and President of the UCLG, called for immediate action on climate change in his remarks at the Local Government Climate Change Leadership Summit in Copenhagen, Denmark June 2.

UN-HABITAT Executive Director highlights partnership with the Cities Alliance

Executive Director Anna Tibajuka recently highlighted UN-HABITAT's partnerships with international organisations, including the Cities Alliance, to help cities address climate change.

Addressing the third C40 Large Cities Climate Summit in Seoul, South Korea, Mrs. Tibajuka stressed that 2009 is a critical year for cities to determine their role in addressing climate change.

To help cities in their battle against climate change, UN-HABITAT has developed partnerships with "the Cities Alliance, the World Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme, to develop a climate change inventory which we hope will soon cover 400 cities assessing their climate footprint as well as their climate change vulnerability," she said.

The climate change inventory is part of a joint work programme between the Cities Alliance, the World Bank, UN-HABITAT and UNEP that aims to facilitate a coordinated, focused effort targeting cities and climate change.

Other deliverables of the joint work programme include an online catalogue to facilitate access to knowledge on cities and climate change and tools for incorporating climate change into city development strategies (CDS).



UN-HABITAT Executive Director Anna Tibajuka addressing the C40 Large Cities Climate Summit in Seoul, South Korea May 19. Photo: UN-HABITAT

New bill seeks to increase US foreign aid for slums

A new bill has been put forward in the US House of Representatives that aims to make addressing the challenges of slums a higher priority in future US foreign aid programmes.

The Shelter, Land, and Urban Management (SLUM)

Assistance Act of 2009 was introduced on March 25 by two Representatives from North Carolina: Rep. Brad Miller (D), a member of the House Foreign Relations Committee, and Rep. David Price (D). The proposed legislation was debated at a panel discussion held in Washington, DC.



The lawmakers were keen to take on the issue of slums after visiting Kibera slum during congressional delegations to Nairobi, Kenya. While in Kenya, they discovered that the [US Agency for International Development](#) (USAID) did not have any programmes in Kibera, where over one million people live in an area the size of New York's Central Park.

"The United States was once the international leader in promoting policies and investments that improved the lives of millions of slum dwellers," said Rep. Miller in a statement. "If we are to promote our national security interests and drastically reduce global poverty, we must renew abandoned efforts to help with shelter and affordable housing."

Rep. Price recognised the importance of a flexible approach in order to develop local solutions that meet the needs of individual slums, which are unique with their own set of issues.

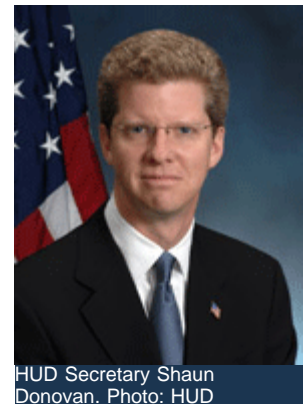
Other panelists at the panel discussion included Christopher Williams of [UN-HABITAT](#) and Peter Kimm of the [International Housing Coalition](#). Overall, there was strong support for the SLUM Assistance Act.

World Habitat Day 2009 to be held in Washington

UN-HABITAT and the US Department for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will co-host the global celebrations of World Habitat Day 2009 in Washington, DC on October 5.

Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Shaun Donovan confirmed the decision and welcomed the opportunity to foster collaboration between the two agencies.

A number of high-level events will be held to reflect on the state of the world's settlements and the living conditions of its human inhabitants, with emphasis on the basic right of adequate shelter for all. They are also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat.



This year will focus on the theme of improved urban planning so that cities can manage and reduce the impacts of climate disruption, the economic crisis and urban poverty around the world.

The Cities Alliance is working closely with USAID, HUD, and UN-HABITAT on a number of parallel activities designed to reinforce the theme and raise the profile of cities and slums within the United States.

Further information on these activities and other preparations for World Habitat Day celebrations will be communicated to all as they develop.

World Environment Day celebrated around the globe

Celebrations kicked off around the globe on June 5 for World Environment Day.

It is a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) initiative that aims to stimulate worldwide awareness of the environment and enhance political action.

Established in 1972, it is commemorated in more than 100 countries around the world. This year's event was hosted by Mexico.

The theme for 2009 was "Your Planet Needs You-UNite to Combat Climate Change." The theme reflects the urgent need for nations to reach a new agreement at 15th UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Copenhagen in December.



The day is being celebrated around the world with activities such as tree plantings, festivals, races, sports events, a transcontinental youth video conference, and the launch of various campaigns to promote environmentally-friendly lifestyles.

[Site Map](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Contact Us](#)

© 2009 The Cities Alliance