Monitoring Habitat Agenda and Millennium Development Goals

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Background

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to monitor and report on the progress of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. UN-HABITAT is providing the leadership and serves as the focal point to monitor the progress made by the member governments in implementation of the Habitat agenda. For the purpose and at the request of the Commission on Human Settlements (now Governing Council), UN-Habitat has devised a monitoring system, which is tailored to track progress in the implementation of Habitat Agenda. Monitoring habitat Agenda entails also developing new and enhanced instruments to measure change especially at the level of cities, which is the main focus of the Habitat Agenda. The concept of the Global Urban Observatory (GUO) was elaborated from this idea. The foundation was laid for GUO in 1998 and within a short time many cities joined the GUO network and are actively participating in collection of urban indicators for their future planning and good governance.¹

In September 2000 147 heads of State and Government, and 189 nations in total, in the United Nations Millennium Declaration committed themselves to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want. They acknowledged that progress is based on sustainable economic growth, which must focus on the poor, with human rights at the centre. The objective of the Declaration is to promote "a comprehensive approach and a coordinated strategy, tackling many problems simultaneously across a broad front." ²

The Declaration calls for halving by the year 2015, the number of people who live on less than one dollar a day. This effort also involves finding solutions to hunger, malnutrition and disease, promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, guaranteeing a basic education for everyone, and supporting the Agenda 21 principles of sustainable development. Direct support from the richer countries, in the form of aid, trade, debt relief and investment is to be provided to help the developing countries.

UN-HABITAT was given additional responsibility to report on the ‘Significant improvement in the lives of the slum dwellers”, Target 11, of the Millennium Declaration Goals (MDG). The Monitoring System Branch (MSB) is the primary knowledge management node for the Agency and is structured to provide technical assistance as well
as to form strategic partnerships that result in rigorous, representative and well analyzed information, for the major knowledge instruments that shape the global policy agenda and monitor achievements of Habitat Agenda and MDG.

The MSB’s overarching goal is to influence urban policies by providing the knowledge support to the international development community on urban development dynamics addressed by the three international instruments, the Habitat Agenda, the Millennium Declaration, and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development from the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

**Global Urban Observatory (GUO)**

The *Global Urban Observatory* of MSB focuses on building local capacity to select, collect, manage, and apply indicators and other information in policy analysis. Timely information is fundamental to tracking progress in implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and to monitoring urban conditions and trends, especially urban poverty, as input to participatory governance. Current activities support the updating of a city level database on slums, governance and shelter, the development of an integrated network of national and local Urban Observatories, whose functions are information gathering, analysis and reporting, and a network of support institutions.

The Global Observatory is a world-wide monitoring and learning network, its main objectives are the following:

- assist governments, local authorities and organizations of civil society to amplify their ability to collect, manage and maintain and use information on urban development;
- enhance the use of knowledge and urban indicators for policy formulation, planning and urban management through participatory process;
- pack and diffuse results of global, national and city-level monitoring activities, as well as disseminating good practices in the use of urban information world-wide.

**Global Urban Observatory Databases**

a. Global Urban Indicators

Based on the Habitat Agenda, UN-HABITAT has developed an indicators system that contains a set of 30 key indicators and nine qualitative data. These are the *minimum data required* for reporting on shelter and urban development consistent with the *twenty key areas* of commitment in the Habitat Agenda universal reporting format.

Indicators are supposed to measure performances and trends in the 20 selected key areas, and to measure progress in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Indicators provide a comprehensive picture of cities, which, with other indicators which may be chosen by countries, will provide a quantitative, comparative base for the condition of cities, and show progress towards achieving urban objectives. There are two data sets for
The 1993 data was collected in 1995-1996 from 237 cities covering 46 indicators and 1998 data were collected in year 2000-2001 from 232 cities for 23 indicators.

b. Human Settlements Statistical Database version 4 (HSDB4-99)

The Human settlement Statistical Database is a web-based, easy-to-operate, comprehensive national statistics on human settlements. Data are available of the categories and various related topics such as Demography, Economy, Land/natural resources, Housing and Infrastructure and services. Data can be downloaded from: http://www.unhabitat.org/programmes/guo/guo_hsdb4.asp

c. CitiBase Database

The UN-HABITAT-CitiBase is a web-based database with comprehensive city statistics on human settlements. Data has been compiled from various sources and available on many topics and categories such as background data of the city, population, households, gender, land and its use, housing and its facilities, infrastructure and services and environment. Data can be downloaded from http://unhabitat.org/programmes/guo/guo_citibase.asp.

d. The Data house version 2


GUO Future Plan

As part of a new strategic and programmatic approach, the GUO will structure its activities for 2004 along with three core functions:
Global Monitoring of the HA and MDGs
To collect, analyse, document and disseminate global data and information on human settlements conditions and trends, including indicg water and sanitation.

The data collection strategy for urban indicators in 2004 is through coordination and by developing contacts with institutions and organizations that can provide data for global sample of cities. Some data will be collected from secondary sources of censuses and household surveys. Data has been collected from USA and Canada for GSC and it is being analysed. Data collection from cities of Australia, New Zealand and Japan are in pipeline. For European cities, contacts are being established to get data for sample of cities from Europe. Eurostat and other organizations are potential entities where partnership will be developed for obtaining relevant data. For Africa and Asia, the data collection strategy has been devised through workshops. For African cities, two workshops will be organized-one for the heads of National Statistical Offices from 30 countries and second one for the statisticians and local authorities from 80 cities. One workshop will be organized in Asia for capturing data from Asian cities.

Support to Local Policy Formulation
Build local capacities to use urban indicators data and GIS technology for strengthening city management, policy-making and good governance practices.

Substantive Advocacy and Reporting
Improve global system for reporting on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and on urban conditions, inequities and trends in general.

The GUO has decided to collect 20 quantitative urban indicators derived by secondary analysis of census or survey data. These indicators are:

20 key Quantitative indicators

CHAPTER 1: Shelter

1. Promote the right to adequate housing
   indicator 1: durable structures
   indicator 2: overcrowding

2. Provide security of tenure
   indicator 3: secure tenure

5. Promote access to basic services
CHAPTER 2: Social development and eradication of poverty

6. Provide equal opportunities for a safe and healthy life
   indicator 7: under-five mortality
   indicator 8: crime rates (homicides)

7. Promote social integration and support disadvantaged groups
   indicator 9: poor households

8. Promote gender equality in human settlements development
   indicator 10: literacy rates by sex

CHAPTER 3: Environmental Management

9. Ensure appropriate planning to respond to urban growth
   indicator 11: urban population growth
   indicator 12: planned settlements

10. Manage supply and demand for water in an effective manner
    indicator 13: price of water

11. Reduce urban pollution
    indicator 14: wastewater treated
    indicator 15: solid waste disposal

13. Promote effective and environmentally sound transportation system
    Indicator 16: travel time

CHAPTER 4: Economic Development

15. Strengthen small and micro-enterprises
    indicator 17: informal employment

16. Encourage public-private sector partnership and stimulate productive employment opportunities
    Indicator 18: city product
    indicator 19: unemployment

CHAPTER 5: Governance

17. Promote decentralization and strengthen local authorities
    indicator 20: local government revenue per capita
UN-HABITAT through GUO and Statistics programme was collecting data on various human settlements related topics and also on Housing and urban indicators from cities of the world through surveys. These data at the city and country level are available in databases maintained by GUO which are mentioned above. In an effort to advance the monitoring the Target 11, UN-HABITAT has undertaken the task of defining the concept of slums and related indicators in consultation of a group of experts composed of activists, practiceners, academicians and policy makers with demonstrated experience in urban poverty issues. The main purpose of the EGM in October 2002 was to reach a consensus on an operational definition for slum dwellers that would be applied for data collection to monitor the MDG Goal 7. Slum estimates were done based on the secondary data from 295 Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS). The results have been published in a report “Slums of the World: The face of urban poverty in the new millennium?” The results of these estimates have already served their global monitoring purpose as they are published in the Human Development Report 2003 and the Secretary General’s report on the MDG’s. These estimates are based on more logical and available sources of data than sound statistical methodologies.

For regional and global estimates of urban indicators, a statistical sample of cities will provide a sound scientific basis. In order to perform the worldwide monitoring function, it was decided during EGMs and during MSB’s Inter-agency group meetings on the MDGs that a global sample of cities was to be selected. A comprehensive list of cities and metropolitan area was prepared jointly with UNSD. This list contains more than 4574 metropolitan areas with a population of at least 100,000 persons. A random sample of 353 cities and metropolitan areas was selected using the technique of Probability Proportionate to size (PPS). The selection procedure ensured that at least 35 cities and metropolitan areas were chosen from each of nine UN designated MDG regions. These cities comprise the sample basis for the execution of the Urban Indicators Programme where city aggregate data are collected and compiled.

Urban indicators are regularly collected in a sample of cities worldwide in order to report on progress in the twenty key areas of the Habitat Agenda at the city level. Data collection is conducted through local and national urban observatories as well as through selected regional institutions. The global urban indicators database 2 contains policy-oriented indicators for more than 200 cities worldwide. Its results have been analyzed and incorporated in the State of the World's Cities Report 2001.
Monitoring Urban Inequities:

The Monitoring Urban Inequities Programme is the study of social inequities within human settlements regarding access to essential services such as water; sanitation; shelter; sufficient living space and security of tenure. The programme however, will not be limited to these five indicators but goes a few steps beyond into other social conditions in health, education, employment and access to credit to name a few.

Along with the Urban Indicators Programme and other current monitoring activities, the MUIP aims to provide globally representative knowledge on the actions taken by the governments to improve the lives of the slum dwellers and to measure the impact of these actions, by monitoring the magnitude of urban inequities. The MUIP aims to develop capacity among multiple national stakeholders on holding policy analysis and on implementing multi-stakeholder programme frameworks in favour of the urban poor. This will enhance policy formulation and dissemination at the local level, based on solid evidence and information.

The programme has already launched activities in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, and other select cities. Data will be available soon at this site.
MUIP main purpose is to fill the gaps of Global information especially on the impact level which will lead to establish a system of evidence-based local policy formulation. MUIP will provide globally representative knowledge comparing slum and non slum dwellers.
Conclusion

UN-HABITAT is strategizing for collecting data for the sample cities with other agencies in partnership mostly with USAID, UNICEF and WHO. Habitat interest is to cover the monitoring the implementation of Habitat Agenda as well as MDG indicators. This is ongoing exercise and the surveys will be repeated periodically. It is felt that this is not enough and some more partnership in data collection exercise should be explored. The problem can be tackled in three broader areas of harmonization of definition and classifications of cities, slum and non-slum areas, agreements on variables to be covered, data collection on periodic basis for wider dissemination. This requires well defined and internationally agreed framework for internationally comparable regional and urban statistics with international agreement. The partnership should be built with stake holders for sharing the responsibility and cost for regular data collection and dissemination and to avoid duplication of efforts as well. SCORUS can play a very important role by initiating the formation of “City Group” and register it with the Statistical Commission of the United Nations as pressure group to promote comparative Regional and Urban Statistics. To start with SCORUS should identify any national statistical office or local authority who can host the first meeting to deliberate and move a head.
References:

1. UNCHS (Habitat), 1996 The Habitat Agenda Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements
2. United Nations, 200 The Millennium Declaration, New York 8 September 200
3. UN-HABITAT organized a gathering of experts and other stakeholders from around the globe between 28-30 October 2002 in Nairobi, to reach on agreement on the universal definition of security of tenure and slum.
5. Willem de Vries, 2003, City Statistics and the Millennium Development Goals: the case for internationally comparable urban and regional statistics, UNSD