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Overall progress achieved since the United Nations  
Conference on Environment and Development

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Promoting sustainable human settlement development\*

(Chapter 7 of Agenda 21)

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\* The present report was prepared by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as task manager for chapter 7 of Agenda 21, in accordance with arrangements agreed to by the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD). It is the result of consultation and information exchange between United Nations agencies, international and national organizations, interested government agencies and a range of other institutions, individuals and major group representatives.

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The present report reviews progress made in the implementation of the objectives set out in chapter 7 of Agenda 21 (Promoting sustainable human settlement development),<sup>1</sup> taking into account the decisions taken by the Commission on Sustainable Development on this subject in 1994 at its second session.

2. Rapid urbanization, the concentration of urban population in large cities, the spread of cities into wider geographical areas and the rapid growth of megacities are among the most significant transformations of our time. Urban settlements hold promise for the protection and careful use of the world's natural resources through their ability to support large numbers of people while limiting their impact on the natural environment. Human settlements should therefore be at the centre of concern for sustainable development, as they are essential for social and economic progress and, in an increasingly interdependent world, critical for the well-being of both urban and rural populations (see box 1).

Box 1. The multiple goals of sustainable development as applied to cities

Meeting the needs of the present ...

- Economic needs: include access to adequate livelihood or productive assets from which this can be gained; also minimum income or economic security when unemployed, ill, disabled or otherwise unable to secure livelihood.
- Social, cultural and health needs: include shelter that is healthy, safe, affordable and secure, within a healthy neighbourhood environment with provision for piped water, sanitation, drainage, transport, health care, education and child development. They also include a home, workplace and living environment protected from environmental hazards, including chemical pollution. Equally important are needs related to people's choice and control - including homes, neighbourhoods that they value and where their social and cultural needs and priorities are met. Shelters and services must meet specific needs of children, adolescents and adults responsible for child-rearing (usually women). Achieving this implies a more equitable distribution of income within and between nations.
- Political needs: include freedom to participate in national and local politics and in decisions regarding management and development of own home and neighbourhood, within a broader framework that ensures respect for civil and political rights and respect for environmental legislation.

... Without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

- Minimizing use of waste of non-renewable resources: includes minimizing consumption of fossil fuels in housing, commerce, industry and transport plus substituting renewable source where feasible and reducing use and minimizing waste of scarce mineral resources (reducing use, reusing, recycling, reclaiming). There are also cultural, historical and natural assets within cities that are irreplaceable and thus non-renewable, for instance, historic districts and parks and natural landscapes that provide city inhabitants with space for play, recreation and access to nature.
- Sustainable use of renewable resources: includes cities drawing on freshwater resources at levels that can be sustained; keeping to a sustainable ecological impact in terms of land area on which producers and consumers in any city draw for agricultural crops, wood products and biomass fuels.
- Keeping wastes from cities within the absorptive capacity of local and global sinks: includes the capacity of rivers to break down biodegradable wastes and methods to deal with persistent chemicals, including greenhouse gases, stratospheric ozone-depleting chemicals and persistent pesticides.

Source: Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite, "Cities and sustainable development", background paper to Global Forum '94, Manchester City Council, June 1994.

## I. SELECTING KEY OBJECTIVES

3. In the five years since the Earth Summit, the following four priorities to advance sustainable human settlements development have emerged: (a) shelter for all; (b) improved urban management capacity; (c) improved environmental infrastructure and services; and (d) inclusive and gender-sensitive human settlements plans and strategies, including local Agendas 21. Priorities for international support to human settlements development have focused on policy advice; capacity-building; partnerships with local authorities and other major groups, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations; and networking and exchange of best practices in human settlements development and management. The Habitat Agenda,<sup>2</sup> the global plan of action adopted by the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), provides a detailed strategy for sustainable shelter and human settlements development based on the principles of partnership and enablement.

4. The effort made during the five years since the Earth Summit in regard to carrying out numerous activities to advance sustainable human settlements development is commendable. In many significant ways, the preparatory process for Habitat II served to accelerate this process and acted as a catalyst for the launching of new activities as well as for furthering United Nations system-wide collaboration. The Habitat Agenda not only represents a reconfirmation of Agenda 21, but also provides a holistic operational framework for implementing the relevant decisions and recommendations of a decade of United Nations conferences.

## II. REPORTING ON AND ANALYSING SUCCESS

### A. Shelter for all: formulation of national shelter strategies

5. Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 80 countries have drafted new or reformulated their existing housing policies and strategies in line with the recommendations of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000.<sup>3</sup> A major objective of these strategies is to accelerate construction and improvement of housing for and by low-income groups. The focus, furthermore, has been on strategies that are environmentally sustainable, especially in regard to land use, building technologies and materials employed, as set out in Agenda 21, and as reconfirmed in the Habitat Agenda. Emphasis is also given to the need to develop efficient land and housing markets that broaden access of security of tenure and credit, a goal for women and men that is linked to, and in many ways dependent on, progress in the broader areas of economic reform. Formulation of new national shelter strategies has been assisted by efforts on the part of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the World Bank in helping over 100 countries to develop quantitative, policy-sensitive housing and urban indicators to help set priorities and guide the policy formulation process.

6. One of the key commitments entered into by Governments in adopting the Habitat Agenda is to work towards the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing. Efforts in this direction will, first and foremost, aim at expanding access to housing for low-income groups and will address such

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key issues as security of tenure. The commitment to the right to adequate housing is considered one of the key achievements of Habitat II and opens the way to further progress in shelter accessibility in the coming years.

7. In most countries that formulated national shelter strategies, the process of implementation has begun. This will be given added impetus as nations engage in broader legislative and policy reforms. The implementation of enabling shelter strategies requires support by a broad constituency, which must include local authorities and the private sector. It is hoped that grass-roots initiatives, encouraged by Habitat II, will contribute to making such partnerships concrete.

#### B. Improved urban management capacity

8. The second key objective in implementing chapter 7 of Agenda 21 is management improvement and capacity-building, in order to assist local authorities in facing the challenge of rapid urbanization and environmental sustainability. Experience has demonstrated that a strongly participatory approach to urban management results in increased commitment of key actors and stakeholders. Increased awareness of the value of stakeholder involvement in human settlements support programmes is resulting in projects with a higher rate of successful implementation and replication. Local authority associations and organizations have also increasingly strengthened their networking internationally, regionally and nationally, establishing the basis for productive partnerships in support of improving local self-government as an essential element in capacity-building.

9. Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Urban Management Programme (UMP) has emerged as the principal United Nations-system effort to improve urban management capacity in developing countries and is currently active in 55 countries with the support of 10 bilateral external support agencies. The principal methods of work are capacity-building at both country and regional levels, facilitating dialogue on policy and programme options that draw on developing-country experts, and developing mechanisms for technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). A number of such new programmes have been launched in the post-Rio period. The most successful of these are multi-agency programmes such as the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP). As a joint Habitat-United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) facility promoting participatory approaches to environment planning and management, the Sustainable Cities Programme spearheads the United Nations efforts in this field, and its work over the last five years has catalysed similar initiatives by others.

#### C. Improved environmental infrastructure and services

10. One of the most promising ways to improve the quality and range of infrastructure services for the urban poor is to draw on the resources and experience of the communities themselves. Over the past years, national and international non-governmental organizations in many developing-country cities have demonstrated that much can be achieved even with modest resources. The

successes have been achieved as a result of programmes undertaken by grass-roots organizations. Over the past five years, most external support agencies have increased the priority they give to working in partnership with the private sector and community groups in order to improve urban infrastructure and services. Importantly, an increasing share of financial commitments have also been made in the area of integrated urban development programmes that combine investments in various kinds of urban infrastructure and services. Many of these projects incorporate a capacity-building component to strengthen local authorities. Multilateral financial institutions, in particular, have increased their lending with regard to urban pollution control.

11. There is a growing awareness that urban technical cooperation should focus, in the long term, on developing the capacity of national and local Governments to plan, invest in and manage urban infrastructure, and on mobilizing the resources of all local actors, especially of the private sector. The challenge, however, is enormous. By 1994, for example, more than 1 billion people in urban and rural settlements were without suitable water supply.

12. A milestone in building global awareness concerning the impending urban water crisis was reached at the Beijing Water Conference in March 1996. Held in conjunction with World Day for Water, 1996, the Conference focused unprecedented media attention on the looming water crisis, especially in rapidly growing cities. Almost all of the world's major cities are today facing serious shortfalls either in water supply, or in water quality, or in both. The Beijing Conference has led to a number of follow-up consultations at the international level, geared to remedial action and involving, in particular, the World Bank and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Water Resources.

13. Developing-country cities face an equally daunting challenge in the area of sanitation. The situation is further complicated by the poverty of the millions who are without access to this most basic of services. Here, the relationships between poverty, environmental decay and decline in the quality of life of people in urban areas are most evident. Given the scale of needs, the most effective approach has been the one that supports city- and neighbourhood-based efforts that mobilize the energies of the affected population. Some United Nations programmes that take this approach include the World Health Organization (WHO) Healthy Cities Programme, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)/UNEP Sustainable Cities Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Basic Urban Services Programme and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment.

D. National and local human settlements strategies,  
including local Agendas 21

14. Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and as a direct result of the Habitat II preparatory process, 138 countries have prepared detailed reports on the state of their human settlements: 127 of these contain first-step, five-year National Plans of Action for Sustainable Human Settlements Development prepared in line with the guidelines established by the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements

(Habitat II). The inclusive nature of plan preparation, and the information component of these plans provided by the indicators and best practices initiatives, as well the substantial donor interest in their preparation, should help to ensure that these plans will not only benefit from broad-based political and social support, but will also be more likely to be translated into tangible policies and programmes able to elicit both local and international support and financing. Most plans stress greater involvement of civil society and of major groups. Almost without exception, they emphasize the need to strengthen local authorities in their decision-making powers and in their managerial and financial capacities. What emerges from these national reports is that, for developing countries, the direct linkages between environmental improvement and the reduction of poverty through the provision of basic infrastructure such as water supply, sanitation and waste management and disposal are given priority attention. The national reports of industrialized countries, on the other hand, reflect their concern with the sustainability of production and consumption cycles in human settlements and their impact on the quality of life. In all countries, without exception, resource mobilization and identification of new sources of finance for sustainable human settlements development are a prime necessity. Ensuring the financial viability of local institutions is also a top priority, for without such viable institutions, sustainable development cannot be achieved at the local level.

15. Assiduous follow-up of these priorities will certainly influence the ultimate success of local Agendas 21 (see box 2). An important contributor to the accelerated pace of local Agenda 21 initiatives has been the work of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), which works closely with local authorities and their associations as well as with a number of donors. One of the principal aims of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda will be to strengthen local Agenda 21 initiatives and to support their replication worldwide.

Box 2. Developing local Agendas 21

Hundreds of local authorities around the world are developing "local Agendas 21" as the means to introduce into or strengthen environmental concerns in their plans and operations. Local Agenda 21 processes differ from city to city since they reflect the different local contexts in which they are operative as well as the existing institutional structures.

Some countries have national programmes of support for such initiatives. They include Australia, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Finland. In the United Kingdom, such initiatives promote local consultative processes on sustainable development; disseminate guidance for local authorities on how to move towards sustainability at a local level and on how to develop models of community consultation, participation and local consensus-building; and involve other sectors and major groups in the local Agenda 21 process at a national level. In Sweden, all local authorities have environmental strategies that include provision for waste minimization and recycling. Most municipalities have also started work on local Agendas 21. Several European countries are exploring the possibilities of linking work on local Agendas 21 to formal land-use planning systems. For instance, the city of Stockholm is currently preparing a new plan that takes a more strategic and longer-term view than previous plans and will explicitly promote the integration of environmental, social and economic goals. The new plan will become part of the local Agenda 21 for the city. In Denmark, existing planning instruments are being adapted to Agenda 21 requirements so that municipal plans become overall action plans for the environment not only nationally but also in the context of Europe.

A large number of local authorities in developing countries have developed local Agendas 21. For instance, each of the municipalities that make up the Bogotá metropolitan area in Colombia is developing its own local environmental agendas, sponsored by the metropolitan authority, non-governmental organizations and academics. Other urban centres in Colombia such as Manizales also have a well-established local Agendas 21 process. Among other cities in the South that are developing local Agendas 21 are Cajamarca in Peru, Durban in South Africa and Santos in Brazil. Both ICLEI and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) are expanding their collaboration with African cities in the area of local Agenda 21 initiatives.

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), An Urbanizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements, 1996 (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 407-409.

### III. PROMISING CHANGES

#### A. Integrated management approaches

16. Today a major emphasis is being given to local capacity-building by multilateral and bilateral donors, financing institutions and other external support agencies, as well as by non-governmental organizations and local authority associations over the past years. This issue is also closely tied to the broader issue of improvement of governance and management, which has increasingly become a focus of governmental efforts worldwide.

#### B. Broad-based participatory approaches

17. Central to virtually each of the success stories referred to above have been the involvement and increased activism of major groups, especially local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. In fact, all indications point to a future strategic role for United Nations agencies in promoting sustainable development by concentrating on the facilitating of new partnerships. The global and regional exchange of new knowledge and expertise derived from local best practices, as well as new networks among major groups active in human settlements development will need to be supported. Moreover, the experience of such programmes as the Sustainable Cities Programme, the Healthy Cities Programme and the Urban Management Programme, to cite just three examples, clearly demonstrates that United Nations agencies, because of their perceived neutrality, can play a pivotal role in bringing together actors, from governmental departments to community organizations, to discuss problems, identify priorities and decide on joint actions.

18. Community involvement in decision-making and implementation at the local level normally has outcomes that exert an immediate and visible effect on people's lives. Such inclusive strategies also increase the likelihood of compliance with agreed upon action, particularly if they have financial implications. In other words, people are more likely to pay for new and improved services, for cleaner water, for cleaner air and for better transport, if they have been part of the decision-making process leading up to these outcomes.

19. Looking ahead, it seems obvious that the rate of success of plans of action and national policies will depend on the extent to which they are anchored in civil society and can generate local commitments, whether from the business community or the people. The times are over when policy and programme development, planning, financing and execution were primarily a matter for government agencies and development institutions.

20. The above observations are validated by the unprecedented call and experience of the Habitat II process. In most countries, this process resulted in broad-based dialogues between government and civil society. These dialogues identified priority issues of common concern as well as ways and means to address them. Similarly, the active participation of local authorities and their associations in the Habitat II preparatory process has not only strengthened the global network of local authorities but also led to their call

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for a new partnership with the United Nations, a partnership that these associations specifically requested at Istanbul. The establishment of such partnerships between the United Nations and major groups has been, all along, one of the principal goals of Agenda 21, and the significant progress achieved therein must be seen as a major accomplishment of Habitat II. In fact, it has become evident that the implementation and follow-up process of Habitat II and its plan of action is being driven by the expectations of these groups of partners as well as by member States, and this has implications also for the implementation of Agenda 21 in the years ahead, and not just in the area of human settlements.

### C. Increased cooperation and networking

21. As a direct consequence of recommendations of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) in 1994, more than a dozen multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies began discussions leading to the formation of the "Urban Forum", to serve as a vehicle for information exchange, and joint programming in the field of sustainable human settlements development. The success of "A Day of Local Authorities" at the third session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 1995 and the joint publication by local authorities and their organizations (ICLEI, the United Towns Development Agency (UTDA) and the Group of 4 Plus (G4+)) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and UNEP, of the book Making Cities Work: The Role of Local Authorities in the Urban Environment<sup>4</sup> have also served to focus attention on the critical role of local authorities as custodians of the urban environment. Such initiatives point the way towards more cost-effective pooling of resources in the accomplishment of shared goals.

22. A key to future progress lies in networking among all the partners and groups of partners. Considerable recent progress has been made here. The creation of the Huairou Commission as a high-level advisory board to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and other United Nations bodies, composed of women at the grass-roots level, women from non-governmental organizations, women politicians, activists and researchers, and women of the United Nations, has been instrumental in terms of ensuring that women's issues remain priority ones in the Habitat Agenda. Major progress has also been achieved by local authorities and their associations in establishing city networks to exchange information and experience, and to promote city-to-city cooperation on specific issues. Further efforts are being made in this regard to consolidate a global network linking United Nations-sponsored networks with those of international associations of cities and those established, for example, by ICLEI in the course of its work in promoting local Agenda 21 initiatives.

23. Given the positive response to the idea of exchanging best practices in human settlements development and management, which was established during the Habitat II preparatory process and endorsed by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, efforts are now under way to establish a global network of capacity-building institutions actively engaged in the exchange of best practice knowledge, expertise and experience with support from the private sector and using the latest information technology to allow for easy local and global

access. In another promising step, parallel to this one, over 100 countries around the world have adopted urban and housing indicators as tools to inform policy-making in the human settlements sector. To consolidate the impact of these programmes, the Commission on Human Settlements, at its fifteenth session, requested the Executive Director of Habitat to establish a "global housing and urban observatory that would permit comparative international evaluation of progress in meeting the aims" of the Habitat Agenda, "and which would draw attention to and provide information on human settlements conditions worldwide".<sup>5</sup>

#### D. International commitments

24. At Habitat II, 171 countries committed themselves to sustainable human settlements development. The Habitat Agenda represents a reconfirmation of Agenda 21 in general and its human settlements-related programmes in particular. On another level, the Habitat Agenda also provides clear and detailed expression of the local environmental agenda and priorities of developing countries, which are focused on essential services, such as water supply, sanitation and waste management, among others, and are informed by the relationship between poverty and environmental decline, and thus by the need for sustainable economic growth to address both issues. Their cross-cutting nature also clearly links the discrete and sectoral chapters of Agenda 21 to sustainable human settlements development.

#### IV. UNFULFILLED EXPECTATIONS

25. It has become increasingly evident that land and land management policies should be dealt with not separately at the urban and rural levels, but rather in an integrated manner. The need for such a comprehensive approach is further called for given the environmental impact of city growth. The absence of a comprehensive national land policy is one of the principal constraints in most countries to achieving sustainable human settlement development and sustainable use of land and water resources, both for agriculture and for settlement needs. Up to now, however, only limited progress has been made to establish comprehensive national policies and appropriate institutional arrangements. The agencies of the United Nations system active in the area of social and economic development have also not been able, as of yet, to effectively cooperate in the critical area of land management although efforts to remedy this have begun.

26. Given the rates of urbanization in developing countries and subsequent new needs for services and infrastructure in human settlements, it is somewhat alarming to note that not much progress has been made on developing new mechanisms for sustained financing, on the scale required for the building, operating and maintaining of basic services and infrastructure (see table).

Government expenditures per person on water supply, sanitation,  
 drainage, garbage collection, roads and electricity

Income grouping: cities in	US\$ per person	Regional grouping: cities in	US\$ per person
Low-income countries	15.0	Sub-Saharan Africa	16.6
Low-mid-income countries	31.4	South Asia	15.0
Middle-income countries	40.1	East Asia	72.5
Mid-high-income countries	304.6	Latin America and the Caribbean	48.4
High-income countries	813.5	Eastern Europe, Greece, North Africa and the Middle East	86.2
		Western Europe, North America, Australia	656.0

Source: The Housing Indicators Programme, vol. III, Preliminary Findings, A Joint Programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the World Bank, Washington, D.C., April 1993.

27. Related to the above is the fact that, as cities grow, their transport problems get worse because the number of motorized vehicles and their level of use grow even faster than income, population, and investment in infrastructure and transport facilities, prompting further congestion and environmental decay. It is also particularly disheartening to note that the pace of motorization has led to policy paralysis in many countries and cities, despite recognition that something has to be done.

28. Improvements in housing, infrastructure and services must go hand in hand with economic and social development policies that produce sustained and significant growth and employment. From all indications, countries that do not have sufficient levels of urban infrastructure and services, as well as good urban management, are being sidelined by the economic changes and globalization processes under way. When cities do not work, investment does not take place, either from national sources or from foreign ones; and when cities fail, economies of countries generally tend to fail. Likewise, social exclusion and discriminatory policies and practices must be replaced by the promotion of social cohesion and human solidarity.

## V. EMERGING PRIORITIES

### A. Responding to local and national priorities

29. In preparation for Habitat II, over 130 countries formulated first-step, five-year National Plans of Action for Sustainable Human Settlements Development. The implementation of these Plans provides the operational and programmatic framework for international assistance and further provides the focus for assistance on substantive priority areas that have been identified at the national and local levels.

### B. Linking the normative and analytical processes

30. The monitoring of progress in implementing the human settlements components of Agenda 21 and in implementing the Habitat Agenda provides an opportunity for linking policy development with the analysis of the information generated by national and local plans of action. Lessons learned from best practices in improving the living environment and the development of normative benchmarks based on urban and shelter indicators should help ensure that the implementation of plans of action will be translated into new policy reforms and strategies. These in turn should elicit both local and international support, investment and financing. This will be a major area of concentration of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

### C. Forging new partnerships and dialogue between major groups

31. The broad-based participatory processes engaged in by the vast majority of countries in preparation for Habitat II provide a solid foundation for the development of strategic partnerships among major groups, notably, Governments at all levels, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, and the private sector. Continued international support in strengthening and nurturing civic engagement, popular participation and partnership should provide added impetus to ongoing efforts in urban management and governance. Emphasis should be placed on networking, both among these groups, and between them and the United Nations system. The multiple benefits of the participation of major groups at this international conference will have a major impact on the implementation of the global plan of action adopted at the Conference. These are also reflected in current efforts to involve representatives of local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in the work of the Commission on Human Settlements as is called for in the Habitat Agenda. Notable among these partnerships is the work of the women within the Huairou Commission regarding the continuous monitoring of the Habitat Agenda from a gender perspective.

D. Integrated approaches to addressing sectoral priorities

32. The Habitat Agenda provides a useful organizing framework for integrated and holistic approaches for the implementation of relevant goals of many of the sectoral chapters of Agenda 21. Implementation will require, however, that the United Nations system become more systematic in promoting participatory processes. By using the framework provided by the Habitat Agenda and the National Plans of Action, implementation support will be based increasingly on cross-sectoral and cross-institutional linkages and should provide through the use, inter alia, of indicators and best practices, the means by which to assess the local impacts of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of Agenda 21.

E. New paradigms for capacity-building

33. A key emerging priority will be capacity-building, particularly at the local level, to implement:

- (a) National shelter strategies in order to achieve adequate shelter for all;
- (b) Land management and policy reforms to achieve well-functioning land markets and security of tenure;
- (c) Application of economic instruments to urban development and mobilization of domestic and international financial resources;
- (d) Legal and policy frameworks in support of public-private partnerships;
- (e) Policies, strategies and technologies for solid waste management, recycling and reuse;
- (f) Policies for water demand management and the reduction of water wastage;
- (g) Guiding principles of local self-government;
- (h) Enhancing the role of women in settlements management and policy decision-making;
- (i) Training and management development-systems;
- (j) Institutionalizing of participatory and consultative processes and mobilizing of civic engagement;
- (k) Fostering of social integration and human solidarity;
- (l) Policies and systems for disaster preparedness and mitigation.

These priorities for capacity-building which are compatible with the priorities contained in national reports for Habitat II should help build up the

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institutional and human capital needed for the implementation of the National Plans of Action and of local Agendas 21.

F. Creating an information and communication system for the exchange of knowledge, expertise and experience

34. A major contribution of the Habitat Agenda to implementing Agenda 21 lies in the initial development of effective information and communication systems using new information technologies wherever possible to facilitate the sharing and exchange of knowledge, expertise and experience gained at the national and local levels. Networking, information exchange and communication, using modern methods, should greatly facilitate the sharing and exchange of, inter alia, best practice expertise and experience, the use of shelter and urban indicators, and the transfer of technology in development.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996 (A/CONF.165/14), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>3</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 8, addendum (A/43/8/Add.1).

<sup>4</sup> London, Earthscan Publications, 1996. Authored by Don Stevenson and others.

<sup>5</sup> See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/50/8 and Corr.1 and 2), annex I, sect. A, resolution 15/6, para. 6.

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