



# International assistance for cities in low- and middle-income countries: do we still need it?

RICHARD STREN

Richard Stren is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto, and the former Director of the Centre for Urban and Community Studies. He has worked in Africa and (more recently) in Latin America on urban political issues. His most recent book is *Decentralization and the Politics of Urban Development in West Africa*, edited with Dickson Eyoh (2007) and published by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC.

Address: Centre for Urban and Community Studies, 455 Spadina Ave, Toronto M5S 2G8, Canada; e-mail: restren@gmail.com

**Acknowledgement:** An earlier version of this paper was published in Ruble, Blair, Allison Garland and Mejgan Massoumi (editors) (2007), *Global Urban Poverty. Setting the Agenda*, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC. The author is grateful to the Comparative Urban Studies Program of the Woodrow Wilson Center and USAID for their support in the preparation of the original version. The author also wishes to thank the editors of this journal for very helpful comments.

**ABSTRACT** Based on evidence of a secular decline in urban development assistance on the part of many overseas agencies such as the World Bank and USAID, this article suggests reasons for the decline and considers what can be done to reverse it. Urban assistance (from North to South) is still needed in many countries because it strengthens economic development at all levels of recipient nations and because it engenders networks of decentralized cooperation that promote local development. To be more effective, urban assistance programmes must support local research; they must support South–South networks; they must continue to focus on pro-poor policies; and the agencies that undertake these must act responsibly as the local stakeholders they have in fact become.

**KEYWORDS** anti-urban bias / decentralized cooperation / donor agencies / ideas in good currency / networked development / urban assistance

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2006, I had a rare opportunity. I attended a closed meeting in Washington of the major partners that make up the Cities Alliance and was able to listen to their discussion of the question: “What can we do to enhance agency support for urban assistance in our countries and programmes?” Most of the bilateral partners of the Cities Alliance (such as USAID, SIDA, CIDA, GTZ, DFID) were present at this meeting, as well as the World Bank, UN–HABITAT and a number of the Cities Alliance country members such as Nigeria and Brazil. Overall, the discussion was very spirited, going on for about three hours. It was ably co-chaired by Clare Short, the former Secretary of State for International Development of the United Kingdom, and by Sheela Patel of SPARC in Mumbai.

While this is not the place to summarize the long discussion, there were two major points that I took from the meeting. First, in many Western countries (but not all – witness continued support in most of the Nordic countries), there is a declining level of public support both for overseas development assistance in general and for what is traditionally known as “urban development”. The second theme of the discussion related to the reasons for this apparent decline, particularly the decline in urban assistance. Based on my recollections from this meeting, the main proximate reason given for the decline in urban assistance funding – from the standpoint of these development professionals – could be summarized as too much competition from other, often more popular, development

themes. Urban development, as it was traditionally packaged, did not muster enough interest within most development agencies to attract professional staff and funding when issues such as HIV/Aids, post-conflict reconstruction, the conflict in Darfur, support for growing numbers of refugees, the tsunami in 2005, various floods and hurricanes, the plight of Africa, the problems of women and children in poverty, and many others were clamouring for support – often with the help of very high-profile celebrities. Even in the World Bank, the meeting was told, urban assistance had declined, although there was about to be a reorganization that might reinvestigate this sector.

I will not attempt here to demonstrate the truth or falsity of the proposition that urban assistance (in qualitative and quantitative terms) has declined. To do this satisfactorily would be a slippery and perhaps fruitless exercise, given the many and diverse ways in which assistance – whether “urban” or in other sectors – can be packaged and delivered. Rather, I will take the concerns of the “insiders” at their face value, since they are closest to the phenomenon they were speaking about. In addition to the reasons offered at this “insiders” discussion, there are other possible explanations behind the apparent decline in urban assistance over the last decade. In the next section we will consider some of them, before looking more positively at the factors that ought to support, or even enhance, urban lending in the immediate future.

## II. THE APPARENT DECLINE IN URBAN ASSISTANCE: SOME EXPLANATORY FACTORS

**Declining political support in the West.** There are many possible reasons for a decline in urban assistance. We shall consider five of them here. One of the more intriguing factors may very well be political. In the elections of 2000 and 2004 in the United States, for example, support for the President's party came largely (but not entirely) from the suburbs and from the so-called “red states” in the interior of the country. Many of the most ethnically diverse parts of the country – cities in the so-called “blue states”, such as California, Oregon and Washington, and the states of the northeast and Great Lakes area – voted against the President, while states with smaller and less diverse urban populations (with the notable exceptions of Florida and Texas) voted for the President's party.<sup>1</sup> This pattern is far from perfect as a characterization, but it does help to illustrate the point that political support for US overseas assistance, which is channelled through the administratively controlled USAID, was likely to be different after 2000 than it was before 2000. Similarly, in Canada, the most recent election (in 2006) showed the winning party (the Conservatives) failing to gain a single parliamentary seat in any of the three largest and most socially diverse cities in the country – Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. As in the United States, the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA) is controlled by an executive that is accountable to the country's leader – in this case a president, responsible to the Minister of International Cooperation who is, in turn, selected by the Prime Minister. While this pattern of political support for the dominant party in Canada does not ensure that urban issues will be extinguished from CIDA's agenda, it does not appear that an urban programme currently features in CIDA's assistance portfolio.

1. In common parlance in the United States, “red states” refer to states that have voted Republican in presidential elections since 2000 (normally, but not exclusively, states in the interior of the country and in the “old” south), and “blue states” refer to states that have voted Democratic since 2000 (states of the northeast, the West Coast and the Great Lakes basin). Red states, on the whole, are more rural and have smaller and less ethnically diverse metropolitan centres than blue states. Designating state electoral patterns in two colours has developed because of televised representation of elections.

2. Lipton, Michael (1976), *Why Poor People Stay Poor. Urban Bias in World Development*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

3. Becker, Charles, Andrew Hamer and Andrew Morrison (1994), *Beyond Urban Bias in Africa. Urbanization in an Era of Structural Adjustment*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH.

4. UN-HABITAT (2007), *Enhancing Urban Safety and Security. Global Report on Human Settlements 2007*, Earthscan, London, pages 374–375.

**Anti-urban bias.** For many years, the argument has been put forward that investments in development in poor countries (or overseas assistance in general) have suffered from urban bias. As Michael Lipton argued many years ago – mostly on the basis of data from South Asia – project expenditures have tended to privilege urban areas even if the likely rate of return of these investments would be higher in rural areas.<sup>(2)</sup> As more of the rural poor move to the cities, however, and we observe an “urbanization of poverty”, this earlier argument seems less and less valid, especially given the kinds of structural adjustment effects that took place during the 1980s, when food prices became much higher for urban populations and secure urban employment became very scarce.<sup>(3)</sup> Nevertheless, we can still find expression of the old idea that, because there is more wealth in urban areas (there is also a great deal of poverty), development assistance should concentrate on rural development and agriculture. This argument continues to attract supporters in many northern development agencies in spite of its obsolescence.

What do we know about urban poverty? Systematic and reliable estimates are hard to come by, particularly when we wish to make cross-national comparisons. In Table B.10 of the most recent *Global Report on Human Settlements*,<sup>(4)</sup> figures on rural and urban poverty are given for selected countries for which acceptable data are available. Of the 20 countries in Africa and 16 countries in Asia for which estimates are given, three in the first group and three in the second show that the proportion of population in the cities that is poor (by national standards) exceeds the proportion in the rural areas that is poor. These figures would seem to reinforce the urban bias argument, except for the fact that, as cities grow, more and more of their populations in terms of absolute numbers are poor. Some relatively recent work by the World Bank shows clearly that poverty is urbanizing in Latin America and the Caribbean. Table 1 compares urban and rural poverty in that region, and shows a steady increase in the aggregate number of urban poor, including the urban population in the “extreme poverty” category. By contrast, the estimated aggregate number of rural poor ceased to rise after 1995, and as of 2000 the aggregate number of rural people in “extreme poverty” did not increase in comparison with 1995.

**TABLE 1**  
**The urbanizing of poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean**  
**(in millions)**

Year	Total poverty		Extreme poverty	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
1986	71	65	26	32
1995	102	79	38	47
1998	102	76	39	46
2000	113	76	46	46

SOURCE: Fay, Marianne and Caterina Laderchi (2005), “Urban poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean: setting the stage”, in Marianne Fay (editor), *The Urban Poor in Latin America*, The World Bank, Washington DC, page 20.

Moreover, as cities, in general, are much more productive economically than rural areas, support for urban assistance that can lift their poor populations out of a dysfunctional condition of life ought to be encouraged.

What about the proportions of urban populations that are poor? Again, solid statistics are few and far between. And the measurement of poverty is highly dependent on statistics of food costs; since non-food costs are generally high in urban areas, it is likely that urban poverty indices, as they have been calculated in recent years, under-report real urban poverty.<sup>(5)</sup> Notwithstanding, the UN-HABITAT table cited above says that, for example, 52 per cent of the urban population of Niger were "poor" by national poverty standards in 1993; that 46 per cent of the Zambian urban population were poor by similar criteria in 1996; and that the figures for India, Bolivia, and Honduras – to pick some countries virtually at random – the level of recorded urban poverty was 32.4 per cent in 1994, 53.8 per cent in 1997 and 56 per cent in 1992, respectively.<sup>(6)</sup> Another list of urban poverty estimates has more recent figures for many of these countries. Zambia showed 56 per cent urban poverty in 1998 (an increase), India 24.7 per cent in 2000 (a decrease), Bolivia 52 per cent in 1999 (a decrease) and Honduras 41 per cent in 1998 (a decrease).<sup>(7)</sup> An even more recent study of Niger showed that the proportion of truly poor (by local standards) in Niamey, the capital city, stood at 42 per cent, while in the third and sixth largest towns (Maradi and Dosso), the combined figure was 47 per cent – an apparent decrease since the 1993 figures.<sup>(8)</sup> Thus, if the rural poverty problem demands international attention, so does the urban poverty problem, not least in the poorest countries, even if there are some advances over time for some countries.

If we can hypothesize weak support structures for overseas urban assistance in some developed countries, we can also observe a preponderance of what we might call "anti-urban bias" in many low- and middle-income countries. This tendency is not universally visible, but in Africa in recent years, most national elections for parliaments or national assemblies have produced voting results that have pitted the largest (and usually capital) cities against the party or coalition that eventually won. The most extreme example of this is Zimbabwe, where, beginning in the year 2000, the government party ZANU-PF began losing elections in the capital city, Harare. In June 2000, all Harare's constituencies supported the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in parliamentary elections. Then, in March 2002, Harare's electorate voted the ruling party out of office at the local government level, defeating the party in all but one local ward. Following a number of conflicts between the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing and the executive mayor of Harare, the government sacked the mayor in 2004, appointing a commission to run the city.<sup>(9)</sup> Finally, in the 2005 general elections, the government lost not only Harare but all major urban constituencies by an embarrassing margin. One of the more serious consequences of the disconnect between the national government and the people in the capital city (a disconnect that was mirrored in the voting patterns in the second largest city, Bulawayo) seems to have been the decision of the Zimbabwe government to move massively against informal sector housing and trading in a military-style "Operation Restore Order" that eventually resulted in the displacement of at least 700,000 people in 2005.<sup>(10)</sup>

5. Satterthwaite, D (2004), "The underestimation of urban poverty in low- and middle-income nations", Poverty Reduction in Urban Areas Series, Working Paper 14, IIED, London.

6. See reference 4, pages 374–375.

7. Kessides, Christine (2005), *The Urban Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa. Implications for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction*, Africa Region Working Paper Series No 97, The World Bank, Washington DC, pages 74–75.

8. Personal communication (2007).

9. Kamete, Amin (2006), "The return of the jettisoned: ZANU-PF's crack at 're-urbanizing' in Harare", *Journal of Southern African Studies* Vol 32, No 2, June, pages 255–271.

10. UN-HABITAT (2005), *Report of the Fact-finding Mission to Zimbabwe to Assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina by the UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe*, Mrs Anna Kajumulo Tibajjuka, available on UN-HABITAT website: [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org).

11. Mamdani, Mahmood (1996), *Citizen and Subject. Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ.

12. United Nations (2005), *World Urbanization Prospects. The 2005 Revision. Executive Summary with Fact Sheets and Data Tables*, Economic and Social Affairs Department, Population Division, New York, page 10.

13. World Bank (2007), "Note from the President of the World Bank", Development Committee of the Boards of Governors of the Bank and the Fund on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries, October 19, available on World Bank website: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org).

14. World Bank (2007), *Agriculture for Development. World Development Report 2008*, The World Bank, Washington DC.

15. World Bank (2000), *Entering the 21st Century. World Development Report 1999/2000*, The World Bank, Washington DC.

This pattern of greater support for opposition parties in the major cities is reflective of similar tendencies elsewhere in Africa. Urban areas have often been seen as sources of disloyal opposition to regimes that are used to the traditional vote control systems they have been able to operate in more socially and economically homogeneous rural areas. That this system has roots going back to the colonial period has been very effectively demonstrated by Mahmood Mamdani.<sup>(11)</sup> Mamdani's brilliant account shows how, during the colonial period, rural populations were governed through decentralized, traditional structures, while urban areas (which often contained many expatriates) were governed and adjudicated with rules that included rights and legal institutions similar to European patterns. The rural and urban spheres, he argues, were treated differentially. After independence, these patterns were slow to change, since the ascendant political groups in each country had built their winning coalitions on the basis of largely rural-based, traditional patron–client structures of support. Although African countries that were only 14.7 per cent urban in 1950 had grown to 38.3 per cent urban in 2005 (heading for 50.7 per cent urban in 2030),<sup>(12)</sup> their electoral systems have been much slower to change than their demographic (rural/urban) dynamics.

The slow pace of representation of urban interests in national governments and governing coalitions in the developing world is another partial explanation of the weakness in support for urban assistance. Current assistance policies – in both bilateral and multilateral agencies – rely rather considerably on agreement with local counterparts. Support for urban assistance, at the end of the day, must be forthcoming from senior bureaucrats and political leaders in recipient countries. To the extent that governments in recipient countries do not see the benefits of urban assistance packages – compared to the benefits from other assistance offers – this will diminish the enthusiasm for the donors to offer urban assistance in the first place.

**Weaker support in donor agencies.** At the same time, there are many competing interests within the donor agencies themselves. In the World Bank, for example, many groups compete to promote their approaches, since support in the form of large projects will enhance the integrity both of their group and their professional point of view. One of the key symbolic indicators of the distribution of thematic support in the Bank is the subject matter of each year's World Development Report. The 2008 World Development Report (WDR), which was released in October 2007, has as its title *Agriculture for Development*. The launching of this document undoubtedly strengthened the position of the rural development group in the Bank, when a press release from the office of the Bank's President noted that: "...growth originating in agriculture is four times more effective at raising the incomes of the extreme poor than growth in other sectors."<sup>(13)</sup> In this particular WDR, all 11 chapters deal in one way or another with agricultural development.<sup>(14)</sup> By contrast, in the last WDR in which urban development was a prominent feature – the 1999/2000 report entitled *Entering the 21st Century* – only two of eight chapters ("Dynamic Cities as Engines of Growth" and "Making Cities Liveable") dealt specifically with urban issues.<sup>(15)</sup> These symbolic markers are important because of the considerable effort the Bank puts into producing the yearly WDRs, and because of the current leadership role of the Bank among all other multilateral and bilateral agencies in the West. By far the largest of the

development assistance agencies, with approximately 12,500 full-time staff, the World Bank's professional ranks include between 200 and 225 individuals who consider themselves part of what is called the "urban family".<sup>(16)</sup> Over the last decade or so, the Bank has been lending more than US\$ 2 billion per year in combined urban development, urban water and urban transport projects.<sup>(17)</sup> Fortunately for the "urban family" (that some insiders see as "on the decline"), the WDR for 2009 has been designated as *Spatial Disparities and Development Policy*. Three chapters out of 10 have been set aside for urban issues. But this is unlikely to dispel the impression that "urban" is declining on the Bank's agenda. As for USAID, one of the mainstays of bilateral urban assistance for many years, a sharp decline in urban personnel in the agency began in the mid-1990s. From a major RHUDO (Regional Offices for Housing and Urban Development) programme around the world with nine major offices and more than 40 professional staff, in addition to a staff of more than 10 professionals in Washington, the current urban professional staff at the agency – with RHUDO offices having been closed – stands at only five.<sup>(18)</sup>

**Many new claims for development assistance.** A fourth important factor that must be considered in this litany of possible explanations for a decline in official urban assistance is the increasing number – some might say "cacophony" – claims for assistance budgets. These claims generally assert a normative superiority over previous, more sectoral approaches to development, such as the need for better roads, schools, clinics and water distribution systems. For example, the claim that assistance agencies ought to focus their mission on the alleviation of climate change, or the worldwide scourge of HIV/Aids, famines, child labour, or violence against women – all these arguments somehow advance propositions that reflect a high moral imperative because they are issues that involve virtually life or death for millions of extremely vulnerable people. And most of the potential targets of this assistance live in the very poorest countries. Promoting a traditional urban development approach (which may involve, for example, slum upgrading, capacity building for newly democratized municipal governments, support for participatory planning initiatives, and assisting the establishment of improved local financial tools) lacks a powerful moral edge. International NGOs, many of them with high profile celebrities willing to speak on their platforms, also campaign for emerging issues.

The allocation dilemma over how to treat older, needs-based claims and newer, rights-based claims has affected UN agencies in a negative way. A former UNICEF planner argues that development organizations that have adopted a human-rights based approach (called "human-rights based approach to programming" or HRBAP) have had great difficulties in allocating resources efficiently and equitably. Since the HRBAP argues that all human rights are equally important, and therefore that prioritization of rights is not possible, the prioritization and allocation of scarce resources has become extremely difficult for many organizations, especially those that were committed to "results-based management".<sup>(19)</sup> Thus, the clash of human rights claims (such as the right to the city, the right to housing and the right to land) with traditional urban approaches to services and infrastructure has both fragmented the message of urban development and weakened the ability of agencies to offer assistance in this field.

In addition to claims for assistance in response to human rights justifications, many of these emerging, and very weighty issues are reinforced

16. Personal communication (2006).

17. See reference 15; also personal communication (2006).

18. Personal communication (2008).

19. Munro, L (forthcoming), "The 'human rights-based' approach to programming: a contradiction in terms?", in S Hickey and D Mitlin (editors), *Rights, Wrongs and Realities: Reflections on the Rights-based Approach*, Kumarian Press, Bloomfield, CT.

by the current list of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). All major assistance agencies have at least been committed formally to the MDGs, since they were declared like the Ten Commandments by the Secretary General of the United Nations in the millennium year. In the complex statement of eight goals and 18 targets, urban development receives only one mention: Target 11: “Have achieved by 2020 a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers”, within Goal 7, “Ensure environmental sustainability”. While the connection between improving the lives of slum dwellers and ensuring environmental sustainability is relatively well understood by many urban specialists and those with environmental backgrounds, it is not so obvious to the outside world.

Emphasizing the goal of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020 appears tangible, but at the same time, very distant and even imprecise. What and how much is required for “improvement”, for example? And, given the massive size of the world’s slum population – estimated quite carefully by UN-HABITAT to be 924 million in 2001<sup>(20)</sup> – how substantial is the overall effect of simply “improving” the lives of 100 million slum dwellers, if not even removing that number of slums in absolute numbers? We may express even more scepticism over the goal established in 2000 when it is pointed out, again by UN-HABITAT, that by 2005 there were 998 million slum dwellers in the world, and that if current trends were to continue, there will be 1.4 billion by the year 2020.<sup>(21)</sup> However aggregated and inaccurate these figures may be, they are consistently collected by the same agencies and show trends in the wrong direction in relation to the Millennium Development Goals.

**Is urban development still an “idea in good currency”?** A final point is the notion of an “idea in good currency”. Is this a characteristic of the notion of urban development? Many years ago, Donald Schön defined “an idea in good currency” as an idea that was “...powerful for the formation of public policy”, an idea, presumably, at the centre of policy debate and even political conflict. Among the characteristics of these ideas are that “...they change over time; they obey a law of limited numbers; and they lag behind changing events, sometimes in dramatic ways.”<sup>(22)</sup> It may not take long, if ideas do not relate to changing events, for new ideas to drive out old. Since the notion of urban development began in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with the excitement over the work of John Turner and the establishment of UNCHS (later called UN-HABITAT) as a United Nations organ to help the urban poor, many other ideas have vied for entry at the top of the international policy agenda.

New ideas have arrived. New approaches to the “urban” or new alternatives to urban development have, in one way or another, either by-passed older notions of urban development or have restated them in a different fashion. This may be partly a matter of language, partly a matter of a whole “paradigm change”. “Sustainable development” is perhaps one of these new approaches, while perhaps “good governance” is another. Both incorporate elements of urban, or local, development but both relate to a wider set of concepts (“environmentalism” or “democratization”) that are currently more appealing to Western publics. While “slum” or “squatter” improvement/eradication have a certain cachet and appeal to certain groups, they have difficulty competing in a conceptual universe that is underpinned by notions of rights, personal liberties and environmental crisis. This is not a comment on the validity or importance of the goal of improving cities in the developing world; this objective is still valid

20. UN-HABITAT (2003), *The Challenge of Slums. Global Report on Human Settlements 2003*, Earthscan, London, page 14.

21. UN-HABITAT (2006), *The State of the World’s Cities Report 2006/2007*, Earthscan, London for UN-HABITAT, pages 16–18.

22. Schön, Donald A (1971), *Beyond the Stable State*, Temple Smith, London, pages 123–124.

after many years. But ideas change, and old projects and programmatic approaches (no matter how successful) are regularly avoided by career assistance officers because they need to identify with new, more current initiatives in order to establish their bona fides, so that competing approaches and perspectives eventually emerge.

Why one idea supplants another is a mysterious process, but “an idea whose time has come” under the right conditions can replace old ideas at the top of the political agenda.<sup>(23)</sup> Just as easily, however, ideas can be negatively “framed” in such a way that they lose favour among voting publics (or competing ideas gain favour), even though the problems they represent have not been solved or even in any way reduced. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, for example, the challenge of the cities held a privileged position on the American political agenda. After that, while the plight of the cities did not change, the issue was pushed off the agenda amidst partisan rancour and the defining of urban issues as essentially “local” problems.<sup>(24)</sup> In the social sciences policy literature, arriving on the political agenda is an important key to achieving the major objectives of any policy. But political competition requires new ideas. Issues, just like equities in the stock market, do not hold their position indefinitely.

### III. A BRIEF RETROSPECTIVE

In spite of its current stagnation and even decline, international development assistance for urban problems has enjoyed some real successes in the past. These historical successes should not be forgotten, even as we focus on the future. The following discussion will list some of the highlights of the overseas assistance experience, but it is by no means comprehensive.

Perhaps the first, and most important, insight about urban development in the global South came through a Western architect, John Turner, although his observations were based on experiences and discussions with Peruvian colleagues. Turner’s insight was that poor people living in so-called “slums” were in fact building for their own needs much more effectively than were governments and public agencies that were clearing the slums and constructing large, centrally controlled public housing estates.<sup>(25)</sup> Turner’s ideas, which had first been expressed in the late 1960s, along with the analysis of the value of the “informal sector” developed by Keith Hart<sup>(26)</sup> and by the ILO,<sup>(27)</sup> resulted in an approach to housing for the poor that stressed self-help building and the value of the small-scale local economy. This approach was epitomized by the “sites and services” approach to housing, whereby – at least in principle – local governments would lay out plots, community services and infrastructure for low-income people and they, in turn, would construct their own houses and develop their own local economies. Instead of being “marginal” to urban society, the poor were central to its proper functioning.<sup>(28)</sup>

A second insight, which was promoted and pursued in the 1980s and 1990s, was that assistance should focus on the development of national policies which, in turn, would be applied appropriately at local levels according to the context.<sup>(29)</sup> This period represents the re-emergence of the local in urban development. These national policies – sometimes brought together in the “urban management” approach to the improvement of local services<sup>(30)</sup> – included improving urban public finance and improving the delivery of local services. Both were absolutely central requirements

23. Kingdon, John W (1995), *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, Harper Collins, New York. For an overview of the literature on agenda setting in the US (where the concept has been used for some time), see Birkland, Thomas A (2007), “Agenda setting in public policy”, in Frank Fischer, Gerald Miller and Mara Sidney (editors), *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis. Theory, Politics and Methods*, CRC Press, London and New York, pages 63–87.

24. Baumgartner, Frank R and Bryan D Jones (1993), *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Chapter 7.

25. Turner, J F C (1976), *Housing by People. Towards Autonomy in Building Environments*, Pantheon, New York.

26. Hart, Keith (1973), “Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana”, *Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol 11, No 1, March, pages 61–89.

27. International Labour Office (ILO) (1972), *Employment, Incomes and Equality. A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya*, International Labour Office, Geneva.

28. Perlman, Janice (1976), *The Myth of Marginality. Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro*, University of California Press, Berkeley CA.

29. Buckley, Robert M and Jerry Kalarickal (2006), *Thirty Years of World Bank Shelter Lending. What Have We Learned?*, The World Bank, Washington DC.

30. Davey, Keith (1996), *Urban Management. The Challenge of Growth*, Avebury, Aldershot.



for local governments that were struggling with problems of limited local funding sources and weak human resource capacities. The 1980s and 1990s also saw the emergence of movements of democratization and decentralization, which, in turn, focused more attention on the institutionalization of city governments and on their ability to plan for their citizens. Support from the major assistance agencies (such as DFID, USAID, SIDA and others) for capacity building at the local level helped thousands of local governments to establish themselves during this transitional period. While neither democratization nor decentralization were normally promoted or initiated by overseas agencies in the first instance (these movements were largely local, based on political and civil society considerations), assistance agencies and foundations were often quick to support locally elected mayors and local government associations once they were established and when they asked for help.

A third and final insight that we must mention here is that urban assistance – when it is appropriate and requested by recipient countries – needs to be offered in a collaborative manner, involving cooperation among all major donors. There are two important reasons for this: first, urban development is a multi-sectoral effort that requires many different actors to work together; and second, overlap and concurrency among donors is counter-productive both for the recipients (who are tasked with the huge transaction costs of managing many projects with different time scales and operational parameters) and for the donors (who do not need to “reinvent the wheel” if other donors have already found the best way to deal with an issue). An important start in collaborative assistance in the urban field was the establishment of the Urban Management Programme (UMP) in 1986. It was largely a collective effort of UNCHS (later called UN-HABITAT), the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with much of the funding supplied by UNDP. (The UMP ceased to exist as a unified, worldwide programme in 2006.) While the OECD guidelines to donors to harmonize their assistance operations in individual countries and regions<sup>(31)</sup> are probably honoured more in the breach than the observance, the existence of the UMP and the establishment in 1999 of the Cities Alliance were major steps forward. The Cities Alliance is a broad coalition of 10 of the major donor countries, the World Bank and UN-HABITAT (as founder members), the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the European Union and (as of 2007) Brazil, Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa, Chile, the Philippines, as well as Metropolis and United Cities and Local Governments.<sup>(32)</sup> The work of the Cities Alliance represents the first time – albeit on a modest scale – that all the major urban assistance agencies have worked together on agreed projects in a wide variety of countries and regions.

#### IV. WHY URBAN ASSISTANCE IS STILL NEEDED

Notwithstanding all the changes in development approaches we have just discussed, I would conclude that overseas assistance to cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America is still justified. There are two important reasons for this conclusion. The first has to do with the economic benefits of urbanization in poor countries; and the second has to do with the benefits that can accrue from a networked approach to urban development.

31. OECD (2003), *Harmonizing Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery. DAC Guidelines and Reference Series*, OECD, Paris.

32. Cities Alliance (2007), *Cities Alliance: Cities without Slums* Home Page, accessed 23 October 2007 at <http://www.citiesalliance.org/members/members.html>.

**Urbanization and economic development.** As Mila Freire and Mario Polèse have convincingly argued: "...the evidence of a positive link between cities (urban areas) and economic development is overwhelming."<sup>(33)</sup> There is some debate over the direction of this link (that is, whether cities affect development, vice-versa or both), but in any case cities are a part of the nation, so that even if the influence flows from national development to cities, helping cities will also support national development. And support for cities is usually support for the most productive sectors in the nation. This is the argument, originally made in the 1980s by Jane Jacobs among others,<sup>(34)</sup> that urban economies are the "motors of development" of our modern economies. In the United States, a detailed study has shown that the 361 metropolitan area economies are responsible for 86 per cent of the total GDP of the whole country. If it were a country, the metropolitan region of New York would have the tenth largest economy in the world.<sup>(35)</sup> Using different figures based on similar calculations, we can compare the GDP of selected major world cities with the GDP of the countries in which they are located. The results are shown in Table 2. The figures show clearly that the proportion of the country's GDP generated by these major cities is well in excess of the proportion of the country's population that they represent. Comparing columns 3 and 6 we see that, while New York City comprises 6.2 per cent of the population of the United States, its economy represents 9 per cent of the country's GDP. This represents a positive, or disproportionate, economic contribution of 45 per cent, giving a "location quotient"<sup>(36)</sup> of 1.45. Similarly, for Mexico City, São Paulo, Shanghai and Mumbai, the corresponding location quotients are 2.27, 2.86, 5.45 and 9.41, respectively. In proportion to their populations – which are already very large – these urban areas make a very important contribution to the economies of their respective countries.

A more extensive tabulation, which uses a different data set that includes 21 cities and national urban systems in low- and middle-income and transitional countries, was prepared by Freire and Polèse. The results are based on somewhat older data than the data in Table 2 above, but the indicators are similar. The ratios of the GNP of the cities to the percentage of the national population they represent are all considerably higher than 1:1. As the authors conclude: "...there is something in the very nature

33. Freire, Mila and Mario Polèse (2003), *Connecting Cities with Macroeconomic Concerns: The Missing Link. Do Local Public Services Matter? A Case Study of Five Cities*, INRS and the World Bank, Montreal and Washington.

34. Jacobs, Jane (1984), *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*, Vintage Books, New York.

35. US Conference of Mayors (2007), *US Metro Economies. Gross Metropolitan Product with Housing Update*, Appendix, January, page 12, accessed 6 May 2008 at <http://www.usmayors.org/metroeconomies/0107/GMPPreport.pdf>

36. Isserman, A M J (1977), "A bracketing approach for estimating regional economic impact multipliers and a procedure for assessing their accuracy", *Environment and Planning A* No 9, pages 1003–1011.

**TABLE 2**  
**Comparisons of major world cities' GDP with country GDP, 2005**

City	(1) City population (millions)	(2) Country population (millions)	(3) City/ country (%)	(4) City GDP (\$ billions)	(5) Country GDP (\$ billions)	(6) City GDP/ country GDP (%)
New York	18.7	298	6.2	1,133	12,417	9
Mexico City	19.4	107	18.1	315	768	41
São Paulo	18.3	186	9.8	225	796	28
Shanghai	14.5	1,323	1.1	139	2,234	6
Mumbai	18.2	1,103	1.7	126	805	16

SOURCES: United Nations (2006), *World Urbanization Prospects. The 2005 Revision*, UN, New York; World Bank (2007), *World Development Report*, World Bank, Washington DC; City Mayors website: <http://www.citymayors.com/statistics/richest-cities-2005.html>; World Bank (2007), World Development Indicators database, available at World Bank website: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/GDP.pdf>.

37. See reference 33, page 6.

38. Cohen, Barney (2004), "Urban growth in developing countries: a review of current trends and a caution regarding existing forecasts", *World Development* Vol 32, No 1, January, pages 23–51.

39. Castells, Manuel (1996), *The Rise of the Network Society*, Blackwell, Oxford, page 469.

40. Sassen, Saskia (2001), *The Global City* (second edition), Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

41. Friedmann, John (1995), "The world city hypothesis", reprinted in Paul L Knox and Peter J Taylor (editors), *World Cities in a World-System*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pages 317–331.

42. Robinson, Jennifer (2006), *Ordinary Cities. Between Modernity and Development*, Routledge, London.

43. Mabogunje, Akin L (2005), "From research to ownership – the legacy of the Urban Management Programme", *Habitat Debate* Vol 11, No 4, December, page 4.

44. Bilbao Declaration (2005), II World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society, Bilbao, November, page 5.

of urban agglomerations that contributes positively to higher incomes."<sup>(37)</sup> It follows that any support (through overseas investment, technical assistance or training) that helps these cities will also lead eventually to collective benefits for the recipient nation. And the poorest countries, whose planning and technical capacities are the lowest, generally need outside support the most. The poorest countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia are almost always the countries with the lowest levels of urbanization and the fastest rates of urban growth.<sup>(38)</sup>

**Networked development.** The well-known sociologist Manuel Castells has argued that we are living in a globalizing, information age, for which "...dominant functions and processes...are increasingly organized around networks. Networks constitute the new social morphology of our societies, and the diffusion of networking logic modifies the operation and outcomes in processes of production, experience, power and culture."<sup>(39)</sup> Whether we are talking about "global cities" at the very apex of the international financial and political system,<sup>(40)</sup> "world cities" as leading nodes in the economic hierarchy, spread throughout the world's major regions,<sup>(41)</sup> or just "ordinary cities",<sup>(42)</sup> all can benefit from better information about what other cities are doing to solve similar problems and challenges. Cities – whether rich or poor – are connected by membership in both national networks of local authorities and international networks and organizations.

One important indicator of the importance that networks have assumed in international urban assistance is a recent reflection on the importance of the Urban Management Programme (UMP), written by Professor Akin Mabogunje. Mabogunje, one of Africa's premier geographers and a member of the National Academy of Sciences in the United States, was a key adviser to the UMP during the 1990s, when it opened regional offices in Abidjan, Cairo, Bangkok and Quito. His observations about the success of this initiative are worth quoting at some length:

"I believe there can be no better testimony to the legacy of the programme than first, the existence in each region today of a very active constituency of stakeholders in the urban management field comprising the regional networks of institutions, experts and practitioners, informed academics, consultancy firms, non-governmental organizations and city managers. Second, the existence of these networks has meant vast improvement in the database, knowledge and expertise available for dealing with problems of urbanization in individual countries and regions. But third, and most importantly, the existence of these networks has enabled the new international effort at urban development known as the Cities Alliance to take off effectively, without much concern with issues of capacity building."<sup>(43)</sup>

Larger and more far-reaching networks have also been formed by local governments around the world. Recently, the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the World Federation of United Towns and Cities (UTO), which had been in operation since 1913 and 1957 respectively, combined into the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), with headquarters in Barcelona. After it was launched in Paris in 2004, the UCLG adopted the Bilbao Declaration, according to which the organization committed itself to "...promote decentralized cooperation programmes between cities, local and regional authorities and their associations throughout the world to help bridge the digital divide..."<sup>(44)</sup> According to its web page, the UCLG represents more than 1,000 cities across 95 countries

directly, as well as 112 local government associations around the world. The UCLG sits as an associate member of the Cities Alliance and regularly attends meetings of the governing council of UN-HABITAT. In March of 2006, the World Bank, acting through Cities Alliance, signed two grant agreements with UCLG. Both the existence and level of activity of UCLG demonstrate the importance to cities around the world of staying in touch with one another and of maintaining good relations with major international funding agencies.

“Decentralized cooperation”, or city-to-city development, is a rapidly growing sector on the international scene. Almost every major Western country has been supporting this expanding field for the last decade. A good example is France, where the organization Cités Unies France was created in 1975 out of the World Federation of Twin Cities, which itself was started in 1957. With a well-organized structure, a very informative web page<sup>(45)</sup> and a wide range of planned activities, Cités Unies France has a membership of 500 local authorities at all levels of the French decentralized structure, and a network of some 2,000 cities in France and in low- and middle-income countries that are regularly connected with each other. Both France and the European Union provide overseas funding for city-to-city collaboration. In the case of France, funding comes both from the local authorities themselves – some of which are very wealthy – and from the overseas agencies of the government. An important policy statement by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, entitled “Governance Strategy for French Development Assistance”, indicates the importance of working with local authorities on overseas projects. The document points to “decentralized cooperation” as an example of working with “new partners” and to the “...dynamic created by the Decentralized Cooperation Programme...to develop exchanges with local government...through the various representative bodies in existence.”<sup>(46)</sup>

In France, Cités Unies is very proactive. When local authorities show interest in working with overseas local partners, Cités Unies France helps them with information pertaining to the country in which they are proposing to work, case studies of other partnerships, information on training and capacity building “tools” that they have developed, and it maintains regular contacts with major French government agencies and overseas NGOs that would be germane to the overseas projects they are contemplating. On the recipient side, there is often a well-oiled non-governmental organization, supported by French and European Union funding, or funding from the active local governments from the North working in a particular country. In Niger, for example, I recently met with ANIYA, the NGO that helps coordinate decentralized cooperation programmes between Niger and France. ANIYA (which means “will” and “engagement” in local languages) calls itself “The network of Nigerien and French local governments working with decentralized cooperation”. At the time of our meeting in May 2007, ANIYA claimed that there were 20 French local governments (including both communes and regional governments) connecting through functioning programmes with 34 Nigerien communes. ANIYA’s work – financially supported by the Nigerien government, the French communal assembly of Faucigny-Glières, the participating communes in Niger and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs – began in earnest in 2001, just as Niger was developing its new programme of decentralization. There are regular meetings in Niger and France. At the end of a colourful brochure, which shows the participating

45. Cités Unies France (2008), accessed 15 May 2008 at <http://www.cites-unies-france.org/>.

46. France, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2007), *Governance Strategy for French Development Assistance* (English version), DGID/DPDEV, 20 rue Monsieur, Paris, page 19.

47. ANIYA (2007), Brochure  
seen on [www.france-niger.com](http://www.france-niger.com).

local governments in both France and Niger, a group of French and Nigerien mayors claims that: "...together we are engaging in an innovative global initiative, a network of solidarity with the goal of gaining a mastery of our local development."<sup>(47)</sup> At the bottom of the brochure I collected in May 2007, Cités Unies is clearly designated as a major sponsor. Checking the attractive internet site more recently, there is more information than before and some examples of the activities of Nigerien mayors and local councillors with the help of current projects. The two themes that are stressed are the help received (both in terms of training and financial support) by local authorities, and the new relations Nigeriens are able to cultivate with the outside world. This is especially important for a country that is so vulnerable to periodic droughts and food shortages. According to World Bank statistics, Niger is one of the poorest countries in the World.<sup>(48)</sup>

48. See reference 14.

## V. WHAT CAN URBAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES DO?

There is no doubt that urban assistance programmes are still needed, even though many bilateral assistance programmes, and even the World Bank, have reduced their support to this sector. Cities are extremely productive islands in a sea of what are often very dysfunctional or stagnant economies, but they are increasingly finding their way to connect with the larger global economy. Rather than state the obvious about the growing importance of cities, and the very great problems they represent and need help to overcome, I would suggest that programme directors consider four basic objectives.

**Support research and local problem solving.** Until now, implied models of urban development for cities in the South are derived from the North.<sup>(49)</sup> Cities should be clean, orderly and efficient; and infrastructure and services should be supplied to all groups and neighbourhoods on the basis of decisions made by publicly elected local authorities. Taxes, wherever possible, should be collected (or at least remitted) locally, and fees for some services (such as water, electricity and sewerage) should be applied to households receiving the services. Because this model of urban development is essentially based on the experience of the North, research on alternative forms or perspectives would seem redundant. Most Northern-based assistance agencies do not encourage or support research to a significant degree.

49. See reference 42.

But for Southern cities, research – particularly by local scholars and scientists – serves at least two major purposes. First, it solidifies local knowledge about cities and indirectly enhances informed local discussions of important issues. It is especially important that, when research is done by local scholars and/or consultants, it can be accessed locally. Creating histories and narratives of issues and questions involved in local urban development is an important vehicle for valuing the city and supporting public commitment to the urban reality. A country such as Brazil, where local research and writing about cities has been an important factor in public discussions for many years, has been successful in nurturing a civic culture in many of its larger cities. Partly as a result of this, Brazil has seen an impressive number of urban innovations, for example: the urban social movements that contributed to ending the military regime; the participatory budget model; and the statute of the city and its product,

the Ministry of Cities. The second reason for supporting research is that it brings more information to local level decision makers, who are often constrained by their lack of systematic data on local problems. This information becomes the patrimony of cities and of the scholars and research institutes that become part of local policy networks. Since cities in the South are growing so much more quickly than cities in the North, new information and methods of collecting it are particularly welcome; thus support from the North and from more experienced researchers can be extremely valuable.

**Support South–South networks.** Almost all countries have associations of local authorities. These associations bring local experience to bear on cities, and newly elected officials experiencing challenges of many kinds. There are usually training courses for new councillors and mayors, regular meetings at which national political leaders explain government policy, and opportunities to explore various ideas and to learn about what others are doing. These associations are extremely important and should be a focus of budgetary support from overseas.

With more support for local research into many aspects of past and current urban development, and with burgeoning associations of cities and their elected officials, cities will need to reach out to other cities to better understand possible futures and scenarios to deal with their most challenging problems. In the social science study of policy, a strong argument can be made<sup>(50)</sup> that any local policy idea or initiative can best be developed and refined if the comparative method is used. Comparison means learning as much as possible about how a potential policy actually works in a complex situation; but when a new policy is being contemplated, examples of what might or might not work in practice can only be learned by visiting other countries and learning from their experience. Nearby, or culturally similar, countries are the best environment for this kind of policy learning. Donors can assist this process by supporting visiting groups from one country to another, and they can support regular meetings (such as Africities, which is held every two years in some African city) where initial contacts are made and potential information exchange can be initiated. Supporting these South–South networks not only steers local officials and policy makers away from the more traditional circuits of visiting, say, London, Paris or Barcelona – where the model of urban development may be very questionable in terms of the real potential in a poor Third World city or town – but it also encourages and implicitly underpins the idea that what works locally is often the most appropriate approach.

**Continue to focus on pro-poor policies.** Much of what overseas assistance agencies are doing is both admirable and very important. Among the most significant policy thrusts in recent years has been the promotion of so-called “pro-poor” policies in Southern countries. A key message from a substantial comparative study of 10 cities in the South is that “...the well-being of the urban poor can be improved by access to economic opportunities, supporting social networks, and greater access to assets (notably land), infrastructure and services.”<sup>(51)</sup> It is important for outside agencies to continue to promote policies that can help the poor, since – as we already know from many studies of urban politics in the North – local regimes, even when they are democratically elected on a regular basis, can easily get shunted onto a development path that privileges wealth, large-scale development and big business. In the process, their policies and programmes can marginalize the very large segment of the population that is poor and

50. Rose, Richard (2005), *Learning from Comparative Public Policy. A Practical Guide*, Routledge, London.

51. Devas, Nick et al. (2002), *Urban Governance, Voice and Poverty in the Developing World*, Earthscan, London, page 3.

often getting even poorer. But support from the outside for policies and projects that can help the poor must be nuanced, based on very solid information about local societies, collaborative with local stakeholders and reliable.

**Act as responsible local stakeholders.** If, as many overseas agencies argue, local development needs to be transparent, accountable and free of any suggestion of corruption,<sup>(52)</sup> there is no reason why external assistance must not also be transparent, accountable in some reasonable fashion to local stakeholders, sustainable over time and open to reasonable discussion. External agencies have become, themselves, influential local stakeholders in a very important process of political and economic change. They should consider this role very seriously, particularly in countries (such as Bangladesh, Niger, Kenya, Uganda, Philippines and Guatemala among others) where the actions – combined or otherwise – of the external assistance community can have a major impact on local development. Among other things, this responsible role means that donors should stick with local programmes until there is general agreement they should be discontinued; and they should work closely as a group so that, as much as possible, their messages and the reporting requirements for their projects are “harmonized” on the ground, following the recommendations of the OECD declaration.

To conclude, we have assumed in this paper that there has been a decline in the relative and absolute weight of overseas urban assistance programmes in the last decade or so. This does not mean that programmes based on such concepts as “local governance”, “democratization”, “urban sustainability” or even “participatory reform” have not been supported and even strongly so. Although these aspects are indeed important, traditional urban development programmes that involve improvement of basic infrastructure and services for the majority of the population – many of whom are very poor – need continued support and confirmation. But in the end, the support of these programmes has in many ways shifted from the North to the South. While much of the funding still comes from the North, an increasing level of involvement by national level civil servants, the informed local community, and national and locally elected leaders in urban policy making needs to take place to sustain the momentum on the ground. As the value of cities and their economic and social contribution to the nation become more pronounced with time, these local support structures should strengthen and become more engaged with local policy.

52. See Tannerfeldt, Goran and Per Ljung (2006), *More Urban, Less Poor. An Introduction to Urban Development and Management*, Earthscan, London for SIDA.

## REFERENCES

- ANIYA (2007), Brochure: [www.france-niger.com](http://www.france-niger.com).
- Baumgartner, Frank R and Bryan D Jones (1993), *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Becker, Charles, Andrew Hamer and Andrew Morrison (1994), *Beyond Urban Bias in Africa. Urbanization in an Era of Structural Adjustment*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH.
- Bilbao Declaration (2005), II World Summit of Cities and Local Authorities on the Information Society, Bilbao, November.
- Birkland, Thomas A (2007), “Agenda setting in public policy”, in Frank Fischer, Gerald Miller and Mara Sidney (editors), *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis. Theory, Politics and Methods*, CRC Press, London and New York, pages 63–87.
- Buckley, Robert M and Jerry Kalarickal (2006), *Thirty Years of World Bank Shelter Lending What Have We Learned?*, The World Bank, Washington DC.
- Castells, Manuel (1996), *The Rise of the Network Society*, Blackwell, Oxford.
- Cités Unies France (2008): <http://www.cites-unies-france.org/>.
- Cities Alliance (2007), *Cities Alliance: Cities without Slums*, Home Page: <http://www.citiesalliance.org/members/members.html>.

- Cohen, Barney (2004), "Urban growth in developing countries: a review of current trends and a caution regarding existing forecasts", *World Development* Vol 32, No 1, January, pages 2351.
- Davey, Keith (1996), *Urban Management. The Challenge of Growth*, Avebury, Aldershot.
- Devas, Nick et al. (2002), *Urban Governance, Voice and Poverty in the Developing World*, Earthscan, London.
- France, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2007), *Governance Strategy for French Development Assistance* (English version), DGTD/DPDEV, 20 rue Monsieur, Paris.
- Freire, Mila and Mario Pol-se (2003), *Connecting Cities with Macroeconomic Concerns: The Missing Link. Do Local Public Services Matter? A Case Study of Five Cities*, INRS and the World Bank, Montreal and Washington.
- Friedmann, John (1995), "The world city hypothesis", reprinted in Paul L Knox and Peter J Taylor (editors), *World Cities in a World-System*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pages 317–331.
- Hart, Keith (1973), "Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana", *Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol 11, No 1, March, pages 61–89.
- International Labour Office (ILO) (1972), *Employment, Incomes and Equality. A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya*, International Labour Office, Geneva.
- Isserman, A M J (1977), "A bracketing approach for estimating regional economic impact multipliers and a procedure for assessing their accuracy", *Environment and Planning A* No 9, pages 1003–1011.
- Jacobs, Jane (1984), *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*, Vintage Books, New York.
- Kamete, Amin (2006), "The return of the jettisoned: ZANU—PF's crack at 're-urbanizing' in Harare", *Journal of Southern African Studies* Vol 32, No 2, June, pages 255–271.
- Kessides, Christine (2005), *The Urban Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa. Implications for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction*, Africa Region Working Paper Series No 97, The World Bank, Washington DC.
- Kingdon, John W (1995), *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, Harper Collins, New York.
- Lipton, Michael (1976), *Why Poor People Stay Poor. Urban Bias in World Development*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Mabogunje, Akin L (2005), "From research to ownership – the legacy of the Urban Management Programme", *Habitat Debate* Vol 11, No 4, December, page 4.
- Mamdani, Mahmood (1996), *Citizen and Subject. Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ.
- Munro, L (forthcoming), "The 'human rights-based' approach to programming: a contradiction in terms?", in S Hickey and D Mitlin (editors), *Rights, Wrongs and Realities: Reflections on the Rights-based Approach*, Kumarian Press, Bloomfield, CT.
- OECD (2003), *Harmonizing Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery. DAC Guidelines and Reference Series*, OECD, Paris.
- Perlman, Janice (1976), *The Myth of Marginality. Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro*, University of California Press, Berkeley CA.
- Robinson, Jennifer (2006), *Ordinary Cities. Between Modernity and Development*, Routledge, London.
- Rose, Richard (2005), *Learning from Comparative Public Policy. A Practical Guide*, Routledge, London.
- Sassen, Saskia (2001), *The Global City* (second edition), Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Satterthwaite, D (2004), "The underestimation of urban poverty in low- and middle-income nations", *Poverty Reduction in Urban Areas Series, Working Paper 14*, I ED, London.
- Schön, Donald A (1971), *Beyond the Stable State*, Temple Smith, London.
- Tannerfeldt, Goran and Per Ljung (2006), *More Urban, Less Poor. An Introduction to Urban Development and Management*, Earthscan, London for SIDA.
- Turner, J F C (1976), *Housing by People. Towards Autonomy in Building Environments*, Pantheon, New York.
- United Nations (2005), *World Urbanization Prospects. The 2005 Revision. Executive Summary with Fact Sheets and Data Tables*, Economic and Social Affairs Department, Population Division, New York.
- UN–HABITAT (2003), *The Challenge of Slums. Global Report on Human Settlements 2003*, Earthscan, London.
- UN–HABITAT (2005), *Report of the Fact-finding Mission to Zimbabwe to Assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina by the UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe*, Mrs Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, available on UN–HABITAT website: [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org).
- UN–HABITAT (2006), *The State of the World's Cities Report 2006/2007*, Earthscan, London for UN–HABITAT.
- UN–HABITAT (2007), *Enhancing Urban Safety and Security. Global Report on Human Settlements 2007*, Earthscan, London.
- US Conference of Mayors (2007), *US Metro Economies. Gross Metropolitan Product with Housing Update*, Appendix, January: <http://www.usmayors.org/metroeconomies/0107/GMPreport.pdf>.
- World Bank (2000), *Entering the 21st Century. World Development Report 1999/2000*, The World Bank, Washington DC.
- World Bank (2007), "Note from the President of the World Bank", Development Committee of the Boards of Governors of the Bank and the Fund on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries, October 19: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org).
- World Bank (2007), *Agriculture for Development. World Development Report 2008*, The World Bank, Washington DC.