

CHAPTER 5

Designing the Inclusive City

the globe finds itself in a frenzy of city building, responding to economic growth from Singapore to Dubai and the challenges of living and work space for the added billions of humanity pouring into Global South cities, whether Jakarta, Mumbai, or Lagos, or much smaller, newer urban centers.

But who is doing the planning—and how well is it being done? Are the planners, who should grasp the big picture of urban form, being heeded—and if so, are they prepared with a holistic grasp of city design? Are architects, engineers, landscapers, hydrologists, transportation planners, and land lawyers reading off the same page? Or are the key urban professionals collaborating only by fits and starts, and often when it is too late to make the wisest integrated decisions?

Just as critical: Are city leaders willing to consult not just the economic deal makers and technical experts on city design, but cross-sections of their own citizenry, before leaping to major city-building or city-altering decisions? Unless they do, can there be any hope for truly inclusive cities, places that honor and find a place for people of all economic strata?

A rare assembly of academicians, planners, architects, consultants, economists, local officials, and journalists from some 15 countries spent a full week at the Summit in Bellagio trying to analyze the challenges of 21st century planning. They were joined by a group of young urban professionals associated with the Global Studio program. The more youthful planners assured their older colleagues in no uncertain terms that the familiar 20th century model of professional silos will not

work to cope with the momentous city building challenges of this time. The session leader, Elliott Sclar of the Center for Sustainable Urban Development at Columbia University, articulated the issue early in the discussions: that planners operate in one sphere with their principles and maps, economists think about their models, architects compete for design distinctions—even while the challenges of today's cities cry out for collaborative approaches.

The sessions were also marked by clear resistance to the still-strong notion that cities of the Global South should simply “look North,” examining and benefiting from what works in the United States and Europe. Today and tomorrow's paradigm needs new focus, insisted participants in the session, especially those from the Global South. Smart Southern cities will obviously look worldwide for positive models. But increasingly they need to be learning from one another to build capacity for the new century's challenges. The cities of the Global South are the population giants of the 21st century and will be hosts to the majority of the population growth over the next 40 years. They are distinctly different from most Northern metropolises. The future of urban learning needs a brand new focus: “South-to-South,” across Africa, Latin America, and Asia, in a rich variety of forums and formats. Paradoxically this can begin to bridge the gap between the North and the South, as it has the potential to lead to more equitable relations and exchanges in the future. There is a lot to be learned on both sides but little will be learned on either if one player consistently dominates.

Underscoring the need for a new paradigm, some participants from developing countries bristled when seasoned and conference-savvy experts from famed Global North institutions jumped into a lead role in discussions, even “speaking for” the Global South representatives who were in the room and knew their own capacity for communication and their clear advantage from experience.

But a clear consensus was reached that Global South universities, professional associations, civil society groups, and local governments need to foster more direct, South-to-South dialogue and exchange of experience and learning. And not just to begin to level the playing field between the North and South but because 1) so many talented Global South urban experts and urban civil society groups are emerging (groups purposefully invited and strongly represented at the Summit) and 2) the destiny of the most rapidly growing cities of the 21st century, almost all of the Global South, lies in their hands.

racing the bulldozers

Issues of rapid slum development dominated many of the conversations, inevitably so in the face of estimates that up to 70 percent of residents in the Global South’s expanding cities are living in sprawling, unplanned slums. But the challenges of the times, Rockefeller Foundation vice president Darren Walker and others underscored, are broader: to prepare planners and other professionals who are committed to developing and growing cities that provide the best possible environments for

Global Studio Program

can the world's city-building professionals learn, coalesce, and work more effectively to plan more sustainable metropolises and meet the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty, disease, and hardship worldwide, with special focus on slums of the fast-developing Global South?

The Global Studio initiative has that precise goal. The project was conceived in 2004 by the Millennium Project's Task Force on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers, whose report was called *A Home in the City*. The Millennium Project, headed by Professor Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, was commissioned by then-U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to plan world action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Founding members of the Global Studio included Anna Rubbo of the University of Sydney, Elliott Sclar and Gabriella Carolini of Columbia University, and Pietro Garau of the University of Rome La Sapienza.

The forums attract professionals involved in city-building, representatives of NGOs, and academics, along with students. Participation in studio field work is by application; accepted students demonstrate not merely preparation in planning and design, but a proclivity toward turning design into action as well as a passion for alleviating poverty.

A lead university in the city where a Global Studio program has been scheduled hosts it; Wits University in Johannesburg, for example, hosted the 2007 program. Prior studios were held in Istanbul (2005) and Vancouver (2006). The program itself consists of forums and site visits, followed by actual field work, with students forming interdisciplinary collaborative teams with community members to identify and execute strategies for community improvement.

Students from both developed and developing countries take part and work together. On the Global South Side, African representation has been especially strong, with young professionals from several countries including Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda.

In the first studio program, in Istanbul, 120 students from 20 countries participated. They started each project with a simple set of questions, such as asking residents of an Istanbul slum what they liked and disliked about where they live, and what physical changes would improve their lives. They also asked questions aimed at understanding the political

context of each settlement and looked for signs of grassroots leadership and expressions of vision for a better future.

In Vancouver in 2006, the students focused on a neighborhood with a high percentage of female drug users. These women said they needed guidance to available resources, but also daily access to a safe park in which to gather, rest, and use sanitary restrooms. Students helped them make these improvements, along with a collective petition for engaging their municipal council. In addition to having an impact on these women's lives, the experience generated opportunities for students to share the results of their work in meetings around the world, including a formal presentation to the 2006 United Nations World Urban Forum, also held in Vancouver.

The 2007 class worked in three slums of Johannesburg, including the well-known area called Alexandra, or Alex. Again, students asked simple but revelatory questions. The slum residents said their roofs leaked and their huts were always cold in winter and insufferably hot in summer. Students showed them how to make roofing superior to the makeshift corrugated tin covers using available materials. They found an affordable supply of insulating materials and demonstrated easy techniques of installation. By the second day residents were taking over, doing the work themselves and spreading the know-how from neighbor to neighbor. And that was the point, said Anna Rubbo, a professor of architecture at the University of Sydney.

The stories quickly reminded Arif Hasan, a veteran of the Karachi Orangi Pilot Project, of his own experience establishing a resource center that he considered a "do-tank." Alejandro Aravena, an architect and professor at Chile's Universidad Católica, said that not only was the Global Studio experience indispensable to education, but it can be profitable and "even sexy." Aravena has his own "doing tank," as he called it, under way with Elemental, a partnership with the Chile Oil Company to build extremely low-cost housing.

residents of all economic groups, cities in which all feel welcome and can have a stake.

The critical question: Will planners and their allied professions have both the knowledge to get ahead of slum-leveling bulldozers and the propensity to press for more inclusive cities? Are they ready to urge political decision makers to plan for urbanization rather than ignoring it or trying to stop it? Are they ready to plan inclusive cities?

So far their achievements are limited. Indeed, just months before the Summit the Indian minister of state for urban development, Ajay Maken, issued his Master Plan 2021 for New Delhi, which was guided by three priorities: obliterating the slums (which currently house some 60 percent of the city's 15 million people), taming traffic, and developing a Manhattan-style skyline. High-rises for the slum dwellers are supposed to take the place of their slum shanties; all height restrictions in buildings would be lifted except in a few historical areas.

Early in 2008 the bulldozers were already sending tens of thousands of residents fleeing with their belongings from Mumbai's sprawling Nehru Nagar slum. Up next is the best known slum of all, Dharavi, home to somewhere between 600,000 and 1 million people—and a thriving export economy worth, some say, in the billions of dollars. Dharavi's demolition, if local resistance fails to stop it, will be the most sweeping slum clearance in world history. Decisions of the city's politicians and planners will push most of the displaced families into high-rise concrete buildings, albeit with the promise of toilets

and electricity. The Toronto's Globe and Mail called Mumbai's moves the imposition of "the discipline of the planner upon the imponderable chaos of the slum" and a fundamental error because slum dwellers are not typically dropouts from mainstream society but rather former rural residents and their descendants, clawing their way into the urban mainstream.

Cities of the developed North carry the painful historical scars of a similar practice of slum clearance a half century back. Government officials destroyed vibrant, even if squalid, inner-city neighborhoods, rupturing their developed social networks and undermining their small businesses. "Progress" took the form of mostly high-rise, sterile housing, of the sort commonly called "public housing" in the United States, "social housing" in Canada, and "council estates" in Britain. In the United States, many of the resulting "projects," such as Cabrini Green in Chicago, became so socially disruptive and crime infested that the federal government was busy tearing them down by the 1990s.

slum
demolitions

The motive for some of today's slum demolitions in the Global South is apparently city image and, more important, clearing land—even in areas never before considered desirable—close to center cities for new economic enterprises that enrich city coffers and benefit permitting officials either directly or indirectly. In some cases, however, such as Zimbabwe's Operation Clean Out, the aim was just getting rid of nuisance slums. But strong and growing cadres of planning professionals, aware of alternative ways that cities across the Global South

and worldwide have dealt with problems, would constitute a new presence in many city governments and might make a substantial difference over time.

slum upgrading

In slum-clearance debates, for example, trained planners would be far more likely to know and understand actual existing slum upgrading projects that have occurred with some success in such nations as Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Brazil. Upgrades include many of the infrastructure improvements for slum areas mentioned in other chapters of this book: clean water supply, adequate sanitation, storm drainage, and, in some cases, electricity. Advocates claim new development typically costs ten to 15 times more than upgrading and is a blow to residents' incomes by eliminating most of the ground-level spaces that slum families typically use to develop their broad array of enterprises. High-rises undermine social networks as well as economic life.

If such arguments—fully crafted by the MIT School of Architecture for the World Bank—can be introduced into planning courses worldwide, one can imagine a major impact over time as the planning graduates fan out across the globe (<http://web.mit.edu/urbanupgrading/>).

That there is an immense need for thousands more professional planners, architects, and other city-development professionals across the Global South is without dispute. The entire continent of Africa, for example, is reported to have just 35,000 architects—roughly 25,000 of whom are in Egypt alone.

Urban Planning: Envisioning Rio's Future

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until 1960, Rio de Janeiro was the capital of Brazil. Once the capital moved to Brasília the city was left to its own devices. Also the military clamped down on the local liberal elite until the late 1970s. Unsurprisingly, the state became rife with parochial politics and has served mainly as a springboard for ambitious politicians running for president. So, although from time to time people offered good plans for the city, we had no one to implement them.

Complacency led to the growth of favelas, where a quarter of Rio's population lives in poverty with utterly inadequate services. This growth was accommodated with interventions and promises of granting property rights to dwellers, while crime came to dominate social life and public spending sprawled. Businesses fled and fiscal accounts became shaky, despite strong oil revenues.

Today, the new administration, led by a young governor, Sergio Cabral, has challenged tired traditional ways. It was high time to bring fiscal discipline and planning for wealth creation rather than for reproducing unfair situations. Cabral understood that good management can improve service delivery drastically, given his state's \$20 billion (U.S.) budget.

Investing in well-planned infrastructure is critical because of its impact on job access for millions of people in a metropolitan area covering more than 2,000 square miles. This strategy includes completing a beltway linking two ports, the airport and sites around the most populated areas. It also calls for refurbishing rail lines and coordinating bus lines so that communities are easily connected to job centers.

The transformation of favelas started with Manguinhos and Alemão, where about 300,000 people live along winding, narrow alleys in a crime-ridden environment. Although Alemão's borders are conveniently close

to rail and bus lines, just getting out of the favela takes many residents inordinately long periods of time. It also makes it difficult to staff schools and send in health workers.

The state and federal governments have joined forces in addressing favelas' real needs in terms of urbanization and provision of public services, as well as economic transformation. The state is also strengthening law enforcement all around the metropolitan area, including where vigilante militias have usurped the provision of key public services and drug lords bring additional extortion and brutality. In Alemão, a cable car lift will help connect the most distant parts of the community to bus lanes and the nearby rail station.

Making such changes will not be easy. To succeed, we must build social cohesion around the goals of better housing, enhanced sanitation, and mobility, and the enforcement of property rights and zoning as a way to create jobs, attract more investment, and reward household savings. We need to embrace those urban planning challenges as an integral part of a strategy to effectively include the poorest in the economic fabric of the city. That will make us all stronger.

Is There a Cure for Corrupt Governance?

no world city or nation is entirely free from instances of “bought” government, misdeeds by those in power that undermine the very idea of civil society. But what are occasional scandals in some societies can become an endemic cancer in others, barring the paths to education, housing, health, gainful employment, and personal security. Among the greatest victims: new, poor residents of fast-growing cities, most often harmed by the actions of corrupt officials and agencies.

But imagine a new, strong generation of urban professionals running city governments — individuals who have been trained in quality institutions and are inculcated with the values of designing, planning, and managing cities that work for everyone. Could a growing cadre of such professionals be an effective antidote to the long-standing cultural and financial plague of corruption?

And if that’s the case, what could donor nations and agencies do to bring about trusted governance and official systems stable enough to manage the cities and nations in need?

In his book entitled *The Bottom Billion: Is There a Way Out of the Bad Governance Trap?* Paul Collier writes, “While poverty is falling for about 80 percent of the world, there is a crisis in some 50 states — the bottom billion — due to a struggle between reformers and corrupt leaders — and the corrupt are winning. Seventy-six percent of the world’s bottom billion live in countries that have suffered long periods of bad governance and poor economic policies. Bad governance is often so persistent because not everybody loses — reform is against the interests of the leaders who can get rich, and when reform does finally come, capacity is simply lacking. Aid (at least on its own) will not get countries out of the trap.... Although the reformers have truth on their side, truth is just another special interest, and not a particularly powerful one.”

Some observers point to poor public sector salaries — whether for police work or clerking for passport offices — as an explanation for persistent bribery demands made for what should be routine public services. Yet the most egregious examples known seem to come at the hands of already well-heeled officials attempting to become even richer. And big international firms seeking major concessions on mineral or oil rights, or looking to land a major construction contract, often become eager to pay what can be easily framed as “facilitation fees.” Indeed, as Collier

notes, until 1999 if a French company bribed a public official in a developing country, that expenditure was tax-deductible. Although no Western government would openly embrace bribery as a business strategy, which governments would want to unilaterally take the high ground and see their firms miss out on lucrative contracts?

In 1999 the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development fostered an agreement among all member states to make practices such as facilitation fees a crime — a step in the right direction, though without much assurance of how vigorously nations will enforce the policy.

Consider the landscape ahead. As the world becomes more serious about building infrastructure to adapt to climate change, and more money flows toward assuring systems of pipes to relay fresh water and take away waste, the opportunities for siphoning off money are enormous. Transparency International, the best-known watchdog organization on corruption, pointed out in its 2005 Global Corruption Report how susceptible the construction industry is to corrupt practices: first, comparing prices is difficult because each project is different; second, it is tough to anticipate every eventuality so the door is always open for changes (and new charges). A firm might win a contract with a low bid and then work to fatten up the agreement with changes, working in collusion with benefiting government officials.

A reputation for corrupt governance hinders the world's most vulnerable from receiving aid. Consider one prominent piece of evidence: the last round of the World Bank's loans went to six middle- or upper-income countries, which have less than 5 percent of the world's needy population. There is no question that bad public sector governance, sometimes combined with blatant corruption, impedes the flow of vital capital to nations where the urban poor need help. The World Bank has been heavily criticized for these actions.

Transparency International lists and ranks nations saddled by corruption. Myanmar and Bangladesh may be rated the most serious cases, but the list of problem nations is disturbingly long. At least in today's world, instances of corruption making the international news can cause significant action. So when Nigeria's top corruption investigator was sidelined, it made *The New York Times*. When newspapers hinted of suppression,

Nigerian police arrested a prominent former governor on corruption charges. When the head official investigating corruption for the World Bank found corruption undermining more than \$500 million of bank projects in India, it became headline news, as did the official's subsequent resignation. Or when the United Nations itself revealed its investigative unit had uncovered ten cases of fraud in contracts worth more than \$600 million, the argument over whether to extend the investigative team's work for another year also hit the newsstands.

As violence broke out in Kenya in late 2007 over charges of election fraud, nearly every article carried a reminder of the nation's decades-long struggle to recover from a long period of mismanagement and corruption under former President Daniel arap Moi. With infrastructure lagging woefully behind population rises, a corrupt gang of contractors doubled or tripled usual contracts, got paid, and sometimes did not even do the work. Kenya's current president, Mwai Kibaki, pledged in his 2002 victory to tackle the issue and appointed a high-level official to clean up the government. Shortly after announcing a finding of a massive fraud inside the government, that official was exiled. In the ensuing months Kibaki would remove two ministers who had been accused of corruption, only to reappoint them.

Kenya's strife is a showcase of how "high levels of poverty expose poor populations to political manipulation," explains Jane Weru, who runs the Pamoja Trust, an NGO working on housing and infrastructure progress with Nairobi slum dwellers. What looks like ethnic conflict, she suggests, is, at its core, politics and economics. All that mixes with long-standing tribal tensions.

Thousands of miles away, Karachi's Arif Hasan would characterize the broader political struggle reported from Kenya: "The looting, arson, and destruction of property that has taken place is not a simple law-and-order situation. It has to be understood that you cannot create small islands of insensitive and arrogant affluence in a sea of increasing poverty and deprivation on the one hand, and a ruthlessly manipulated political and judicial dispensation on the other."

There are hopeful signs. The military regime in Bangladesh seems committed to rooting out long-standing pockets of corruption. It has made believers so far of the Asian Development Bank, which has made

a \$150 million loan, largely aimed at strengthening the Anti-Corruption Commission. The charismatic new president of Tanzania, Jakaya Kikwete (continuing the struggle initiated by former president Benjamin Mkapa), is said to be committed to change, having already pushed through an anti-corruption bill and ordered an investigation into the dealings of the Bank of Tanzania. Skeptics remain, but bilateral money, led by Britain, is donating aid directly to the nation's budget. Former Mozambique president Joaquim Chissano won the cash-rich Mo Ibrahim prize in late 2007 for restoring democracy and good governance.

Still, in too many countries where the planet's poorest reside, critics of corrupt practices are simply waved off, told that this is a necessary if sometimes unsavory part of doing business — just part of the culture. In many of these places, however, a few brave people do try to change the system, but they always find well-financed interests arrayed against them. Parties and politicians commonly reserve significant resources to protect the advantages of being in power.

What nearly every observer decries is the absence of a clear and coordinated global strategy for better governance. The path to a strategy raises an almost-obvious list of questions:

- How much difference can a new generation of urban professionals make? If the management of cities is not merely political, but the product of a team of professionals, can corrupt practices be squeezed out?
- What are the key institutions to establish and protect? Are anti-corruption commissions enough? What else?
- How much effect would systems of participatory budgeting have, as people feel they have a voice in setting the priorities of municipal government? Would bringing grassroots voices into public budgeting actually create transparency in how governments allocate monies, disinfecting the process against corruption and assuring a fairer break for poor neighborhoods?
- Could major aid programs be made conditional on governance change on the integrity or professionalism front? If aid were consciously shifted to the most difficult urban arenas (itself a major change), could aid policies openly accept higher failure rates, spend more resources working

with local officials, and show more flexibility in seizing opportunities for reform? As author Paul Collier and others point out, all the policy momentum today runs in the opposite direction; most agencies are risk-averse and they constantly try to drive down administrative costs while focusing on the best “success” photo ops.

- Could nations, or groups of nations such as the European Union, use the regulatory tool for leverage, requiring institutional changes as a condition of approving trade deals, particularly in countries dependent on exporting goods?
- What are the prospects for more international agreements, in which clear and serious political standards set the eligibility for participation, much as the four nations making up Mercosur in Latin America require democratic institutions?

No matter what else is tried, it appears that nothing will endure without establishing, nurturing and protecting institutions and professionals who replace the old customs with a new culture.

Growing armies of planners and their colleagues are also imperative because a high proportion of Global South growth is now projected to go into medium-to-smaller-sized cities and not the megacities that have absorbed such vast numbers of people in recent years (though “absorbed” may be too generous a term given the huge slum population growth in these cities). São Paulo, Mumbai, Mexico City, Manila, Jakarta, Delhi, Lagos—none of these cities shows any evidence of better planning, despite their immense size. And smaller developing-world cities often lack even a minimal number of professional staff to help them make timely and smart decisions, even as increasing waves of new residents start to arrive.

urban design and planning: grasping for connections

If the emerging cities of this century are to do more than merely cope with urban problems, the practice of urban planning and design must change. The preparation of urban professionals must burst through the walls that separate academic subjects. Complex partnerships must be forged that include a set of major universities to develop and share knowledge about better theory and successful practices.

That was the strong consensus of the Summit session on planning. The rationale was brilliantly summarized by Joseph Sauve of Canada, one of the participating Global Studio graduate students. Sauve, fresh from field experience in the slums of Johannesburg, said, “You look around and see that the trees are

botany, the ground suggests geology, the sky reminds you of geography, and people take you to anthropology and sociology; the systems are all politics and economics. How could you study just one thing and think you are prepared?”

Such changes sound simple and straightforward. They are, however, nothing less than revolutionary—insurgent notions pushing against cultural inertia and institutional resistance. It remains true that in most universities and city governments, professionals in each specialty area, from planning to engineering to finance, are off doing “their thing” and all too rarely collaborate. Their work may be interrelated, but it is not often interconnected for maximum effectiveness.

Sclar recalled the previous Summit weeklong sessions: “Our best minds told us that little can be done about water or sanitation or housing or even climate change unless they are connected to the agenda for development.” Those are the rules of the real political economy, Sclar explained. “And when we got to the issue of urban population health, it was all about the social and physical determinants of health, with implications way beyond the scope of the health professions alone.”

So what’s to be done to encourage urban professionals to crawl out of those persistent silos and embrace a broader challenge? A key problem, the participants noted, is that the silos of professional practice—and the damage that follows—are direct echoes of the organizational form of the universities where most professionals receive their preparation. Despite all the talk of inter- and multidisciplinary knowledge, people noted, almost all university activity (and

faculty rewards) remains organized by separate disciplines.

Yet any single discipline is insufficient to deal with the deep, emerging challenges of 21st century cities. “The categories simply don’t work any more,” noted Richard Plunz, himself a professor of architecture as well as director of the Urban Design Lab at Columbia University’s Earth Institute. Aravena, the architect in Chile, claims that “too many architects are skilled only at issues that interest other architects, so we end up answering the wrong questions. Slums are overcrowded, yes, but the question is how to design for high density without overcrowding.” Peter Ngau, head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Nairobi, added that “students are telling universities that what they are being trained to do is irrelevant.”

design for high
density without
overcrowding

Edgar Pieterse, head of a new network for African cities at the University of Cape Town, said it is a matter of focusing on the “how” issues. “You need to know how the bureaucracy and the state work and how to navigate them, and that does not come from studying political science.”

Or as Harrison Fraker, dean of the College of Environmental Design at the University of California, Berkeley, put it, “there is such an incomplete understanding of the real system” and its complex interconnections “that I think we just have to reboot.”

And though there is no way to reverse that situation instantly, the planning and design participants agreed that they needed to take action and find ways to start spanning the silos so that the next generation is better equipped to address the increasingly complex challenges of rapid urbanization.

spanning
the silos

Along the way, several added, it is essential to address

both the numeric maldistribution and attitude of many professionals within the various urban disciplines. As International Union of Architects president Gaetan Siew explained, Italy has three times the number of architects as all of Africa. “Besides,” he said, “most students are motivated to build monuments, be the stars of architecture. That’s maybe 3 percent of the work out there. Somehow we have to tell them to be social architects as well.”

social
architects

That means, in turn, a keen awareness of changing demographics. While design professions practice as though this were still the late 20th century, noted Pieterse, the developing world in particular presents an explosion in the number of young people, with profound implications for cities and the global economy.

Both fuel and food are becoming significantly more expensive, perhaps permanently so. The era of climate change and mounting environmental dangers also challenge planners to be ecologically sensitive, to focus on models of true sustainability, and to work with local residents on such fronts as food self-sufficiency, energy conservation, improved local drainage systems, and adequate local transportation services. How can the ingenuity of slum dwellers’ house building be matched with research on safe and conserving building materials? What are possible ways to bring in safe electricity and avoid dangers of exposed wires? Planners and other publicly supported professionals should be positioned to contribute significantly on all such fronts.

added tensions for planners

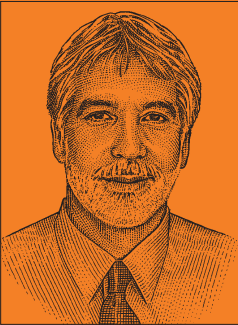
There is a continuing dilemma: the entire issue of whether elites care at all about conditions of the poorest in a world characterized by widening gaps in income and increasing separation of humanity by economic classes. Pieterse pointed out that nearly 60 percent of African workers labor in some part of the informal economy, “while elites are utterly comfortable living in enclaves.” “In Rwanda,” he said, “the real world [of decision makers] is about oil. It’s definitely not about the 20 percent at the bottom of the economy.”

For decades, participants noted, motivated professionals and NGOs have tried to alleviate alarming slum conditions by appealing to the self-interest of the economically privileged in better-run or less socially divisive cities. “What did we find?” asked Pietro Garau, former Habitat officer and now director of the Urban Research Center for Developing Countries at the University of Rome. “After 30 years of trying self-interest, of working through organizations such as the U.N., we have failed miserably. It is not enough.”

All too often, it was noted, elites simply dismiss the interests of the poor as they make decisions central to cities’ futures. Thus the whole process of designing cities ostensibly to work for everyone does not reach the poorest citizens who most need the kinds of improvement that investments in planning should produce. “In fact,” said Getaam Tiwari, an associate professor at the Indian Institute of Technology,

Disrupting the Status Quo: A New Urban Vision

Enrique Peñalosa



Former Mayor of
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if new york, paris, or london could make half of itself disappear to rebuild anew, quite a few things would be done differently the second time around. Since many cities in developing countries are relatively young, they enjoy a similar opportunity today. Most of what they will become by the year 2050 will be built during the next 40 years. So these youthful cities have a historic opportunity to design themselves based on lessons learned from the successes and failures of their older siblings.

The choices made in the way new urban areas grow in the coming decades will determine to a large extent their quality of life, environmental and social sustainability, and overall competitiveness for centuries. If, for example, land is not reserved now for parks, many generations of children will be less happy and healthy. In the past, first land and then capital determined economic growth. In today's post-industrial society, however, it is highly qualified and creative people who are the most crucial resource for economic development. To attract and retain such people, cities must offer a high quality of life. This includes comfortable, fast and accessible public transportation; wide tree-lined sidewalks; protected bicycle lanes; abundant parks, sports facilities and libraries; and a rich cultural life.

Environmentalism, economic development, and social welfare need not conflict. The same urban policies that can lessen negative effects on the natural environment can be used to enhance social equity and quality of life in general.

Over the last 50 years many cities in developing countries saw their populations increase by more than 1,000 percent, yet little was done to make them any better than preexisting advanced cities. For the most part Latin American cities are undistinguished. They should have featured, for example, New York City-style Central Parks, Amsterdam-esque bicycle ways, and Toronto-like greenways. Yet, this type of planning and development was rare. Instead, 20th century cities were designed around the needs of cars far more than those of people.

When less-developed countries did attempt to emulate urban centers in the more advanced countries, particularly the United States, they replicated elements that did not help them enhance their quality of life by saving oil, avoiding global warming, and creating more competitive cities. It is still difficult for many of the new upper-middle classes in developing countries to understand that when it comes to urban development, the United States model is to be avoided, not followed.

We cannot let these mistakes be repeated. What must be done during the next 50 years is now clear. Policies designed to improve quality of life, social equity, environmental sustainability and economic development are neither particularly costly nor technically complex. Obstacles to creating better cities are actually political, more than economic or technical. Governments shy away from what should be done in order to appease powerful stakeholders, such as speculative landowners and members of upper-income groups who radically oppose any restrictions on the use of their cars.

This conflict of interest between the car-owning middle and upper classes and the car-less lower-income majorities is complex and often goes unacknowledged. When resources that could have gone to schools, housing and parks are poured into high-velocity urban roads instead, the poor are left with the message that this is progress and that, in time, they will benefit from it as much as their better-off neighbors. Yet, this type of car-centered urban development does a disservice to all residents, whether privileged or poor.

Car infrastructure is by far the main competitor for funds that otherwise could be invested in solving the needs of the poor — and, in turn, improving quality of life for all, since everyone benefits when the poorest among us become less poor. Upper-income citizens in developing countries, however, don't use government-provided services such as public education and public health. So they often fail to see the connection between helping those who do and improving their own lives. All they require from government are security and traffic-jam-free roads. These upper-income citizens do not really use their cities much at all: insulated in their cars, they move from one destination to another, from apartment building to office to mall, from supermarket to country club.

For them the city is a threatening, alien space to be bypassed while going from one private place to another.

In an attempt to solve traffic problems, upper-income citizens demand more, bigger and faster roads. But, as cities like Los Angeles clearly demonstrate, increasing road infrastructure only stimulates more and longer trips, making traffic congestion even worse. Like fences, new roads also divide long-standing neighborhoods and, when built as overhead highways, darken city streets, lower real estate values, and often promote crime. They also encourage further development of far-flung low-density suburban gated communities, which draw upper-income residents away from the hearts of cities and increase their dependence on cars and roads. Of course, some roads and highways are necessary. But to help link poorer residents with jobs, schools, and other urban benefits, any large, new urban roads should incorporate exclusive mass transit bus lanes, protected bicycle paths, and broad sidewalks.

It is clearer today than ever before that the only urban mobility solution is public transportation. Time lost in traffic is increasing annually in all North American cities except Vancouver, which has blocked the construction of highways through the city and promoted density and public transport. But convincing people who can afford cars to use public transportation instead requires more than a good public bus system; governments need to impose restrictions and surcharges on car use, such as parking limitations, congestion pricing, fuel taxes, and other charges whose proceeds should go to subsidize better and cheaper public transportation. In forward-looking cities, "transportation policy" translates into "ways to reduce car use." Unfortunately, too many underdeveloped cities are still trying to facilitate it.

All cities must be both community-minded and realistic about the type of public transportation they provide. Higher-income citizens in developing countries prod their governments to build subways, preferably underground, despite not having the slightest intention of ever using them. They simply do not want buses taking away precious road space from their cars. Yet buses are actually the best transport solution in developing country cities. High investment and operating costs make it impossible to build more than a few rail lines, so trains do not move

more than 10 percent of the population in any developing country city. Bus rapid-transport systems begun in Curitiba, Brazil, and used in cities such as Bogotá are moving more passengers per kilometer hour than most rail systems do at comparable speeds and at a fraction of the cost. Their required use of exclusive lanes is a given in a democracy, where public good prevails over private interest. But the idea of making concessions for the community as a whole is not so obvious in the unequal societies of developing countries, where more costly rail systems are often chosen over more economical bus rapid transit.

Urban residents everywhere have the right to walk or bike safely. Bicycle use can save up to 20 percent of poorer citizens' income in developing countries, where it is the only form of transport for many. Even in cities as rich as Utrecht in the Netherlands or Copenhagen, nearly half the population uses bicycles for their daily mobility. Safety, however, for these environmentally friendly modes of transportation is severely lacking in many countries, where pedestrians and cyclists are too often killed by motorists. World Bank and multilateral agencies require environmental impact studies for infrastructure projects, yet they finance roads without bicycle lanes or sidewalks. As cities arise and grow, streets, roads, and drainage canals should always be built with walkways and bicycle paths.

Convenient public transportation is an important tool in helping poor people improve their lives by linking them to employment and educational opportunities. Whether known as tugurios, bidonvilles, or favelas, slums are found in most developing country cities. As we strive to create compact, energy-efficient urban centers, we must not only improve and legalize existing slums but we must also avoid the development of new ones. Urban land reform is more critical than rural land reform ever was. Diverse tax systems and other regulatory mechanisms proposed to solve the problem, however, are always blocked or dodged by landowners. If governments acquired, through voluntary sales or the use of eminent domain, large tracts of land adjacent to existing urban areas, the housing needs of poor people could be met in quality urban environments. Every day that goes by without radical government intervention in urban and suburban land use, slums grow. Opportunities are lost to create a healthy city for all residents.

A city is a collective creation that reflects a society's values. There is much in a good city that cannot be left to the private sector: It is not for developers to decide the width of roads, sidewalks or bicycle lanes; how many or how large parks should be; the maximum height of buildings; or whether there should be shops in residential areas. There are, however, many areas in which private investment and management clearly do much better than the public sector. For instance, governments in developing countries should not own and operate machinery such as excavators, dump trucks, or compactors, and even if bus companies are government-owned, the buses themselves should be owned and operated by contractors. Public services such as electricity, piped gas, water, and garbage collection can often be managed more efficiently and at lower cost by private operators.

Although land around cities should not be left to the free market, housing construction should not be controlled by government institutions. Private corporations can build and market houses for the poor under strict time schedules and pricing parameters. Governments can help by providing housing subsidies to buyers in need.

When cities are at their best, they are protective, beautiful, inclusive, and stimulating places. We must learn from older cities as we imagine the futures of today's growing urban centers. Yet we must also create new urban concepts to make cities more respectful of human dignity so that more people around the world can lead happier lives.

“a majority of people in our cities are completely outside the planning process.”

Another thought-provoking question: Who knows best which solutions will work best for slum dwellers? As Darren Walker noted, “We have two kinds of tension at work here. One is North versus South, a tension increased by the North’s presumed intellectual superiority. The other, though more subtle, is the struggle to balance professional (whether North or South in its provenance) and authentic local knowledge.” It is a false debate, participants agreed, but nonetheless real. University professors and representatives of major donor organizations have special knowledge that is relevant. But there is also tremendous “street knowledge” in troubled low-income communities. And the world is even starting to see maps and indigenous enumeration systems devised by slum dwellers themselves. Indeed, Web sites such as Wikimapia and OpenStreetMap are rapidly showing how significant locally gathered voluntary mapping can be to understand both geography and human activity.

Arif Hasan, an architect and planner renowned for his work on the Orangi Project and the Urban Resource Center in Karachi, said it was essential, though probably never popular, to get the design process not just extended to but focused on the challenge faced by the poorest 20 percent of urban citizens. “We probably need better terms,” he said, suggesting that the goal should in fact be creating “the inclusive city,” in which the needs of the urban poor are taken as seriously as those of existing elites. Sclar said much of the North is easily made nervous by terms that suggest redistribution. “But socially,” he said, “Americans do understand mobility.”

voluntary
mapping

Whatever the words we use, Hasan continued, “what’s necessary now is new organizations and knowledge that together deal directly with conflicting interests. And we must have space for those interactions—this is how you relate to the real political economy.”

possible solutions

So what steps would bolster the global networking, multi-disciplinary learning, and development of sensitive planning and project implementation to deal with the most serious new-century problems of new billions of population amid alarming growth of urban slums? Summit participants developed a number of recommendations:

Through a cooperative donor effort, establish a network of up to a dozen university-based centers—“co-labs”—with a majority located in the Global South. These centers should be related to a major university but enjoy a necessary degree of independence from academic governance and constraints. This status, participants insisted, is key to overcoming the rigidity and inertia of separated professional preparation and research. Participants were so enthusiastic about the idea that they named the centers “co-labs”: collaborative centers where students would be prepared for new-century challenges in a multidisciplinary way, where professionals would come together to compare practices, where research rooted in realities of the field could be furthered, and where special events could be staged. And they could also develop and nurture partnerships

co-labs

with local governments, NGOs, key community and economic-development organizations, and philanthropies. University of Nairobi's Ngau pointed to a wide array of global networks. "Some work, some don't," he said, and "we should tap the knowledge of what works." Key points of the co-lab idea, as developed in the sessions:

- **Dialogue and co-learning.** The forums would bring together residents of developing-world cities with developers, financiers, politicians, and other researchers. The media could be invited to observe. The co-labs would provide a communications platform for emphasizing the focus on design and planning dilemmas that affect the potential improvement of urban conditions for the poor.
- **Network and capacity building.** The co-labs could form a large network, producing a journal, endowing chairs based on criteria of priorities for the urban poor, sponsoring further studio programs for student experience, collaborating on research around priority themes and issues, and leveraging available bilateral funding.
- **Student recruitment.** These centers could attract the growing number of students, especially graduate students, who tell survey takers (Paul Farmer of the American Planning Association suggested the figure is as high as 80 percent) that they are looking for international experience.
- **Applied research.** The centers could undertake the largely neglected area of applied research, offering practical solutions to problems in cities ranging from health and housing to energy and infrastructure. Applied research, it is hoped, would catalyze interdisciplinary commitments

across anthropology, economics, energy, environment, architecture, and planning. “Centers would be in a prime position to bring in experienced professionals to mix in on research or forums, tapping groups such as Architects (or Engineers) Without Borders,” noted Anna Rubbo, the University of Sydney architecture professor who mentored the 2007 participating Global Studio students.

- **Credibility and validation.** Accreditation process for the centers could occur wherever it helps to ensure a cross-disciplinary, real-world oriented approach that includes applied research as well as traditional academic inquiry. As the College of Environmental Design at the University of California’s dean Fraker reminded participants, in the North, especially in the United States, accreditation is nearly never seen as supportive of innovation. “If anything,” Fraker said, “it tends to dumb down things, a necessary drill to go through.” Those familiar with university life in the Global South, however, reported that the accreditation process is seen there as a more meaningful exercise; indeed, it provides a kind of “badge of legitimacy.” In the South, accreditation can be a useful lever for trying something different, if a different course gets an official seal of approval. The Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), it was suggested, could set up criteria and processes for interdisciplinary programs with credentials to match. CHEA, which has recently published a directory of international programs, could set up an interdisciplinary track that would apply to these emerging centers and their university affiliates.

Making Two Cities into One: Securing Land Rights

Jane Weru



Executive Director,
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many see urban development as chaotic and uncontrolled. As loads of people move out of unsustainable rural settings into unplanned urban communities, they lay to naught the often myopic plans of city governments. Lands that had been set aside for other purposes are invaded and squatted on, as land and housing markets fail these new entrants into our cities. Services such as water and electricity are pilfered, as utility companies fail to recognize these new areas as legitimate human settlements and accordingly provide services to the people who live there. Most of our cities are therefore in reality two cities in one: the first, a formal and orderly city and the other, a higgledy piggledy world where there are more churches than toilets, where children sleep underneath the matrimonial bed because there is just not enough space.

The informal city is also seen as a threat to society and perceived as a seed bed for rebellion and social and political strife. Large numbers of unemployed and discontented youth are harbored here. The youth often gang up and slowly begin to take over their neighborhoods. Through force and extortion they seize control of water, security, and other services. They can at the least provocation mete out violence on their adversaries or for a fee be hired to achieve a political goal.

One needs to look only as far as Kenya to see the writing on the wall. For those who do not take heed of the large numbers who have been stripped of their citizenry through years of exclusion, then civil strife and mayhem awaits them. Addressing land and access to services in our cities is critical. A priest friend of mine who for many years lived in Korogocho often said that the city of Nairobi is built on a mortal sin. That sin is the fact that 55 percent of the residents of this city squat on only 1 percent of the total land area and 6 percent of the total residential area of the city.

Yet one of the most fundamental rights of man is the right to enjoy the quiet and uncontested occupation of a portion of this earth. This too is a fundamental right of citizenship; the right to the quiet enjoyment

of space in the land of which one is a citizen. The failure to have any form of security of occupation without the threat of eviction undermines this right.

The urban poor within our cities are without this right. They see themselves as refugees in their own land with no rights to the lands they occupy and no recognition as legitimate citizens of our cities. They say they have sat on their haunches for too long. They say they cannot settle in peace because they are never too sure when they may need to get up and run because an arsonist's match has been used to burn down their homes and get them off the land. With this level of inequality, brutality, and exclusion, little wonder Nairobi blew up the way it did after the contested 2007 elections.

The challenge of providing security of tenure to the urban poor in our cities is daunting. Often layered property rights exist with tenant, structure owners, and registered property owners all laying claim to these lands. The complexity of this situation calls for a multiplicity of strategies. For instance, in Kenya we have sometimes chosen to address the issue of security of tenure without seeking the immediate registration of rights. We have done this through advocating for the setting aside of lands by the Nairobi City Council as special planning areas, for the purposes of upgrading. Once these lands are secured, the identified residents are free to upgrade their homes and settlements with the assurance that they can in time obtain title documents.

A palpable energy exists in most informal settlements and it is in them that the future of a country lies. Among the teeming masses, I see youth with their hopeful enthusiasm, I see the courage and innovation that it takes to survive in these harsh environments. If we could invest more in our people, in educating our youth, in providing basic services, then that energy, that courage, and that resilience could really count for something.

The panelists understood that the central co-lab idea—serious collaboration around a multidisciplinary approach—is a revolutionary notion in today’s world of learning. But the harvesting of many ideas from varied sources, it was suggested, provides superior results. One participant recited an oft-told story of a Manila experiment in which groups were divided from most to least homogenous for a problem-solving exercise. The groups that were most familiar with each other (and most alike) worked really fast and competed well—until the level of problems became more complex. Then only the diverse groups seemed to succeed.

“I’m in agreement” with that overall thrust, said Gary Hack, University of Pennsylvania School of Design dean and experienced practitioner in planning in more than 30 cities around the world. “But,” he added, “let’s not risk the empty-suit syndrome by ignoring the value of specialization.” Even generalists, participants agreed, need an area of special knowledge for success in the real marketplace.

Participants speculated that the collaboration centers, once established, would find promise in a variety of approaches. One working group classified the multiple approaches as people-based, place-based, and ether-based networking. Perhaps most of the centers would be rooted in a suitable location—a place-based asset. But some might take a people-centered approach, and emphasize developing professionals across the board and tackling a realistic range of challenges facing the urban poor, using networks across a variety of locations; young professionals could mix with veterans who could share their rich experience at a variety of locations. The third

proposal, given the accelerating use of the Internet, was the promising potential in an ether-based approach. The Internet works well for sharing research, collaborating on projects, generating ideas through multiple-participant brainstorming, and sharing results.

people-
centered
approach

Ngau insisted that the co-labs could be permanent even if mobile—physically, intellectually, world-oriented. Ideally, the group said, they should generate their own income and thus be free of individual university “ownership” (or intellectual domination).

Build a coalition of funders who will then empanel a group to design a collection of the co-lab centers. Composition of the group should be cross-disciplinary and include people with a practical sense of priorities in rapidly expanding urban areas with concentrations of the poor. Such a design group should be asked to suggest the number and variety of centers, up to some practical limit set by funders. It should recommend a strategic geographic balance, not only between North and South, but with a specific goal to generate early and plausible collaborative networks among NGOs, local governments, one or more academic institutions, and indigenous organizations controlled by residents in the least privileged urban areas.

The panel would produce a model strategic plan, including a method of sustainable finance, and a governance model that balances a necessary degree of autonomy with a relationship to suitable academic institutions and other affiliations that might strengthen each center’s early standing.

Stress that field experience is as important as intellectual

study—each informing and challenging the other. Global Studio students, fresh from the 2007 field work in the slums of Johannesburg, provided vivid evidence of the value of integrating experience in urban communities with the study of architecture and planning. Any student whose preparation was isolated in academia and constrained by narrow disciplines would, judging by their testimony, experience a life-changing epiphany from a few weeks of confronting the pressing problems faced daily by the urban poor. Additionally, any student's sense of what constitutes a practical solution would be transformed.

Another idea advanced: if it is considered normal to require physicians to have a period of residency before starting a full professional practice, why should it make any less sense for urban professionals to have real contact with the people and the problems their practice should serve? Both field experience and intellectual study would be greatly enhanced by exposure to a rich mixture of academic disciplines, corresponding to the mixed nature of problems and solutions.

Enfranchise local professional practice. As panelists repeatedly reminded each other, less than 5 percent of the urban world today functions under any kind of planning regimen. In most places even the notion that advance planning and considerations of design and analysis of how things will fit together is completely new. Far too many urban places show little evidence of good planning; worse, in some places, what passes for planning has merely served a narrow group of developers or the whims of officials with their own interests

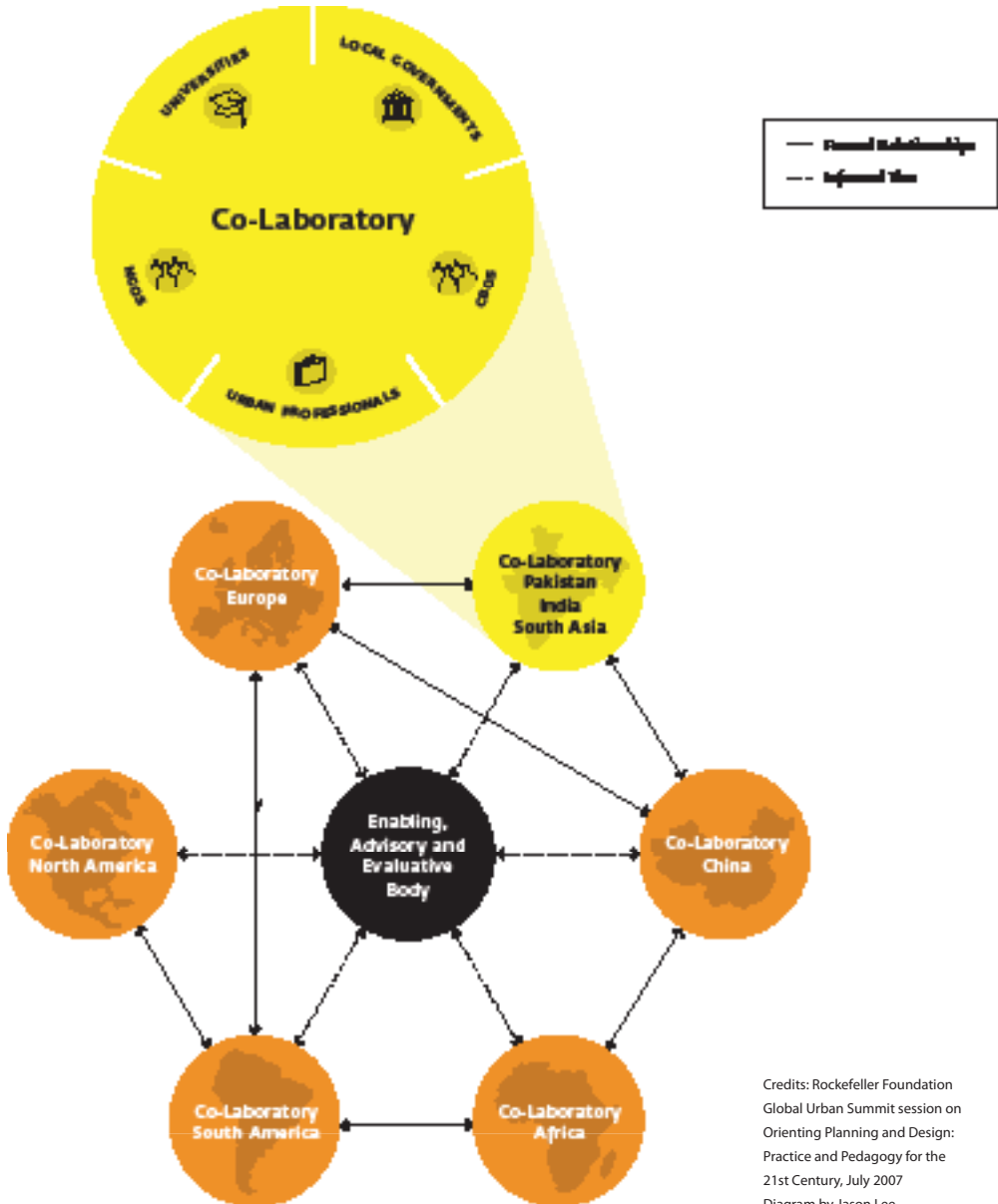
in play.

Since it is not reasonable to expect high-level professional design and planning practices to reach all parts of cities, why not institute varieties of licenses that can be earned by people engaged in all manner of urban planning and implementation work? Planners, architects, and engineers tend to have professional degrees that represent at least a significant measure of education and capacity. But what of organizers of slum dwellers, business-oriented people working on community economic projects, coordinators of street planning and design, and craftspeople who have proven their ability in upgrading physical infrastructure of formal settlements? Recognition as local community planners would bolster their standing, perhaps putting them on a ladder to more professional preparation. Panelists saw this level of service as akin to what people in the United States see in an “extension service,” a vocational practice aimed at the most intensely local level.

varieties of
licenses

Challenge the sources of finance. The Rockefeller Foundation’s Walker set the stage for considering finance with a sober assessment, in that “there are not at present a lot of donors interested in this.” But he also emphasized the potential of leadership. If a major grant maker such as the Rockefeller Foundation can identify other donors who come to share a strategic vision of what can be accomplished, their stand on the cause of the urban poor might shift the ground of public perception. The key objective should be to build a coalition of potential

structure: urban innovation co-laboratory



Credits: Rockefeller Foundation
Global Urban Summit session on
Orienting Planning and Design:
Practice and Pedagogy for the
21st Century, July 2007
Diagram by Jason Lee

funders, rather than expecting that some foundations will follow others, and then to recognize that even foundations with their considerable resources lack the cumulative fiscal power to match the scale and scope of the challenge.

Therefore, we should not allow the profit-making private enterprises of the world to escape responsibility, participants said. International Union of Architect's Siew suggested that the large insurance firms that do business internationally already have a serious stake in seeing that urban areas are better planned. Particularly in view of the threat of climate change, these companies would put a premium on prospects for buildings and infrastructure that are built to higher standards and made more reliable. Chile's Aravena suggested that firms operating in most markets still see that they can profit by building a better public image. "We got Home Depot to finance social housing in Chile," he said, pointing to how much the firm's involvement raised its profile with the public. Farmer of the American Planning Association pointed to commodities firms, which are, he said "just flush with cash these days." Such companies, along with the shipping companies, will do better if people around the world are doing better, ordering things available to be made and sold and shipped.

shift the
ground
of public
perception

Summit participants also thought that oil companies should be approached. Their profits are nearly legendary in these times. And they can hardly escape their primary role in the climate-change challenge. All these big economic entities, people said, should be funding targets for effective co-lab centers across the developing world.

threat of
climate change

Nor should the World Bank be ignored, the panelists noted, suggesting that it might be now primed for more

A Checklist for Slum Improvement

what is a model checklist for upgrading the slums in any developing nation? The Cities Alliance, a global coalition of cities and their development partners committed to scaling up successful approaches to poverty reduction, has produced a list of essential steps. Key elements:

- Demonstrate political will.
- Generate both national and local government vision, commitment, and leadership to achieve slum upgrading.
- Set national and city targets.
- Put it in the budget.
- Support slum upgrading as part of core business, nationally and locally.
- Ensure necessary reforms dealing with land tenure and finance.
- Reform closed and opaque land markets, which encourage corruption, patronage and exploitation of the urban poor, as well as constrain capital markets.
- Engage slum dwellers themselves, who have both the ability and the interest in promoting upgrading, and the private sector, which should be engaged as a risk-sharing partner rather than a mere contractor to the public sector,
- Prevent the growth of new slums.

funding. (In December 2007 the Bank announced that after months of negotiation, 45 countries, including such nations as Egypt, China, and Latvia, agreed for the next round of funding to a three-year donation of more than \$25 billion, a 42 percent increase toward poverty reduction and sustainability goals.)

The sense of urgency for urban planning and design is rising rapidly, participants noted, in part because of global climate change and its potentially disastrous impact on world cities. But despite the potential ravages of global warming, the challenge to shape more livable and sustainable conditions for the hundreds of millions of people at the bottom rungs of the global opportunity ladder could hardly be more dramatic and compelling than it is now.

On June 22, 2007, the world's mayors, along with a host of other local government leaders, assembled in Rome. Keenly aware that 2007 marks the halfway point between the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals and the target dates they envisioned, mayors said in one collective voice, "We are running out of time."

Yet the harsh fact is that up to now the universities and allied institutions, where the designers and planners of the century's explosively growing cities must be trained, have not been enlisted as meaningful partners in the endeavor to create livable cities for our time. A challenging agenda of institution building, shaped to new century needs, is today's inescapable imperative.

potentially
disastrous
impact on
world cities