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UNCHS (HABITAT) COOPERATION WITH
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Contribution by the United Nations
Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) */

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UNCHS (HABITAT) COOPERATION WITH LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

The least developed countries (LDCs) are the weakest nations in the world with an extremely ill-equipped human settlements management capacity and poor domestic economies and standards of living. Their economic and social development represents a major challenge for the international community.

The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), since its inception, has accorded the highest priority to its cooperation with LDCs, with a view to stimulating the emergence in each country of self-sustaining and continuous human settlements development.

The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) serves as a laboratory or think-tank within the United Nations system, utilizing its research and technical analysis capacity to enable the least developed countries to improve the development and management of human settlements. UNCHS (Habitat) undertakes technical research on substantive issues, prepares training curricula and training materials, publishes and disseminates information, and provides technical assistance to Governments, local authorities, non-governmental organisations and other major groups, educational and research institutions and specialised agencies in activities related to its mandate.

In undertaking these activities, UNCHS (Habitat) maintains close working relationships with UNEP on environmental aspects of human settlements, with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs on disaster mitigation, with WHO on health aspects of human settlements, with ILO on employment in the human settlements sector, with the World Bank and UNDP on urban management, training and the application of urban and shelter indicators, with UNIDO on the development of indigenous building materials, with regional development banks and bilateral support agencies and other United Nations departments and programmes as well as specialised agencies executing programme elements relevant to the human settlements sector.

UNCHS (Habitat) carries out its work through an integrated programme of policy advice, research and development, training, information dissemination and operational activities, focused on priority areas defined by the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements and contained in the Centre's Work Programme. The programme on human settlements consists of eight sub-programmes: global issues and strategies; national policies and instruments; managing human settlement development, including financial and

land resources; improving infrastructure and the living environment; managing disaster mitigation, reconstruction and development; housing for all; strengthening local communities; reducing poverty and promoting equity.

In the implementation of all its programmes and projects, UNCHS is guided by the recognition that the development of human settlements is a multidisciplinary and intersectoral activity, and human settlement management is linked to all programmes of economic, social and environmental improvement.

To achieve its human settlements development objectives, UNCHS (Habitat) is guided by:

(a) The **Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000**, which was launched by the United Nations in 1988. The principal objective of the Strategy is to improve global shelter conditions by the creation of a legal, institutional and regulatory environment which can facilitate the construction and improvement of housing by all social groups, but especially by and for the poor. The Strategy pioneered the enabling approach, which rather than emphasising direct government intervention, favours legal and other incentives to encourage all stakeholders to become engaged in housing and urban development;

(b) **Agenda 21**: As the Task Manager for Chapters 7 and 21 of Agenda 21, UNCHS (Habitat) is working closely with national governments, local authorities, the private sector, NGOs, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and UNEP. It has made significant advances in establishing the framework for monitoring the implementation of the Agenda's human settlements programme.

(c) The **Global Plan of Action** under preparation for adoption by the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) which will take place in Istanbul, Turkey, in June 1996. UNCHS (Habitat) acts as the Secretariat for that World Conference on housing and urbanization issues.

Each of these initiatives advocates enabling strategies which are designed to better mobilise human, material and financial resources and to marshal the inputs of local authorities, community groups and other non-governmental organisations in the human settlements development process.

The objectives of the operational activities of UNCHS (Habitat) in LDCs, are primarily focused on assisting governments in policy and strategy formulation to create and strengthen a self-reliant human

settlements development management capacity at both national and local levels. Capacity-building is focused on expertise in: the assessment of human settlements development constraints and opportunities; the identification and analysis of policy options; the design and management of human settlements development interventions; and the mobilisation of national resources as well as external support when required to increase the impact of investments for upgrading human settlements conditions.

AREAS OF CO-OPERATION

Through its activities UNCHS (Habitat) responds dynamically to the changing conditions of LDCs, working together with them to solve the diversity of their needs and to meet their overall development goals and strategies. Operational activities vary in type, coverage (national, regional or global), size, duration and cost. They range from providing advice on a very defined, particular subject to elaborating solutions to complex multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary problems. Their focus may lie in defining the feasibility of capital investment, training of personnel, encouraging community participation and institution building, establishing new regulations, etc. Accordingly, they also vary in cost, from short-term, timely inputs to large-scale, multi-year, multi-million dollar programmes. Thus, UNCHS (Habitat) has significantly increased its delivery of assistance to LDC's governments both in terms of volume and value during the last five years.

UNCHS (Habitat) is working closely with LDC's governments on human settlements projects most of which emphasize a comprehensive approach to human settlements planning and management for achieving balanced development. These projects reflect a shift away from traditional land use planning and master planning to a more pragmatic and multi-sectoral approach which views planning as a continuous, adaptive process, rather than the production of static plans with fixed time horizons. This approach is also based upon the recognition of the need to combine spatial planning with infrastructure programmes and realistic investment planning geared to resource mobilization and human resources development.

More and more governments have recognized that, the often neglected human resources of the poor must be mobilized with firm political commitment to upgrade their settlements conditions. In the area of shelter and community services, the formulation of strategies for use of self-help and community participation and the dissemination of policy lessons drawn from pilot projects is the

focus of many of the UNCHS (Habitat) technical cooperation projects.

UNCHS (Habitat) is also supporting projects in LDCs focusing on the development of the indigenous construction sector. Work within these projects is mainly on developing appropriate standards and technologies to encourage the use and production of locally available materials and on reducing building costs.

The promotion of efficient infrastructure for human settlements is the focus of several ongoing UNCHS (Habitat) technical cooperation projects in LDCs. A number of environmental problems which are of major concern to the government of developing countries today, such as the acute public health hazards which result from inadequate water supply and refuse collection and from the lack of sanitation and drainage are being addressed through these projects. Furthermore, a major new area of focus which is emerging from UNCHS (Habitat)'s technical cooperation activities in this field is on developing strategies for improving the operation and maintenance of infrastructure in developing cities.

Although most of LDCs are still predominantly rural, to meet the challenge of rapid urbanization that most of the developing countries are experiencing, it is necessary to promote a better knowledge of the functioning of urban land markets and to design policies and programmes that foster the efficient use of land and minimize negative externalities such as water quality deterioration. Accordingly, UNCHS (Habitat) is directly supporting and promoting renewed land approaches in its projects in LDCs.

Over the last several years, regional conflicts and civil strife have increased the burden on the United Nations to provide relief and reconstruction assistance. UNCHS (Habitat) is being increasingly called upon to make an early contribution to the continuum from relief to rehabilitation and development in war-torn LDCs and other developing countries. UNCHS (Habitat) has provided technical assistance in major labour-intensive housing and infrastructure reconstruction projects, resettlement projects, immediate reconstruction after natural calamities, and in the initiation of programmes aimed to restoring environmental balance and sustainable settlements development in LDCs and other developing countries.

UNCHS (Habitat) is supporting projects in LDCs which are directly focused on the mobilization of finance for human settlements development. Through many other projects, UNCHS (Habitat) is also promoting a better understanding of the direct linkages between human investments and economic growth and productivity.

Reflecting the priority which least developed countries, and in fact all developing countries, are attaching to capacity building, one of the most active functions of UNCHS (Habitat)'s technical cooperation is human settlements institutions and management.

In the face of rapid urban growth in most LDCs, the ability of cities to continue to perform their economic role and to improve standards of living, relies heavily on the availability of proper infrastructure and municipal services which, in turn, depends on the strength of local governments and the effectiveness of urban management. In this regard, a major initiative undertaken by UNCHS (Habitat) is the urban management programme (UMP), executed by the Centre with the collaboration of the World Bank, and funded by UNDP and several bilateral agencies. The UMP is the first concerted multilateral effort to support developing countries world-wide in improving urban management. The Programme's long term objective is to help strengthen the contribution that cities and towns in developing countries make towards economic growth, social development, and the alleviation of poverty. The UMP's immediate aims are to promote improved urban management policies, programmes and practices, and the most important goal of the UMP is therefore to help strengthen national capacity in urban management. The UMP also places strong emphasis on the linkages between operational urban management activities and the policy making process. There are five major components of the current phase of this interregional programme: land management, infrastructure operations and maintenance, municipal finance, urban environmental management and urban poverty reduction. The results of this programme are already being applied in a number of LDCs, in the preparation and implementation of improved urban investment programmes and in the development of more effective urban management capacity at all levels of responsibility.

One of the key activities in support of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 was a series of policy seminars organized by UNCHS (Habitat) in various subregions in order to promote action-oriented policy dissemination among high level decision-makers from developing countries on national shelter strategy formulation and implementation. A vast majority of LDCs participated in the seminars.

The UNCHS/FINNIDA support programme for preparing national shelter strategies, executed in cooperation with the Government of Finland was another important activity in the context of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. The programme was designed to assist selected countries in the process of shelter strategy formulation. The emphasis was on technical assistance for training needs assessment, resource assessments, improvement in the housing

delivery systems and development of suitable institutional systems to implement the shelter strategy. The programme was implemented in a number of LDCs.

Preparatory assistance is also being given by UNCHS (Habitat) towards the formulation and implementation of national shelter strategies in many of its projects.

The technical cooperation activities of UNCHS (Habitat) are complemented by a programme of research and analysis. Applied research directly supports the formulation of technically, economically and socially sound approaches to the development of human settlements. Specialists and advisers in selected subject areas or from regional and interregional levels provide additional technical inputs to the work of country-level teams. Conversely, the experience gained in projects enhances applied research. In this way realistic solutions to critical human settlements constraints are identified, and then cross-sectoral issues can then be better addressed. Additionally, opportunities are created to identify existing institutional and individual capacities at the country level that can be mobilized for technical cooperation among developing countries.

As a continuous activity and with increasing demand, UNCHS (Habitat) provides special advisory services and training on computer-assisted technologies and planning approaches with particular emphasis on the Least Developed Countries.

Training is a developing activity in which the resources invested can produce very high multiplier effects. It is also an indispensable part of effective management and a prerequisite for independent and sustained development in all sectors. To promote new and systematic approaches to human settlements training, UNCHS (Habitat) is continuously providing a wide range of services to LDCs. UNCHS (Habitat) accords high priority to strengthening national and local training capabilities and assists LDCs in establishing and supporting institutions dealing with training in planning, urban management and municipal finance. The Centre has also implemented regional and sub-regional courses and workshops, conducted in partnership with local training institutions, in which all LDCs have participated. The courses and workshops promote new training methods, formats and techniques and provide an opportunity to test new training materials for use by local training institutions. They are aimed at middle-level to senior officials concerned with: housing and housing finance; urban management for local authorities; human settlements project management and execution; and microcomputer applications in human settlements management.

Community development is a cornerstone of enabling policies. In order to ensure that research, programme and project components and options are understood and have the maximum impact on the intended audiences, dissemination of information has been made an explicit objective of operational activities. Additionally, UNCHS (Habitat) has the capacity to support the dissemination of information on successful policies and strategies and on positive experiences in operational activities, thus enhancing the potential for replicability of successful approaches. The commitment of UNCHS (Habitat) to technical co-operation among developing countries as a basic function of its operational activities enables quick cross-fertilization of the latest ideas and approaches to human settlements management and development in different parts of the world.

EXAMPLES OF UNCHS (Habitat) TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION WITH SOME LDCs

AFGHANISTAN

Since 1989, UNCHS has been active in providing a range of rehabilitation assistance to address the evident needs of the returning refugee families in Afghanistan who have suffered from years of conflict. Their efforts to reestablish themselves in their towns and villages are hampered by the collapse of many parts of central government authority and its many counterparts. Damage to housing and infrastructure such as basic services and utilities has been extensive. The early assistance provided by UNCHS towards redressing these problems included improvement of sanitation in Kabul City and research on low-cost indigenous building materials.

During the period after 1990, UNCHS assisted in the implementation of several programmes which enabled families affected by war to resettle in both urban and rural areas. The Housing for Resettlement project helped almost 10,000 families to overcome their immediate housing needs through a programme of self-built construction of housing. Other activities implemented with technical assistance of UNCHS (Habitat) during this period include; the implementation of the Kabul Emergency Rehabilitation Programme, the Restoration of Logar Water Supply, the Restoration of the Kabul Museum and the Urban Rehabilitation Programme.

The Urban Rehabilitation Programme implemented with UNDP assistance seeks to build on the experience of the preceding housing for resettlement project. It focuses on establishing an institutional structure and developing a technical approach to support the indigenous process of recovery in the urban centres of Afghanistan. The programme will provide direct support to war-affected communities, and will develop the expertise and knowledge necessary for

long-term settlement support programmes in the country. The project will have Municipal Support offices in major towns, and develop a network of neighbourhood organisations to ensure participation in activities at the community level. The programme operates in the context of a range of projects in the different sectors which will require collaboration to ensure effective coordination. Effectively, it is expected that the project will continue the close collaboration UNCHS has developed with UNOCHA, UNDP/OPS, World Food Programme, UNHCR and UNICEF. The initial UNDP budget of US\$ 5.0 million provided for this programme has already attracted an additional 2 million from bilateral donors. The total investment in UNCHS activities in Afghanistan during 1989-1994 exceeds US\$ 6,775,000.

BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh, UNCHS collaborated in the implementation of two key projects, namely, Urban Management and Settlements Improvement Programme and the project on Post Disaster Construction in Flood-Affected Areas. Thereafter, UNCHS (Habitat) assistance has focused on improving planning and management capacities in two largest cities of Bangladesh, Dhaka and Chittagong. These two cities account for over one third of the urban population of the country and are growing at a rapid rate. A large percentage of this population lives in congested slums and squatter settlements without access to protected water, and unserved by waterborne sewerage systems. The development of these cities had been constrained by outdated plans and fragmented institutional arrangements. UNCHS assistance therefore focuses on providing support for preparing a multi-sectoral development planning system for the two cities.

UNCHS assistance covers the production of plans, institutional strengthening, and training activities. The assistance provided so far has helped in the preparation of structure plans and infrastructure master plans and operationalising a GIS facility. Multi-sector investment planning is also being introduced and the institutional reforms and human resource development programmes are in the process of being implemented.

BENIN

With a view to providing social and economic facilities in the remote part of Benin, a specific UNCHS/UNDP programme (PICMR) was set up with a total investment commitment of about US\$ 2 million. Its main activities were the identification of local needs in this field, the design of affordable and appropriate infrastructure and community buildings, the identification of sources of funding and control of infrastructure construction. 60 infrastructure operations have been executed. The project has also identified ways and means to render PICMR independent from external support (workforce and financing).

PICMR has acquired substantial knowledge on how to provide basic communal infrastructure for low-income populations in disfavoured areas of the country. It has been able to mobilize people's participation, including partial cost recovery, and has developed simple but appropriate infrastructure designs. All this experience and knowledge has been compiled into a special handbook. Assessment of infrastructure needs and regional development studies have also been compiled in specific publications.

BHUTAN

UNCHS (Habitat) has a long background of technical cooperation in Bhutan commencing in the late 1970's. Assistance funded by UNDP has been provided in housing technology, urban planning and development institutional structures, documentation of elements of architectural heritage and housing finance programmes and policies. Current activities include a major programme of training for improvement in rural traditional housing construction using appropriate technologies, a detailed review of the human settlement sector to assist Government and UNDP in the preparation of future programmes, and assistance in designing a management and operational structure for a new Central Government Department of Works and Housing.

BURKINA FASO

Launched in 1988, a UNCHS/UNDP pilot project supported the planning and management of two secondary cities, Yako and Koupela. Its main focus has been to create and train technical units within the respective local authorities. These units are in charge of updating physical plans and of preparing and supervising small-scale projects, such as schools, markets, water networks, both at the technical and financial levels.

The results of this project have been fully utilized in the design of a new project (BKF/90/006) focused on the management of medium-sized towns and development of housing. The main objective of this project which started in 1991, was to contribute to the development of ten medium-sized towns in order to create a balanced urban network. Within this framework, two immediate objectives have been defined: the improvement of urban management and the implementation of a shelter strategy based on the enabling approach of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. The main results of this project which lasted for two years (1991 and 1992) are: the constitution and training of technical units in these 10 medium-sized towns; a new policy in the field of urban management, including practical tools needed for the implementation of this policy, and a strategy for the development of the urban housing sector in Burkina Faso, focused on local building materials and entrepreneurship. Since 1994, the Government, recognising the main results of the project and the recent election of city mayors, created

a new department located in the Ministry of Housing, to assist the new municipalities on urban management and housing policy issues.

BURUNDI

UNCHS (Habitat) activities in Burundi are funded by UNDP, UNCDF and the Government of Switzerland. They aimed at strengthening government's capability to promote social housing through creation of a public housing agency (ECOSAT). ECOSAT has been very successful in the development of serviced plots, the allocation and recovery of loans to plot owners and the construction of housing related infrastructure. The project has led to substantial follow-up investments by the Government, the private sector and various external support agencies; the project's approach is incorporated into on-going government programmes with the aim of extending ECOSAT's activities to other urban centres. The creation of the FPHU (Urban Housing Promotion Fund) in Burundi helped boost ECOSAT's activities as loan agreements with beneficiaries are now handled by this institution, thus allowing ECOSAT to concentrate on its role of developer.

Another aspect of UNCHS (Habitat) present programme in Burundi is aimed at helping develop four secondary cities within the overall urban development strategy and identify public investments that are needed during the next years. An in-depth analysis of their present situation has been carried out and development proposals for the cities are being formulated through a new project aimed at strengthening the Government's institutional and technical capacity to determine the development of secondary cities (Karuzi, Kankuzo, Rutana and Makamba) and to promote their economies.

For these secondary cities very detailed studies concerning the necessary economic infrastructure (feasibility studies) have been completed and are under consideration for financing and implementation with the shortest delay. A complementary project (BDI/87/C06, Development of the Urban Centres of Karuzi and Cankuzo) is now being initiated with capital assistance provided by the United Nations Capital Development Fund.

CAMBODIA

With conditions returning to normal in Cambodia, UNCHS has successfully negotiated a project with ODA to provide support to community development. ODA cost sharing contribution to the project is US\$ 1.5 million. The project is designed to strengthen domestic self-reliance through capacity building and improve resource mobilization at the community level. The project will also assist in the urban reintegration at both policy and operational levels, focusing specially on the provision of land and housing. Activities will focus on legitimising and institutionalising the housing processes of the urban poor through inputs provided at the municipal and community levels. Specific activities proposed under the project

include; institutional development, development of new policy frameworks relating to urban reintegration and rehabilitation and, training of communities and local government personnel.

CAPE VERDE

The emphasis of UNCHS/UNDP/UNCDF programme was on upgrading urban living conditions in Praia by constructing basic residential infrastructure, self-help housing and public facilities. This programme with a total investment component of US\$2.7 million has been successful in stimulating community participation in the production of housing and community facilities. The conclusions from the execution of this project were: i) people's participation was not only confined to physical participation (such as pavement of roads, construction of laundries) but took place also at the decision-making level, when, e.g. the layout of roads had to be modified or the extension of existing facilities was to be determined; and (ii) the training of local staff and the overall institutional strengthening of PROMEBAD created at the beginning of the project could allow this agency in the future to extend similar activities to other parts of the city of Praia and other urban centres in the country. The introduction of financial mechanisms in the provision of housing (still not totally completed) will play a key role in the Government's efforts to provide better housing and living conditions.

Following the volcanic eruption on 3 April 1995 in Fogo Island, UNCHS has extended its support to the Government through a rapid assessment mission, in order to contribute to a safer and sustainable development in Fogo by proposing resettlement, disaster management and the establishment of a National Park.

CHAD

In Chad, UNCHS (Habitat) assisted the municipality of N'Djamena in municipal management. This UNCHS/UNDP project aimed at an increase of municipal tax revenues by revising the present tax system and improving tax collection. With these actions it has been possible to double the volume of the municipal budget, to reintroduce a special investment budget (FCFA 230 million in 1990) and to honour former financial engagements of the Municipality. The activities also concentrated on proposals for organizational restructuring and training of government officials. A useful tool developed by the project, with special impact on the operation of the Municipality, consists of an inventory of short-term and long-term interventions with regard to the construction and maintenance of infrastructure.

COMOROS

In 1993 UNCHS organized a sectoral assessment mission in Comoros which defined a limited number of priorities to be addressed by the national human settlements policy.

DJIBOUTI

UNCHS (Habitat) has assisted the Government of Djibouti with

UNDP funds to elaborate an urban development policy for the orderly growth of urban areas along with the necessary infrastructure investments. The emphasis was on economic and financial aspects. As a follow-up a UNDP/UNCDF/UNCHS low-cost housing project is now being implemented in Balbala with a total budget of US\$ 2.9 million.

ETHIOPIA

In recognition of the crucial role played by building materials in the reduction of construction costs, UNCHS (Habitat) provided technical assistance to the Government of Ethiopia in the development of low-cost building materials and components in 1990.

UNCHS is currently working with the Ministry of Works and Urban Development and UNDP to develop the "Sound and affordable Housing" component of the Human Resource Development and Utilization Programme.

UNCHS (Habitat) has also been requested by the Commissioner for Relief and Rehabilitation to contribute to the development of activities under the Disaster Prevention Preparedness and Mitigation Programme and has responded positively. The Habitat/UNEP Task Force for the Continuum from Relief to Development will provide experts as requested once the Programme Support Document has been approved.

GAMBIA

UNCHS (Habitat) with UNDP funding supported the preparation of a National Housing Policy and through the process assisted in capacity building of the then department of housing in the Ministry for Local Government and lands.

GUINEA

A UNCHS (Habitat)/UNDP/UNCDF programme, with a total investment commitment of US\$4.9 million, supported the first large-scale housing scheme in the country. The emphasis was on development of 41 hectares of residential land in Conakry, and strengthening of capacity of the national developer (SOLOPRIMO). The work started in 1989 and included construction of roads, drainage, water and electricity supply and social facilities. The plots were sold at two different rates. Prices for the largest plots made subsidies available for the low-cost plots. Training of the local staff and reinforcement of SOLOPRIMO has allowed this agency to develop its activities after completion of the project. The evaluation of this first sites-and-services scheme in 1992 has helped the Government in the implementation of its national shelter strategy to the year 2000.

GUINEA-BISSAU

UNCHS (Habitat) supports the Ministry of Public Works to implement a first sites and services scheme at the outskirts of Bissau.

The project which was started in July 1992 is made up of five components: (a) the elaboration of overall plans for the development of Bissau and seven towns in the interior; (b) the development of a 29.2-hectare site in Bissau, offering 551 new plots for housing construction; (c) the provision of a credit line for 407 loans for low-income households and for 100 loans for owners of existing houses on the site, to cover the costs of building materials for the self-help construction or rehabilitation of houses; (d) the design and implementation of financial and administrative procedures for the recovery of investment costs, and the creation of a Reinvestment Fund for Housing; and (e) the training of national personnel in urban planning and administration methods.

The project has made good progress in all its components. Infrastructure works were launched in 1994 and will be completed in 1995.

HAITI

Phase I of UNCHS/UNDP project "Amenagement du territoire", assisted the Government in its decentralization policy by setting up a methodology to assess development potentialities of local economies and draw up local development plans.

Following a request from the Government, UNCHS/UNDP are now being replicated to cover the whole of the national territory. At the same time, UNCHS is fielding a sectoral support mission to identify specific issues within the Human Settlements sector that should receive special assistance from UNCHS to enhance the effectiveness of the general policies already in progress.

KIRIBATI

A human settlements sector review in Pacific Atoll Nations was undertaken by UNCHS (Habitat) in 1994. Kiribati was among the islands covered by this study. The study identified the key human settlements related issues and linkages common to all countries participating in the study, in order to clarify and rationalise investment and technical co-operation priorities. It is expected that this comprehensive review would influence the focus of future donor assistance programmes in human settlements sector, thereby helping in better targeting the limited aid resources to raise the quality of life in the sub-region.

LAO (PDR)

UNCHS (Habitat) and the Lao Government have cooperated in recent years to attain a sustainable process of integrated urban development in Laos. A project commenced in 1989 was instrumental in providing assistance for improving the living conditions of the poor in Sihom through rehabilitation of neighbourhoods and the basic services. Also, a project implemented since 1991, is assisting Vientiane and cities such as Luan Prabang,

in managing the uncontrolled urban growth. While complementing the Rehabilitation of Sihom, the project has also reinforced town planning and development capabilities of the responsible institutions. A key contribution in this regard had been the assistance provided by the project to help strengthen the national capacity for the preparation of digital maps.

LESOTHO

UNCHS (Habitat) was requested to assist Maseru Municipal Council in 1989, to design building control mechanisms and to advise the Government on the measures necessary to transform the Water and Sewerage Branch of the Ministry of Water, Energy and Mining into a parastatal.

UNCHS (Habitat) with UNDP funding supported the review and revision of planning/building rules and regulations project LES/86/003. Final and terminal report was delivered in 1994.

LIBERIA

UNCHS undertook a study on the "National Shelter Sector Assessment and Human Settlements for Displaced and Returnees in Liberia" in May/June 1993. Based on this study UNCHS participated in the Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance for Liberia but failed to secure any funding. At present UNCHS is planning a programme formulation mission to Liberia in the third quarter of 1995, using TSS1 and sectoral support.

MALAWI

The Government, with the technical assistance of UNCHS (Habitat) and funds from UNDP and UNCDF launched the rural housing project in 1981 to assist rural families in improving their housing conditions. The project began by developing building materials such as improved sun-dried mud bricks, ventilation blocks and sisal-cement roofing sheets. It also developed simple, low-cost construction methods and simple housing design. Local builders and artisans were trained to produce local materials and model houses were constructed at demonstration centres. Funding was stopped in 1992.

UNCHS (Habitat) with UNDP Funding assisted the department of Housing and Physical Planning to develop a "National Physical Development Plan" - Project MLW/79/012. This was an Institution - building to strengthen the capacity of physical planning and housing sections to monitor and evaluate implementation of physical development plans.

MALDIVES

Male, the capital of Maldives, is an island of 185 hectares and a population of 69,000, which is expected to double in 17 years. No further area is available for disposal of solid waste at the Male

garbage site, thus solid waste is now being burned, used as landfill to reclaim new areas for the island, or dumped at sea. UNCHS assisted project supported Government's efforts to institute an environmentally-compatible, long-term, solid-waste management system. The project assisted in the installation of a city-wide collection system of small-scale vehicles and containers, the creation of an inter-island solid-waste transport system, and in establishing a technically, aesthetically, and economically-sound sanitary landfill operation on a nearby island. In the long term, the project will help in protecting the sensitive marine environment of the island through the formulation and implementation of a long-term solid-waste operations plan and monitoring programme. The new solid waste management system has effectively replaced the previous disposal practices which had an adverse impact on the environment of the Maldives. As a follow-up to the Waste Management Project, a three year environmental monitoring program has been proposed for the landfill site at Thilafushi island. A pilot monitoring study was carried out with UNDP/ODA funding, and parameters have been developed to monitor the effect of the landfill operations on the coral population and on seawater around the landfill site.

MALI

UNCHS (Habitat) has assisted the Government in formulating a National Shelter Strategy during 1992-1993 in the framework of project MLI/90/005. National authorities are now identifying follow-up activities.

MYANMAR

Collaboration between the Government of the Union of Myanmar and UNCHS (Habitat) dates back to 1980. During the period technical assistance was provided in the preparation of a major UNCHS/UNDP urban planning study for the capital city of Yangon and its environs, and providing relief assistance to fire victims and building materials supply. A Community Water Supply and Sanitation Project was also designed as one of the components of a larger Human Development Initiative (HDI) developed in conformity with the Governing Council decision 93/21. The project is assisting in introducing appropriate water supply and sanitation technologies with low operation and maintenance costs (ferro-cement, rain water harvesting, improved latrine, etc.), based on a community-led identification and implementation process. In townships where there are no strong community organizations, the project, in coordination with other components of the HDI will provide support in the establishment of suitable organizations for systems management. Also, assistance will be provided in promoting private sector manufacturing of low-cost and appropriate water harvesting technologies such as hand pumps. Training in various aspects of community management of water supply schemes, and the induction of improved personal hygiene practices will be yet another cluster of

important project activities. Low energy, traditional water harvesting methods are investigated and improved for replication.

MOZAMBIQUE

The Government of Mozambique decided in 1989, that housing was to be a national priority and UNDP/UNCHS (Habitat) were accordingly requested to expand what had been a housing policy framework/low cost housing monitoring project into a full fledged housing policy and implementation strategy project, in close collaboration with the World Bank which supports a number of relevant studies. In another series of activities UNCHS (Habitat) is assisting the National Physical Planning institute providing training classrooms and district development planning for the island of Inhaca.

UNCHS (Habitat) has provided technical assistance to the government in the formulation of a long-term programme of support to the housing and urban development sector in Mozambique through the UNDP funded projects MOZ/91/010 and MOZ/93/020. The programme is intended to provide a framework for capacity building and other support to sustainable urban development and improve housing delivery. UNCHS (Habitat) is an Associate Agency on a project to develop low-cost sanitation solutions throughout the country, MOZ/91/014. UNCHS (Habitat) is currently contributing to the UNDP supported PROAREA programme which is exploring an area-based integrated approach to the rehabilitation of war affected areas.

NEPAL

In Nepal, assistance was provided for the establishment of a financial intermediary known as Town Development Fund Board, to provide financial assistance to implement priority urban investment projects. On completion of this activity, UNCHS cooperated with the Government in providing assistance for the development of the housing and building sectors. A major project implemented in this area was assistance provided to the government in the implementation of a reconstruction programme in Eastern and Central Nepal affected by a severe earthquake in 1988. A project was also implemented to assist in the formulation of a housing policy, a building code and improvement of building materials and techniques, to minimize the effect of future earthquakes.

The Management Support for Urban Development assisted government in identifying suitable strategies to support decentralised municipal management in Nepal. The above project and its successor project which commenced in 1994 provide support to the new urban local authorities to carry out their functions under the Municipality Act effectively. The assistance also helps to translate sustainable development policies into operational programmes which directly address poverty alleviation and the urban environment. The

assistance to help strengthen the capacity of Local Government and institutions is made available to target municipalities on a demand-driven basis.

NIGER

A large UNCHS (Habitat)'s project in Niger with funds from UNDP and UNCDF aimed at the rehabilitation of an existing housing area and the development of a new housing area at Niamey. Plans for the infrastructure (road networks, drainage, water and electricity supply) have been prepared. The construction of infrastructure has been completed. Creation of a Revolving Fund, a Housing Financing Fund and a Small Enterprise Fund has been envisaged.

RWANDA

UNCHS (Habitat) has formulated a large-scale programme for the rehabilitation of the war-torn areas of Rwanda, and has started implementation of a pilot project in Kigali at the end of 1994, with a total budget of US\$ 2.4 million.

SIERRA LEONE

UNCHS has provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Lands, Housing and the Environment through the UNDP supported Project SIL/91/002 - Improving Affordability of Shelter. The project has been assisting the Government in formulating a national housing policy and shelter strategy, develop and promote the production and use of local building materials through small scale entrepreneurship. A Project Document for the second phase of the on-going project - SIL/91/002 has been submitted to UNDP New York for approval. The project aims to develop and strengthen the institutional capacity of the Government to plan for shelter delivery through support to and collaboration with local communities, taking into account the rehabilitation and reconstruction needs of war-torn areas. The project focuses on training, expansion of the production of affordable building materials and the introduction of non-conventional credit mechanisms to support the shelter initiatives of local communities, small scale entrepreneurs and NGOs.

SOMALIA

In September 1993, UNCHS (Habitat) fielded an assessment mission in Somalia which prepared a comprehensive project entitled SOM/94/001 - Hargeisa Area Development Programme. The Programme was arranged into five components: i) The Core Urban Development Programme; ii) Major Infrastructure Projects; iii) Reconstruction of Hargeisa's Supporting Rural Settlements; iv) Militia Reintegration; and v) Livestock Export Facilities Reconstruction.

At the request of UNDP and under the umbrella of the above Programme, UNCHS (Habitat) prepared a project document entitled SOM/93/005 - Preparatory Assistance, Hargeisa Area Development Programme, with a budget of US\$ 332,000. Over a duration of 6 months, the project aimed at providing the initial technical assistance

towards the realization of SOM/94/001 - Hargeisa Area Development Programme. The project aimed at providing nine work-months of consultancies in the areas of urban development, shelter and basic urban services, rehabilitation of the displaced, institution and capacity building, and livestock - focusing on the continuum from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development. At a further request from UNDP, UNCHS (Habitat) also prepared the project document SOM/94/003 - Urban Settlements and Management Programme, with a budget of US\$ 590,000. Within a 6-month duration the project was designed to contribute to the restoration of the socio-economic base of urban areas. It would be carried out in a number of selected urban centres. In parallel, the project is to develop a larger programme of capital and technical assistance to address broader issues of physical reconstruction and development of governance including management and service capacities in Hargeisa.

These projects will be implemented as soon as the situation permits.

SUDAN

Following a UNCHS (Habitat) formulation mission, a project document was formulated in 1992 entitled Services for the Urban Poor. The project was to: supplement the basic services available at relocation sites, bring them to a minimum level of acceptability along with the development of employment generation activities; and deal with the shelter of those living in squatter settlements or sites which were designated for clearance. Funding remains to be mobilized for implementing that project.

TANZANIA

UNCHS is currently executing the UNDP funded "Sustainable Dar es Salaam" Project, URT/90/033, Managing Sustainable Growth and Development in Dar es Salaam. This is one of the first projects to be executed under UNCHS's Sustainable Cities Programme and has successfully introduced a participatory process towards the identification and solution of environmental problems in the city and attracted considerable support from numerous donor agencies and the Government.

UNCHS has also provided technical assistance with a human settlements assessment and the development of a Sustainable Human Settlements Development Strategy and programme for Tanzania. The programme provides a framework for government and donor efforts to support the sustainable development of human settlements which will focus on urban areas in the country as a whole.

In Zanzibar UNCHS executed the UNDP funded Stone Town Conservation Project, URT/87/014 and is currently assisting in the preparation of a project which will support sustainable urban development in Zanzibar.

TUVALU

A human settlements sector review in Pacific Atoll Nations was undertaken by UNCHS (Habitat) in 1994. Tuvalu was among the islands covered by this study. The study identified the key human settlements related issues and linkages common to all countries participating in the study, in order to clarify and rationalise investment and technical co-operation priorities. It is expected that this comprehensive review would influence the focus of future donor assistance programmes in human settlements sector, thereby helping in better targeting the limited aid resources to raise the quality of life in the sub-region.

UGANDA

Namuwongo upgrading and low cost housing project is the first major project by the Government of Uganda, aimed at improving the quality of housing in Kampala. Namuwongo was an informal housing site without basic services. The houses were retained and improved through the use of better materials, some of which are manufactured on site, and loans made available for residents through a new housing office located on-site. New properly drained roads were constructed, piped water and electricity was provided to the plots. UNCHS (Habitat) assisted the development of National Housing Policy and has been evaluated in developing implementation strategy for the policy.

VANUATU

UNCHS (Habitat) assists the National Housing Corporation on developing a new range of affordable designs to be applied to selected sites in Vila and Luganville, restructuring and upgrading existing and resettling squatter communities.

YEMEN

Following a sectoral assessment mission, UNCHS has been requested to conduct a qualitative and quantitative damage assessment and to evaluate the situation of the urban environment and socio-economical facilities in Southern governorates, particularly in Aden. A UNCHS mission is expected to prepare a short technical report, including a brief assessment of the current situation and actions so far taken, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Based on the report, the mission is also expected to draft a project document, on the technical assistance required to support the potential capital assistance to be provided by bilateral donors and possibly by UNCDF for a low-cost housing demonstration project in Aden.

ZAMBIA

UNCHS has undertaken five projects in Zambia over the last five years these include the UNDP funded projects ZAM/90/005, Technical Assistance in Promoting Low-Income Housing, as well as the DANIDA funded Community Participation Training Project, DN/ZAM/91/D04. All these projects focus on supporting urban poor communities to improve their living environment.

A Human Settlements needs Assessment has recently been undertaken in Zambia and it is intended that this, together with experience from project implementation, should form the basis for a programme to introduce participatory approaches for the sustainable development of urban areas.

UNCHS has been assisting the Government in the formulation of a national housing policy for Zambia, using sectoral support funds. This is expected to lead to formulation of a national shelter strategy and implementation of a national housing programme.

In response to a request from the Ministry of Local Government and Housing, UNCHS (Habitat) is also currently initiating a Sustainable Cities Project in Lusaka.