



United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)  
United Towns Organisation (UTO/FMCU) on behalf of the  
World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities  
Coordination (WACLAC)

## *City-to-City Cooperation: Issues Arising from Experience*

An Interim Report prepared as a contribution to discussions

on decentralised cooperation at the  
IULA/UTO Unity Congress,  
Rio de Janeiro,  
3-6 May 2001  
and

on city-to-city cooperation at the  
25th United Nations General Assembly Special Session (Istanbul+5)  
New York, 6-8 June 2001

*Nairobi, 25 May 2001*



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The **United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)** promotes socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. UNCHS (Habitat) is the lead agency within the United Nations system for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda – the global plan of action adopted by the international community at the Habitat II Conference in Istanbul, Turkey in June 1996. Its activities represent the Centre’s targeted contribution to the overall objective of the United Nations system to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development within the context and the challenges of a rapidly urbanizing world. As the secretariat to the Habitat II Conference, UNCHS (Habitat) broke new ground by enabling local authorities, the private sector and representatives of civil society to play an active role in the Conference and in formulating the Habitat Agenda. As a result, partnerships and participation constitute two important strategic objectives of the Habitat Agenda. The Centre’s focus on partners is twofold. It advocates partnerships and broad-based multi-stakeholder participation as effective means of governance and of improving living conditions for all. It involves partners in the design and implementation of its work programme.

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The **World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC)** was formed by the major international local government associations in 1996 to provide a focus for developing their collective collaboration with the United Nations. The associations (the International Union of Local Authorities, the United Towns Organisation, METROPOLIS – World Association of Major Metropolises, and the Summit Conference of the World’s Major Cities), together with six regional associations and networks, convened the World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities in Istanbul in 1996 on the eve of Habitat II, the Second UN Conference on Human Settlements. This World Assembly called for further development of the partnership with the UN through the formation of an ongoing coordination of all interested associations. WACLAC and its member associations have since pursued joint work with UNCHS (Habitat) on many aspects of local government capacity-building and implementation of the *Habitat Agenda*. WACLAC was instrumental in the formation by the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) in 2000 of the **Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (ACLA)**, as proposed by the UN Commission on Human Settlements. On 6 May 2001 WACLAC convened a second World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities in Rio de Janeiro to formulate local government’s collective input to the UN General Assembly Special Session Istanbul +5 (New York, June 2001).

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The **United Towns Organisation (UTO) / Fédération Mondiale des Cités Unies (FMCU)** was formed in 1957 to promote international cooperation among cities and towns. It has been a major protagonist of twinning and linking of all kinds and of the practice of decentralised cooperation for international development. UTO/FMCU is a broadly-based membership organisation of cities and local authorities and their national associations and has its headquarters in Paris, France. In early 2001, UTO was designated by WACLAC as United Nations focal point for “decentralised” or “city-to-city” cooperation.

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# Foreword

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When, five years ago, the world met in Istanbul at the HABITAT II City Summit to discuss the enormous challenge posed by global urbanisation and our rapidly growing cities, they reached a number of historic agreements and enshrined them in the *Habitat Agenda*. The international community achieved a major break-through in collectively recognising the important role that cities play in social and economic development, as centres of productivity, innovation and advancement. A second major break-through lay in agreement on a collective strategy that is sharply focused on two high priority concerns: “sustainable human settlements” and “adequate shelter for all”. And a third major break-through was the forging of a new partnership approach involving not only central governments and civil society, but also local authorities in a joint plan for systematically addressing the future of the world’s cities and urban areas.

In addition, at Istanbul the United Nations recognised, for the first time, the status of local governments officially at one of its global meetings. This was yet another first, progress towards recognition of local governments as interlocutors with the United Nations, and their participation in the key decisions affecting and requiring cooperation from the cities. Indeed, local authorities were recognised as the closest partners of national governments for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

Given this context, it is not surprising that city-to-city cooperation or “decentralised cooperation”, practised by local authorities with the support of their associations for more than half a century, has in recent years become an important focus area for the United Nations. It has emerged in the past decade as a new technical cooperation paradigm of the United Nations, which emphasises the demand-led sharing of operational experience among practitioners, the exchange of know-how and mutual learning rather than the traditional provision of ready solutions.

Earlier this year, UNCHS (Habitat) agreed to co-operate with the United Towns Organisation (UTO) - the latter acting on behalf of World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC) and the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (ACLA) - to support a series of events concerned with city-to-city cooperation. These events will emphasise the benefits of city-to-city learning and mutual support, highlight the broad range and diversity of city-to-city cooperation practices, showcase the variety of complementary options for supporting cities in their cooperation, and seek to draw and agree on forward-looking conclusions regarding opportunities to improve the scope for both city-to-city cooperation and support. The series of events will culminate with a parallel event on city-to-city cooperation during the Istanbul+5 United Nations General Assembly Special Session in New York on 7 June 2001.

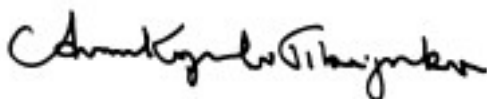
By the time Istanbul +5 has concluded, there should be a solid foundation for jointly launching a more permanent forum on city-to-city cooperation, which will be in a position to continue expanding an inventory of the various forms of city-to-city cooperation as well as the modalities of international support including removal of legal constraints on city-to-city cooperation. This in turn will make it possible systematically to identify complementarities to be exploited, overlaps and redundancies to be avoided, and gaps to be filled - information which will be equally valuable for cities seeking to establish cooperation links and for organisations seeking to support cities' cooperation initiatives.

The present report is an input to this series of events. Over time, it will provide a systematic guide to the full wide range of city-to-city cooperation activities. These activities differ in many important ways, reflecting the tremendous diversity of interests, purposes, institutions, resources, and situations among cities. The report addresses this complexity of patterns by providing an analytical framework which allows the full range of city-to-city practices, on the one hand, and support systems, on the other hand, to be described in a meaningful and comparable manner. This framework provides a rationale for organising and sharing information, in a way which facilitates a constructive exchange of experience as well as mutual learning among cities, their associations, and their partners in national governments and international institutions and in civil society.

An initial version of the report was presented to a special workshop session of the IULA/UTO Unity Congress in Rio, specifically to stimulate discussion and elicit responses and feedback. On the basis of reactions from Rio, and of other information received, the report has now been updated and printed for distribution at the Istanbul +5 Special Session of the United Nations in New York in June 2001. Still, the present report remains a "work in progress" which will be progressively refined and improved through continuing inputs of evidence and experience from cities and support organisations.

The report has been prepared by UNCHS (Habitat) in close collaboration with UTO (on behalf of WACLAC and ACLA). Under the overall coordination of Jochen Eigen, Ag. Chief of the Technical Advisory Branch of UNCHS (Habitat), the report was written by Paul N Bongers, Consultant and former Director of the Local Government International Bureau (UK), and Douglas McCallum, Consultant to Habitat's Sustainable Cities Programme. The work was carried out in collaboration with Michel Bescond, Marcelo Nowersztern and David Bouanchaud of the United Towns Organisation, and with inputs from Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi, Director of the Municipal Development Programme for Western and Central Africa, Nicholas You, coordinator of Habitat's Best Practices Programme, and Jean-Christophe Adrian, coordinator of Habitat's Localising Agenda 21 Programme.

We hope that the report will serve to inform, and to stimulate debate among, the participants at Istanbul +5. We are assuredly on the threshold of a new era in international cooperation for development, in which all levels of government and all civil society partners will be active participants. Intelligent application of the potential of city-to-city cooperation offers creative and powerful avenues for achieving sustainable development at the local level in both South and North.



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# Introduction

## Background and Context

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### **1.1 The Idea of City-to-City Cooperation**

During the last two decades of the twentieth century cities have become active participants in international relations as never before – or at least since the Middle Ages, when Europe’s city states had more power than most of the national governments. Three reasons can be adduced for this. Firstly, urbanisation is a growing trend in all the developing countries, matching in some respects the rapid development of urban areas which characterised the first industrial revolution in the North. Secondly, globalisation has led to a clearer recognition of the determining position of cities in a world which is both interdependent and committed to sharing finite quantities of natural resources. And thirdly, city governments have taken initiatives to assert their place in the world and to develop international links which will contribute to their future economic and social well-being.

Cities and local authorities have been developing their international cooperation for many decades. The first international association of local authorities was set up as long ago as 1913, principally for the purpose of general information exchange and mutual support, and a small number of direct city-to-city links were established. But it was in the aftermath of the Second World War that direct links between local authorities of two or more countries really began to spread. Most of the early initiatives were among the developed countries of the North, but it was not long before the first links with developing countries began to be formed.

With the marked trends towards democratisation and decentralisation of the 1980s and 1990s, the scope for concrete cooperation between local authorities on practical issues of mutual interest expanded considerably. Moreover, cities were increasingly responding to their role in combating the root causes of poverty and fostering sustainable economic and social development, as the political entities closest to the needs of their communities. These advances at the local level coincided with the growing recognition in the international community that the process of urbanisation, particularly with the movement of population towards the cities of the developing countries, raised major issues of governance - as well as of economic, social and environmental policy – which called for new approaches to capacity-building at the local level.

Before taking this discussion any further forward, it is important to state that the terms ‘cities’ and ‘city-to-city cooperation’ will be used in this report without any preconceptions about the size or historical

importance of the settlements concerned. Thus, the word 'city' will be used in the American English sense of an urban settlement or cluster of settlements of any size, with its own elected or appointed local government body, which may go under a whole range of administrative titles such as 'municipality', 'township', 'town', 'borough', 'district', 'metropolitan area' and so on in all possible language variants. The term 'cities' is also frequently used loosely in international contexts to refer to other types of local authorities such as 'counties', 'provinces', 'departments' etc, which exist at an intermediate level between the municipality and the state and may contain a number of larger or smaller urban settlements within their boundaries.

'City-to-City Cooperation' - neatly if inelegantly shortened to 'C2C' - thus becomes a portmanteau term to cover all possible forms of relationship between local authorities at any level in two or more countries which are collaborating together over matters of mutual interest, whether with or without external support. There is also a relevant dimension of cooperation between cities within a single country, but such cooperation takes many forms beyond that of development-oriented capacity-building which is the focus of this report. The term city-to-city cooperation is sometimes used synonymously with the term 'decentralised cooperation', although the latter concept (first embodied in the European Union's Lomé Convention in 1990) embraces a wider range of actions for development carried out by 'non-state actors' and locally-based institutions and voluntary associations of all kinds. Decentralised cooperation policies are based upon the principle of partnership and joint working between public authorities, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations, cooperatives, the private sector, and the informal sector, a principle which is increasingly being incorporated in C2C approaches.

## **1.2 City-to-City Cooperation and Development Cooperation**

The inherent weaknesses of 'top-down' development cooperation programmes have become increasingly apparent in recent years. There has been a notable, though still incomplete, shift in development cooperation over urban issues away from the provision of ready-made solutions and textbook approaches through consultants and through outreach from the established western centres of expertise. Decentralised cooperation, whereby cities (and indeed other institutions) work together on defining their problems and devising appropriate solutions on the basis of shared experience among peer groups is increasingly recognised as a powerful means of advancing collective know-how. However, there are signs of a continuing confusion or mismatch between the facilities and services being provided through the international community and the needs and demands of the cities themselves. Thus a further move is indicated away from a supply-driven approach towards one based upon more effective understanding of demand and of the potential of the various agencies and intermediaries to meet such demand.

C2C may take place between cities in neighbouring countries or between cities at opposite ends of the globe. Town twinning provided the framework for the earliest examples of C2C, and some very productive cooperation continues to take place within that framework. But in recent years the practice and scope of C2C has widened considerably on the initiative of city leaders, with the encouragement and assistance of the international associations and networks of local authorities and with support from a growing number of national and international agencies. Strengthening the capacity of cities to deal with their own problems in close touch with their citizens is now an acknowledged international policy goal. Partnerships between cities are gaining recognition as a potentially cost-effective and sustainable component in achieving that goal. Cities are increasingly working together on topics affecting their responsibilities, enabling their personnel to exchange experience on a peer group basis and transferring and adapting successful practices to new contexts. Cities are also becoming increasingly involved as direct participants in international programmes addressing the problems of urbanisation and sustainable development.

There has thus been a notable convergence between the growth of C2C practices initiated by cities and the growing focus upon urban issues among the international institutions. The challenges of urbanisation and

the roles of the various civil society stakeholders as partners in policy formation at local, national, regional and global levels were strongly underlined during the series of major United Nations conferences in the 1990s. This process started at the Rio Earth Summit 1992, and the Istanbul City Summit 1996 went much further in recognising that cities and local authorities, as the level of governance closest to the people, are essential partners of national governments and the international institutions in the processes of translating international agreements on economic, social and environmental issues into effective action on the ground. Agenda 21 adopted in Rio recognised that these global problems have their roots in local actions and that cities are thus key actors in the quest for sustainable development. The *Habitat Agenda* adopted in Istanbul underlined the role of cities in socio-economic development at local and national levels, and set out an extensive Global Plan of Action, drawn up in an evolving partnership with representatives of local authorities, for addressing the challenges of achieving sustainable human settlements development in an urbanising world.

In response to the trends and political developments outlined above, cities and local authorities have also taken significant initiatives of their own to define and project their role as partners in the international policy processes addressing urban issues. To take the place of the traditional top-down approaches, they have stated their wish to participate in drawing up the ground rules for future international programmes and to engage in sustained dialogue with the international community about development priorities and approaches. For this reason they sought, and were readily admitted to, active involvement throughout the HABITAT II Istanbul City Summit process. Through joint action by all the major international associations of cities, they convened the first World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities on the eve of the Summit to draw up and project their collective policy input to the global debate.

As a direct follow-up to the City Summit a series of steps were taken to develop the dialogue between the UN and local government on the implementation of the *Habitat Agenda*. Local authorities' representatives were enabled to participate in the proceedings of the Commission on Human Settlements and the Preparatory Committee for Istanbul + 5. In the context of a Memorandum of Understanding drawn up between UNCHS (Habitat) and WACLAC in 1997, joint work was initiated in a number of areas. More recently, the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) was mandated by the UN Commission on Human Settlements to set up an Advisory Committee of Local Authorities to associate the cities and their associations still more closely with the development of Habitat's policies and programmes.

Given these developments, both at the city level and at the international policy level, it seems timely to carry out a review of the current state of practice of C2C, to identify the lessons learned so far and to chart ways of extending and improving its implementation. This report represents the first step in that process, and the purpose and scope of the report are explained more fully in the next chapter.

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# The Purpose and Scope of the Report

## 2

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### **2.1 Advancing Understanding of C2C and Strengthening C2C Practice**

The fundamental purpose of this report is to provide a coherent framework for analysing the by now very wide range of forms in which cities (in the widest sense, as above) cooperate with one another, along with the support mechanisms which have been called into being to facilitate and expand this cooperation. This should then provide a basis for assessing the opportunities but also the pitfalls which exist in this field, the complementarities and also the gaps in current practices, and the policy issues that arise in relation to the further development of C2C. The aim will be to present the cities' current practices and the support options available to them in a meaningful and comparable fashion, as the basis for a continuing process of collective learning which will be progressively further developed. It is hoped thereby to achieve an enhanced common understanding among all interested parties of the current state of C2C concepts and principles, as a basis for informed policy-making which takes full account of the cities' perspective.

The issues which the report addresses were at the heart of the agenda for the International Union of Local Authorities / United Towns Organisation Unity Congress held in Rio de Janeiro on 3-6 May 2001 under the theme 'The Community Agenda', and the practice of C2C was specifically addressed at a workshop session devoted to decentralised cooperation. The demands and concerns formulated by local government worldwide on the occasion of the second World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities as part of the Rio congress programme will provide the basis for the cities' collective input to the Istanbul + 5 General Assembly Special Session in New York on 6-8 June 2001, at which a further elaborated version of the report will be provided for reference. Account will also be taken of the results of the Meeting of Mayors on City-to-City Cooperation convened by UNCTAD in collaboration with UNDP-WACAP (World Alliance of Cities against Poverty) and UNCHS (Habitat) in Brussels on 15-16 May 2001 within the framework of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

These issues can be expected to feature prominently in the dialogue sessions between the national governments and representatives of local authorities to be held at the Special Session, and will be discussed in detail at a parallel event on this occasion being organised in collaboration with the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities. At this Special Session concrete measures for stepping up the implementation of the *Habitat Agenda* in all continents will be mapped out for international agreement. This means that the institutional base for any future development of support or coordination measures through the United Nations system for C2C is likely to take significant shape during the current year.

At the same time it is hoped that the report - and subsequent expanded and updated editions of it - will serve a broader purpose for the cities themselves and for the international community. It should provide a point of reference and comparison, both for cities which are already engaged in C2C and for others interested in entering this area of activity for the first time. The intention is to furnish a framework for such users to assess their needs against the background of others' documented experience, and assist them to identify and compare possible support mechanisms to which they could turn. And finally, for the United Nations Agencies and the other international and national organisations involved in providing support to C2C programmes, the report should offer a frame of reference enabling them to identify complementarities, overlaps or gaps in provision, and to focus upon new policy development or organisational needs. This in turn should help donors to target their funding in this area more strategically.

## **2.2 The Organising Framework of the Report**

As already indicated, there is a very wide range of activities which can be called city-to-city cooperation (or "decentralised cooperation"). All share a commitment to working directly between and among cities, on the fundamental premise that cities have a great deal to learn from and teach to each other and are best placed to articulate their needs. City-to-city activities differ, however, in many important ways, reflecting the tremendous diversity of interests, purposes, institutions, resources, and situations.

One purpose of this report is to provide the basis for an inventory of C2C practices and activities, to illustrate the breadth and depth of ways in which cities work with one another. But a simple listing, however extensive, would be of limited use and would not really extend our understanding of city-to-city cooperation. It is therefore a fundamental purpose of the report to take a further step and provide an *analytical framework* which will allow the full range of C2C practices and support systems to be charted in a more meaningful and comparable way. This framework provides a rationale for organising and sharing information, in a manner which facilitates a constructive exchange of experience as well as mutual learning among cities, their groupings and associations, and their partners.

The starting point of this analytical framework is a basic distinction between the *practices of C2C*, on the one hand, and *C2C support activities* on the other. For clarity of understanding, we should look first and separately at the actual city practices in C2C - the things which cities do in cooperation with one another. This, after all, is the core of our concern: to comprehend the full richness and diversity of activities which cities undertake in direct cooperation with other cities. We can then look separately at the various associations, programmes, and institutions which support the cities in undertaking their C2C activities.

**Looking at City Practices in C2C.** Actual city practices in C2C differ in many ways, and the task of an analytical framework is to establish sensible categories which will help clarify those differences. As shown in the left-hand column of Table 2.2 below, five categories (or sets of characteristics) are proposed:

- geographic orientation
- linking modality
- primary cooperating parties
- focus in the urban management process
- thematic focus.

Any particular example of C2C practice can then be looked at in relation to the descriptions indicated under each main set of characteristics. For instance, a general city twinning activity might be characterised as being: North-South (under category one - geographic orientation), one-on-one (category two - linking modality), between local authorities (category three - primary cooperating parties), having no particular focus in category four (urban management process), but having a social/cultural emphasis (category five, thematic focus). Any particular example of C2C practice may be described in relation to all or only some

of the particular categories shown, and it could also be associated with one or more of the detailed descriptions within a particular category. The framework is thus not designed to be restrictive, but instead intended to help bring out the variety and detail of each particular C2C activity by characterising it in ways which facilitate systematic comparison.

**Looking at Support for C2C.** Similarly, support for C2C includes a wide range of different activities, approaches and organisations, and the analytical framework can help these to be seen more clearly. Three main categories (or sets of characteristics) for comparing support options for C2C are proposed, as seen in the right-hand column in Table 2.2:

- facilitating structures
- funding and resources
- support modality.

Each particular example of support for C2C can then be described in respect to the various characteristics listed under each main category heading. For illustration, the Urban Environment Forum (UEF) supported by UNCHS (Habitat) might be described as follows: under “facilitating structures” (category one), the UEF involves both individual city authorities and bilateral and multilateral aid organisations as well as an international agency; with respect to the “funding and resources” category, the UEF relies primarily on own budgets of the participants; and under the third category (“support modality”), the UEF’s activities primarily involve networking support and exchange of information and technical knowledge.

When C2C practices and support to C2C are analysed in this way, in terms of systematic sets of characteristics, there are several important benefits. First, it becomes possible to see more clearly the defining characteristics of individual practices (or support activities) - information which is typically lost when only generalised (and non-systematic) descriptions are given. Second, being based on a common set of descriptive categories, the information generated is more readily comparable across otherwise highly divergent cases. Third, and following from the first two, this approach demonstrates the richness and wide range of different C2C practices which might otherwise appear quite similar.

Fourth, and perhaps most important, providing this structured disaggregation of information helps to identify the complementarities, overlaps and gaps in C2C practices and support, which can be quite important information both for cities and for support organisations. Cities benefit from knowing more about the range of different activities which C2C practice can assist, knowing what different approaches exist, and seeing what other cities have done. Support structures benefit from knowing more clearly what cities actually need and want to have in the way of C2C activities and support, and from knowing as well what other organisations or groups are doing in relation to C2C support. Development agencies and donors benefit from being able to see more clearly how the needs of cities and the activities of supporting organisations can best fit with their own capabilities and mandate, and to discern what are the best opportunities for partnership - the scope for complementary action and for reinforcing other development-related interventions.

By following this approach, the report will be able to display the vast range of city-to-city cooperation options while also illustrating the variety of complementary international support available from the UN, associations of cities and local authorities, NGOs, bilateral agencies, etc. Moreover, doing this in a systematic way will provide the basis for identifying important patterns of practice and support and for drawing useful insights and lessons of experience – potentially a valuable source of information for all those engaged in C2C.

It must be reiterated that, at this stage, the analytical framework used here is not definitive; it is instead a “work in progress” which shows the advantages of a systematic approach but which can, and should, be further modified and refined as its use progresses. For instance, different main categories might be

proposed, and more or different descriptions might be listed under each main category. These, however, will essentially be secondary adjustments to the basic approach of using a systematic analytical framework: this approach remains fundamental to the joint UNCHS (Habitat)/WACLAC-UTO effort to maximise the potential of C2C approaches, and hence it is applied systematically in this report. In Chapter 3, City Practices in C2C are presented and described in accordance with the categories and characteristics of the analytical framework (Table 2.2). In Chapter 4, Support for C2C is presented and described in a similar way.

**Table 2.2: Analytical Framework**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>City Practices in C2C</b>  <b>City practices can be compared in relation to the following characteristics:</b></p> <p><b>(1) Geographic orientation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North-North</li> <li>• West-East</li> <li>• North-South</li> <li>• South-South</li> <li>• global</li> </ul> <p><b>(2) Linking modality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one</li> <li>• Groups</li> <li>• Networking</li> </ul> <p><b>(3) Primary cooperating parties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authority services</li> <li>• NGOs and CBOs</li> <li>• Private sector</li> <li>• Academia</li> <li>• National associations of local authorities</li> <li>• Others</li> </ul> <p><b>(4) Focus in the urban management process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical information and expertise</li> <li>• Strategy formulation / decision-making</li> <li>• Strategy implementation</li> <li>• Management of change / institutional reform</li> </ul> <p><b>(5) Thematic focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal finance</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Infrastructure and services</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Housing / shelter</li> <li>• Employment / economic development</li> <li>• Security / disaster management</li> <li>• Social / cultural</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Support for C2C</b>  <b>Support options can be compared in relation to the following characteristics:</b></p> <p><b>(A) Facilitating structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual city authorities</li> <li>• Associations of local authorities</li> <li>• National governments</li> <li>• Bilateral and multilateral aid organisations</li> <li>• Professional associations</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul> <p><b>(B) Funding and resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own budgets</li> <li>• Local partner contributions</li> <li>• Development project / programme funds</li> <li>• Grants and loans</li> <li>• Self-funding activities</li> <li>• Foundations, trust funds</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul> <p><b>(C) Support modality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of best practices, match-making</li> <li>• Exchange of specialised staff</li> <li>• Exchange of information, technical knowledge</li> <li>• Networking support</li> <li>• Demonstration, replication, guidelines</li> <li>• Specialised expertise and tools</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
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# City Practices in City-to-City Cooperation

3

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## 3.1 Framework for Comparing City Practices

The last chapter has outlined the developments leading to the present wide range of activities involved in C2C practices but has said little of the content of the activities involved. That is the purpose of the present chapter. No report on this subject can aspire to present a fully comprehensive picture of what is going on, because there is no central database, let alone coordination, of activities. The purpose of the analytical framework outlined above is, however, to enable C2C practices to be classified within the broad categories outlined in the left-hand column above. The following sections outline the range of practices by category and provide some illustrative examples of the wide scope of initiatives underway.

It is likely that this first version of the report will prove to be less than complete in its analysis, and that some additional categories may in fact need to be incorporated in the reporting structure to do justice to the whole spread of C2C practices. However, the authors' hope is that this framework will provide a useful starting point, and that the practitioners of C2C will provide further inputs of material and illustrative cases that will fit within the overall structure that we have traced.

The purpose of the illustrative boxes contained in this part of the report is to provide concrete examples of the type of practice being described in the main text, referenced to the specific category of practice under discussion. Not all of the boxes are filled at this time since material is still being assembled and a wider range of experience could usefully be tapped.

## 3.2 Comparing City Practices by Geographic Orientation

Historically, the first C2C links in the modern age were within Europe, ie. **North-North**, and this still represents by far the largest category in numerical terms - although the least relevant to the principal purpose of this report. These links number many thousands of traditional twinnings, which are based upon more or less equal resources and the principle of reciprocity, and whose primary focus is upon exchanges of people and groups of all kinds. The European Commission reported the existence in 1995 of some 7,000 twinning relationships among the local authorities of its 15 member states alone, many of these being among quite small municipalities and communities, and the twinnings in the other European countries would add significantly to this number.

While the focus of most North-North links may have been social/cultural, rooted in the aim of bringing people together across national boundaries to reinforce peace - and, in the case of many of the European links, explicitly or implicitly to help build a united Europe - many of the links between larger towns also include technical/professional cooperation activities and, increasingly, economic development components. A number thus have a focus in the urban management process and/or a thematic focus on one or more local government responsibilities. European Union funding programmes in the areas of regional development, transport, environment, energy etc have also led to the formation or reinforcement of many North-North links and networks. In some cases, project proposals have come forward to EU programmes from cities already linked; in others EU research programmes on a wide range of thematic areas involving cities' functions have attracted new involvement by cities in C2C practices.

***Box 3.2.1 – Birmingham and its European partners build upon EU opportunities***

**C2C Context:** Birmingham (UK) has several well-established twinings with other large European cities and participates actively in European networking through Eurocities and other channels. A mutually agreed action programme is drawn up for each link and regularly reviewed. This incorporates joint projects for which EU support can be obtained. **Outcomes / Lessons:** Joint work is carried out with partner cities across the whole range of the city's responsibilities. Examples of recent projects, most benefiting from EU support, include: a joint project with Lyon on the illumination of public buildings; a joint scheme with Leipzig on canal regeneration; a network of chief officers from all European partner cities to share experience of benchmarking schemes in city services; the 'Headlamp' scheme whereby every newly appointed headteacher in the city's schools is sent on attachment to a corresponding school in a twin town to widen their experience of the education system and develop potential new links; and participation in a major exhibition in Milan of works by young artists from partner cities. **Issues Arising:** Cooperation with the partner cities across a wide range of areas facilitates mutual learning and contributes to tangible improvements in the delivery of services. Through their action programmes the partners set mutually agreed goals in the context of their enduring relationships and define means of achieving them through the proactive use of EU support opportunities.

*Source: Birmingham City Council*

The next category to develop, albeit much more slowly, was **North-South** links, most often initiated from the North, frequently on the basis of previous colonial links. A significant number of new links also arose from associations with solidarity movements, the most striking case being that of Nicaragua, where coordination mechanisms were set up among the European cities involved in cooperation programmes. North-South links were sometimes, but not always by any means, seen primarily as constituting a humanitarian aid / charity rather than a technical cooperation / partnership relationship. However, some which started in that way have developed a broader base through subsequent activities and through the realisation that the link truly brings two-way benefits. There are examples of North-South links between cities in nearly all the European countries and countries of the South, and there are many North-South links involving partners in North America, Japan and Australia.

***Box 3.2.2: North-South partnership for improving public services and strengthening democratic governance: Europe and Nicaragua***

**C2C Context:** In 1985 a group of European cities (Bielefeld, Germany; Delft, Netherlands; Essen, Germany; Evry, France; San Felix de Llobregat, Spain; and Sheffield, UK) together with a German NGO formed a partnership with the Nicaraguan city of Esteli, to assist with water, sanitation and ecological projects. **Outcomes/Lessons:** Building on 10 years' experience of cooperation, the partners shifted the emphasis to institutional reform, specifically to strengthen democratic governance during the transition period of change to a multi-party system. This attracted support from the European Commission and led to a series of successful local activities in Esteli aimed at citizens and newly elected mayors and councillors, and including technical support on aspects such as finance and administration, planning, international relations. One result was strengthening of the links between Esteli and the six European cities. **Issues Arising:** This was one of the first North-South C2C partnerships to focus on institutional reform and governance issues. Its concern for operational aspects of local democracy is probably the strongest feature, giving the partnership a concrete purpose and leading to visible results. This case is notable also for involving six cities from the North working together with one city from the South.

*adapted from "Europe - Central America Decentralised Cooperation Programme", UTO, 2000*

The adoption at the Rio Earth Summit of the concept of Local Agenda 21 programmes, which has been actively followed up both by the appropriate UN Agencies and by the international local government associations, might have been expected to lead to an upsurge in new North-South C2C links, but a relatively small number of the LA21 programmes adopted by cities comprise this element. Thus for example the Sustainable Development Charters Programme funded by the Netherlands Government focused upon the establishment by partner cities in North and South of new binding agreements, but even here a significant proportion of the cities that participated in this programme were building upon already existing twinning links.

**Box 3.2.3 – How Gulu’s, Uganda link with Lancashire, UK developed out of Local Agenda 21**

**C2C Context:** In the course of an advisory visit by the UK Association of County Councils aimed at developing a technical cooperation programme with its Ugandan counterpart association, an initial contact with Gulu was made by Lancashire’s County Planning Officer. A joint project for developing a Local Agenda 21 programme was then drawn up with Gulu and implemented with co-funding from the European Union. **Outcomes/Lessons:** After the funded project was completed, Lancashire decided to reduce its direct commitment and transfer responsibility for the link with Gulu to a non-profit company, which is continuing to exchange Local Agenda 21 information and seeking to develop broader exchanges and community projects with Gulu. The county council is represented on the board of the company but has no continuing financial commitment to the link. Measures to strengthen the capacity of the link and expand community engagement are actively underway at both ends following the cessation of guerilla activities in Northern Uganda. **Issues Arising:** Relatively few European Local Agenda 21 programmes have comprised an explicit North-South element. This one came about through the enthusiasm of an individual officer taking part in an advisory mission for his association and has survived subsequent organisational challenges on both sides. The link is now institutionalised at community level.

*Source: Lancashire County Council, Global-to-Local*

The development of **West-East** links started well before the end of the cold war, being promoted notably through the Embassies of the USSR. They were controversial, and were supported in particular by those who saw them as a means of establishing contacts with partners in cities at a human level, without thereby giving any signal of approval for the nature of the central regime. This area has expanded greatly since 1990, assisted by a number of national and European programmes to promote democratic practice and facilitate technical cooperation. Many of the links established in the earlier times have endured through the major political changes, and have been at the forefront of those taking part in the new cooperation programmes. An interesting extra dimension here has been the promotion of **North-South-East** links, a concept promoted by the Netherlands Government in particular and given an extra push through a Trilateral Municipal Cooperation Programme projected jointly with IULA as a follow-up to the IULA World Congress on Municipal International Cooperation held in The Hague in 1995.

**Box 3.2.4 – The North-East-West-South (NEWS) programme**

**C2C Context:** A three-year trial programme of cooperation between partners in the Netherlands, the Czech and Slovak Republics, and Nicaragua was initiated in 1992 with a view to integrating experience of democratisation and developing relevant cooperation projects in the East and the South. Within this programme, administered by the Union of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG), ‘triads’ of municipalities were established in cooperation between the local authority associations concerned through which the Czech and Slovak municipalities transferred municipal skills and assistance to development projects in Nicaragua, with financing from the Netherlands partner. The Czech and Slovak cities then used their experience of these projects to raise awareness in their communities of the need for development cooperation with the South. **Outcomes/Lessons:** Eight ‘triads’ were established, some based on existing city links, and 20 concrete development projects were implemented in Nicaragua. Significant awareness-raising activities concerning development needs and approaches took place in the Czech and Slovak Republics, including the production of films for national television (co-financed by a Dutch NGO). The programme was continued for a second phase and expanded to other countries in Central Europe and the South. **Issues Arising:** National platforms of the cities involved in each country needed to be formed to ensure continuity and overcome problems arising from changes in personnel and priorities. The complexity of the linkages required special organisational effort, and communication in a common language was not always easy. However the global perspective achieved through the collaboration between three cultures and the correspondingly wide span of experience brought to bear on problems reaped considerable rewards.

*Source: Adapted from IULA Publication ‘Trilateral Municipal Cooperation’, 1996*

In recent years interest has grown considerably in the concept of **South-South** links, although the number of such links, especially on a one-to-one basis, is still limited. In theory, such links between cities at a broadly equivalent level of development could operate on the basis of similar concepts of reciprocity and exchanges of people and experience as apply in North-North links. Their potential relevance to the building of continental and inter-continental solidarity, as happened in Europe, may also be recognised. Limitations of resources and problems of distance represent special challenges for such links, particularly among the Least Developed Countries.

**Box 3.2.5 – An active South-South link**

In addition, in some countries of the South, the development of international links is not as yet recognised as a legitimate city function in local government legislation. A number of South-South links are, however, facilitated by networks and associations to which cities in the South adhere. In addition, increasing numbers of cities of the South are associating themselves in programmes of exchange of experience and good practice sponsored by international agencies, and these experiences may provide the impetus for the development of direct bilateral and multilateral links.

Within some countries of the South the opportunities for interchange between city practitioners is itself a challenge. National associations of local authorities and professional bodies are weak, and resources for such networking are severely restricted, particularly in the Least Developed Countries. The South-South cooperation taking place within particular countries as a spin-off of international cooperation programmes is indeed a dimension worthy of note. Relevant examples are the replication, through a UNCHS (Habitat) project within nine cities of Tanzania of aspects of the Sustainable Dar es Salaam programme and the similar replication process for sustainable cities in the Philippines facilitated by the Philippines League of Cities.

**Box 3.2.6 – City-to-City replication of the Sustainable Dar es Salaam Project (Tanzania)**

**C2C Context:** The Government of Tanzania initiated a programme to extend to nine other cities the successful experience of the Sustainable Dar es Salaam Project (SDP), which had been implemented as part of the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP) of UNCHS. National replication was seen as a city-to-city exercise, using staff with experience in the SDP to help support similar SCP activities in the other cities. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The replication programme has progressed steadily with most of the nine cities having also attracted additional international support. The ability of the replication cities to learn from the prior experience of Dar es Salaam was seen as a considerable advantage, especially in the early stages. **Issues Arising:** The manpower resources available from Dar es Salaam were insufficient for the task of supporting nine cities and had to be supplemented with a national-level support unit. The building up of direct links among the nine cities helped as well, by providing a direct peer-to-peer C2C network for information exchange and comparison of experience.

*Source: UNCHS, DANIDA, Government of Tanzania*

### **3.3 Comparing City Practices by Linking Modality**

The majority of C2C links comprise a **one-on-one** partnership between just two communities. Many communities in the North have more than one twinning link, and some have as many as 20 twinning partners - though a proportion of these may be of historical importance but involve little concrete activity - as well as participating in ad hoc technical cooperation links with other cities or networks. Where communities have two or three twinings in other countries, these are most often discrete links with their own history, personalities and characteristics, with each one steered by its own twinning association. In a significant minority of cases, however, bilateral links have been widened to take in another of the partner community's own links, leading to tri- or multi-lateral links, a proportion of which also include partners in the East or South.

Not all one-on-one C2C links take the form of conventional twinnings or enduring partnership links, however. The recent emergence of funding schemes aimed at promoting technical cooperation between municipalities - such as the UK-funded Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme, the EU's TACIS City Twinning Scheme and Asia-Urbs programme, or the Netherlands Government Inter-Municipal Development Cooperation programme - has led to new C2C practices which involve mutual commitment only for the duration of the externally supported project. Recent experience with support programmes of this kind for the East and South has indicated that those cities with existing twinning links are the best placed to present effective project proposals within a short timescale, because they already know and are used to working with their partners. However the existence of these schemes has led to the formation of many entirely new C2C relationships, and it will be interesting to assess in time how many of these become formalised into enduring links.

**Box 3.3.1 – City and association links fostered through the Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme**

**C2C Context:** The Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme, funded by the UK Government, supports joint technical cooperation projects between cities and associations in two or more Commonwealth countries. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The collaboration which the Scheme has enabled between the Local Government and Shires Association of New South Wales (Australia) and the Papua New Guinea Urban Local Level Government Association has in turn led to the strengthening of three existing city-to-city links between the two countries (Mount Hagen/Orange, Townsville/Port Moresby, and Cairns/Lae) through individual cooperation projects. **Issues Arising:** C2C links can receive new impetus when they are enabled to operate within a broader support framework. Local government associations are important intermediaries in the development of C2C but often require capacity-building measures of their own in order to fulfil their members' expectations.

*Source: Commonwealth Local Government Forum*

Another recent phenomenon is the development of a wide variety of technical cooperation networks between **groups of cities**. These tend to focus upon discrete topics of importance to the participating cities' services, and they are set up either in response to an initiative or a call for tenders by a funding agency or else with a view to bringing project proposals forward to such an agency. Programmes addressing sectoral issues such as waste disposal or traffic management, as well as broader programmes to promote sustainable development or participatory democracy, have provided the basis for such ongoing cooperation networks to develop. Yet another form of network is that constituted in accordance with political party affiliation. A number of such networks have emerged in Europe, but their potential for facilitating sustainable C2C practice is necessarily limited by changes in political party fortunes.

**Box 3.3.2 – Medcities: A geographically specific North-South network of cities focusing on environmental strategies and management**

**C2C context:** Medcities was formed in 1991 to provide a structure for exchanges of experience and know-how on urban environment issues among the cities bordering all sides of the Mediterranean. It was initiated by the Mediterranean Action Programme (METAP) in collaboration with UTO. It currently comprises 27 cities and its membership basis has recently been widened to allow for two cities per country. Medcities' aims are to strengthen the notion of interdependence and joint responsibility regarding environmental protection policies in the Mediterranean area; to strengthen the role and the capacity (institutional, financial and technical) of the cities in implementing local environmental policies; to promote awareness and involvement among users and the local population; and to facilitate direct cooperation policies by implementing partnerships among Mediterranean cities within the framework of national strategies. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The Medcities approach aims to integrate economic, social and environmental considerations. Recent work has included environmental audits, creation of a public information service on the environment for citizens and SMEs, promotion of Local Sustainable Development/Local Agenda 21, and participation in the Mediterranean Waste Management Programme (EU/UNDP). A model Urban Observatory in Tripoli, Lebanon and an associated Air Quality Monitoring Service were recently set up with assistance from network partners and external donors. **Issues Arising:** Medcities' core funding is provided by the European Union and by METAP, and individual projects are supported by national governments or multilateral donors. However, member cities are having to review the means of raising new revenues through charges or public/private partnerships to compensate for reductions in core funding.

*Source: UTO paper, 2001 and Medcities newsletter Aug 2000)*

A different and wider category of **network** is constituted by sectoral membership organisations or associations. These may focus upon particular city characteristics – examples are METROPOLIS, which brings together the biggest metropolitan authorities world-wide, or more specialised groupings of port cities, historic towns etc – or upon a shared culture – such as the Association of Francophone Mayors, the Union of Lusophone Capital Cities, or the Organisation of Islamic Capitals and Cities. Some of these organisations undertake substantial and ongoing programmes of joint work, while others comprise such a diversity of members that the shared interest other than, for example, language, is more limited. Where these groupings comprise a lead country in the North, they are sometimes seen as integral parts of that country's development cooperation mechanisms leading to significant technical cooperation programmes, and they all have the potential to generate interest in the development of new direct South-South links.

**Box 3.3.3 – METROPOLIS: a decentralised urban management network among the world's major metropolitan areas**

**C2C Context:** The cities and metropolitan authorities covering the world's largest urban centres share particular problems, which were highlighted in the *Habitat Agenda*, and need to work together with the best available expertise to address these. **Outcomes/Lessons:** Some 70 cities and metropolitan regions belong to METROPOLIS, together with some 50 associate members including companies, research institutions and consultancies serving the world's biggest agglomerations. Through four decentralised commissions run by member cities on such subjects as transportation, social policy, spatial planning, culture etc, METROPOLIS organises exchanges of experience and develops policies which it promotes through the international community. It also operates a Technical Assistance Service and an International Training Institute for the Management of Major Metropolises. **Issues Arising:** The exchange of experience facilitated by the network is highly valued but the work programme depends heavily upon the input of a small number of institutions. External support would help to maximise the potential of the network in furthering effective South-South cooperation on major urban issues.

*Source: METROPOLIS 99 Barcelona Report*

It is relevant also to mention here a further rapidly expanding and effective form of international cooperation among cities which does not rely upon direct C2C links. This is the **exchange of 'good' or 'best practices'**, which is promoted by a number of international agencies and associations, in many cases supported by an award scheme. Cities submit their experience to these schemes individually, but the processes of dissemination may well bring them into direct contact with other cities which wish to learn from the experience documented and adapt it to their own needs. These ad hoc contacts, which are being increasingly facilitated by the international agencies, may or may not lead to ongoing exchanges and the creation of formal links. But the experience of international exposure which such schemes provide undoubtedly encourages cities to go forward in looking beyond their own boundaries for solutions to their problems (see box 3.2.7 below).

### **3.4 Comparing City Practices by Participating Partners**

The diversity of inter-connections between cities are very wide in this era of globalisation, ranging from enduring city twinnings through technical cooperation partnerships to individual ad hoc contacts. A distinguishing feature is whether each city's own **local government body** is formally committed to the link. Such a commitment need not necessarily be to a long-term or indefinite relationship, it can simply be related to the undertaking of a specific time-limited programme of cooperation. On the other hand, the performance of an ad hoc consultancy assignment by an individual councillor or member of staff on behalf of an external agency could not normally be regarded as falling within the general concept of C2C practice, although such assignments may also be potential building blocks of C2C.

Equally, there may be international partnership linkages maintained by local institutions or organisations in a city which involve no formal engagement by the city authorities yet which address city development issues and thus form part of the wider C2C canvas. Many such linkages do, however, operate under the

aeGIS of official city links and indeed serve to strengthen and add substance to the links. Relatively few C2C relationships or exchange of experience schemes, indeed, engage only the city authorities themselves. In most cases there is an involvement by stakeholders who have an interest in the cooperation underway. Such stakeholders may in particular include private sector companies and chambers of commerce, which are increasingly recognising the extent of their dependence upon the fortunes of their city and the potential which their resources offer for helping to tackle urban problems and to provide a secure environment for the development of their businesses.

Voluntary associations and community-based organisations, universities and colleges, trade unions etc are also increasingly involved in city policy-making and service provision. Just as governance at the local level is increasingly recognised as needing to engage stakeholders, surely one of the key messages of the *Habitat Agenda* and Local Agenda 21, so C2C links also increasingly involve the relevant partners in the community.

**NGOs and CBOs** are important components of many C2C practices in both North and South. A large number of projects with a thematic focus upon local service delivery rely upon NGO/CBO partners for their implementation. NGOs are often key partners of the city authorities in assessing local communities' needs and communicating these to officials, and their own international links and networks can be brought into play in advancing C2C initiatives. The 'joint action' approach to development projects promoted by Towns and Development focuses upon bringing together the respective strengths of cities and NGOs in combined action programmes. Development NGOs in the North have an important further role to play in facilitating C2C, in that they can integrate these activities in their own urban programmes. They can also be sources of valuable practical advice to local authorities interested in participating in C2C initiatives who may have limited knowledge or understanding about the circumstances of a prospective partner community and the country concerned.

The extent to which local **private sector** interests become engaged in C2C activities also varies greatly according to the nature of the subject matter of the cooperation. The promotion of dialogue with the private sector about their contribution to achieving sustainable development is a key aspect of modern, broad-based participatory management. The shared interest of business in the good functioning of cities and quality of life issues is increasingly recognised. The capacity of private sector concerns to contribute resources of money and skilled staff to projects, often upon a more dynamic and flexible basis than the public authorities, makes them particularly attractive partners in C2C activities. While they can never lose sight of their primary duties to their shareholders and customers, their enlightened self-interest may in particular circumstances lead them to play a major part in providing investment in infrastructure or public services which is beyond the capacity of the city on its own.

***Box 3.4.1 – Example of a substantial private sector involvement in C2C***

The involvement of **academic and training institutions** in C2C practices is a particularly promising development, although one which must depend a great deal for its quality upon the particular strengths and focus of the institutions concerned. Thus, for example, the City of Birmingham, UK has taken steps to associate the University of Birmingham, which is the major national centre for local government studies and research and operates a large training facility for city personnel from developing countries, as an active partner in many of the its extensive international partnership activities. Similarly, the City of Bremen, Germany has drawn in the University of Bremen as an active partner with corresponding institutions in the city's international links. The University also played a major part in drawing up the concept for the 2000/01 Bremen Initiative and international award scheme to promote best practice in the operation of city partnerships with the private sector.

**Box 3.4.2 – Stakeholder involvement – a key element in the vitality of C2C links**

**C2C Context:** Bremen, Germany and Pune, India started their collaboration over a project in 1976 to support handicapped children in a Pune hospital. In 1980 NGOs were established in each city, known as City Solidarity Forums, to develop links across a wide range of community organisations and institutions. **Outcomes/Lessons:** Official agreements were signed between the local authorities, universities and chambers of commerce, leading to widespread exchanges, training programmes, business links, joint projects, cultural events, and education programmes. This in turn led to joint work on Local Agenda 21, and the formation of a round table of administrators, scientists, industry representatives and NGOs in Pune which spearheaded a wide range of concrete projects for environmental improvements, waste management, air pollution control, solar energy implementation, and reforestation. **Issues Arising:** The link has been mutually beneficial, and in the context of Local Agenda 21 new structures have been developed through which much broader sections of society in both cities have participated in the process of sustainable development. NGOs have facilitated private sector cooperation, and the Pune link provided the incentive for the University of Bremen to join the Local Agenda 21 process.

*Source: Adapted from 'Partnerships for Sustainable Development' – Asia, 1999*

**National associations of local authorities** are less often primary cooperating parties in the operation C2C practices, while undoubtedly having a key role in helping to initiate them and ensuring the most favourable support framework. Given that their role is primarily a national one, involving policy advocacy with the national government and the provision of general services to the membership as a whole, national associations are not usually in a position to participate closely in the projects of individual member cities. However, the strengthening of national associations is itself seen as making an important potential contribution to development, and this has been the focus of a major programme administered by IULA as a follow-up to the 1995 Hague Congress on Municipal International Cooperation. There are, moreover, many examples of national associations taking initiatives to create opportunities for C2C to take place and, in some cases, administering a support scheme. In the South, the capacity of national associations to help initiate and operate C2C projects is often more limited despite the potential which they may see in this area. However, there are examples of national associations building upon members' C2C initiatives to extend their implementation more widely within the country (see Box 4.2.10).

It is also important to note, as a general principle applicable here, that the sustainability of partnership projects is conditioned by the capacity of each local authority to design and maintain them effectively, through engaging the active participation of a wide range of stakeholders.

### **3.5 Comparing City Practices by Focus in the Urban Management Process**

Many C2C activities, especially those which have evolved in connection with a development initiative, often become focused on particular aspects of the urban management process. This is a logical response to the difficulties faced by cities, particularly but not only in lower income countries, in addressing the increasingly severe urban development problems they face. There has also been a growing awareness that limited management capabilities, not lack of technology or capital, is generally the key constraint to achieving sustainable urban development, and that therefore changes in approach, policy and governance are required. This has focused attention on the process of managing urban development and growth. In this context, cities have become much more interested in learning from one another, in seeking out ways in which other cities have overcome these constraints and worked out better structures and methodologies for urban management.

Among the many ways to characterise the process of urban management, the following four aspects have been identified by a number of global city networks concerned with sharing information and experience in upgrading their urban development planning and management processes:

- technical information and expertise
- strategy formulation and decision-making

- strategy implementation
- management of change and institutional reforms.

Access to and effective utilisation of **technical information and expertise**, applied to a wide range of thematic tasks, is a key aspect of modern urban management. This is an area of activity, moreover, for which direct city-to-city cooperation is well suited. The provision of technical expertise to a partner city by temporarily seconding specialist staff has been a feature of many North-South C2C projects, for example. There is also a growing trend toward direct exchange of staff among cities, as a device for mutual learning by sharing information and experience between the professional staff of both partner cities (“peer-to-peer”); this is seen also in some South-South C2C activities. In addition, there are numerous international programmes which have sought to increase the flow of technical information to cities; some of these (such as the UK Know-How Fund’s Local Authority Technical Links Scheme) aim to deliver technical expertise specifically on a city-to-city basis. Most, however, function primarily on the basis of assistance from the programme to the city, although in a few cases this has stimulated the formation of C2C networks through which technical information is spread directly from city to city.

**Box 3.5.1 - Bangkok, Thailand, transfers techniques from Yokohama, Japan’s flood control system**

**C2C Context:** Rapid development of open land combined with its low elevation result in Bangkok suffering from frequent flooding. Officials of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration learned that innovative flood control methods had been developed by Yokohama in the face of similar problems and sought their advice. **Outcomes /Lessons:** Experts from the Sewage Works Bureau of Yokohama visited Bangkok to work with local officials on implementation of the concept of ‘retention ponds’ for rainwater as now widely used in Japan. Following further joint work, the Bangkok engineers are now so confident of the validity of the approach that they are developing an application handbook and computer program with Chulalongkorn University to assist in countrywide application of the technique. **Issues Arising:** A relatively simple technique already widely used in Japan but unknown in Thailand was transferred effectively through direct peer-to-peer exchanges. Widespread replication of the technique acquired through a C2C initiative is now being facilitated.

*Source: Citynet Guidelines for Transferring Effective Practices, 1998*

**Box 3.5.2 - Peer-to-peer exchanges give Poznan, Poland, new capacity**

**C2C Context:** Having developed new links with partners in the West in the context of the democratisation process, Polish cities were keen to learn the techniques necessary to upgrade their services to meet rising public expectations. The UK Government’s Know-How Fund Local Authority Technical Links Scheme offered a mechanism to facilitate such transfers. **Outcomes /Lessons:** As existing twinning partners, Nottinghamshire County Council and the City of Poznan were among the first applicants to this experimental scheme of support for short-term exchange projects. The introduction of new waste management methods and recycling techniques, the restructuring of the city’s transport service, the development of the airport for tourist traffic, the training of dairy and meat specialists, and the development of a business school were among the projects undertaken. **Issues Arising:** The Technical Links Scheme was launched in 1992 and ended in 2001. After an initial period it was operated by the Local Government International Bureau on a delegated basis. 153 projects were carried out, all submitted jointly by a UK local authority and a partner city in one of the target countries. Assessments of the effectiveness of the projects were mostly favourable, but it was not thought appropriate to make a scheme of this kind permanent as it cuts across established development cooperation approaches. Where the partner cities did not have an enduring link the sustainability of the projects was less readily assured.

*Source: Local Government International Bureau, Nottinghamshire County Council*

The process of **strategy formulation** - identifying and assessing options, analysing benefits and costs, balancing resource requirements - is an aspect of modern urban management which is quite different from traditional forms of city administration. It involves not only technical processes of analysis and assessment, but also participatory activities to ensure the support of, and information from, a full range of local stakeholders. Within the framework of a wide variety of international programmes (such as the Sustainable Cities Programme, the Urban Management Programme, Localising Agenda 21, the Cities Alliance, etc.)

new approaches are being worked out through direct action in a variety of cities. So far, most of these activities have been implemented through programme-to-city relationships, but there is considerable scope for direct city-to-city forms of co-operation; indeed, this has already begun to develop on an ad hoc basis, as in the cooperation on sustainable urban development between Nakuru and Leuven.

***Box 3.5.3 - Direct city-to-city partnership in formulating sustainability strategy develops out of the international Localising Agenda 21 initiative (Nakuru, Kenya and Leuven, Belgium)***

**C2C Context:** Through the Localising Agenda 21 programme of UNCHS, technical expertise from Leuven participated in the early stages of work in Nakuru. From this start, there developed a longer-term “pact” between the two cities, to formalise their cooperation in formulating sustainable development strategies for Nakuru. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The direct C2C links between the two cities have developed steadily, not only in relation to sustainable development strategies but even leading to wider forms of city-to-city cooperation, such as education, exchange of information, and cultural understanding. Creation of the direct C2C linkage was not an intended consequence of the original LA21 initiative but instead grew out of it, in a “natural” way. **Issues Arising:** The stimulus of an international initiative can boost the idea of C2C, but it requires a significant commitment by the two intending partners, particularly in the North city which needs to allocate financial and other resources. Also, in this particular case the introduction of Leuven was indirect and fortuitous, not part of the LA21 programme design; this suggests that a more deliberate or explicit city-connecting element could usefully be introduced into international development support programmes.

*Source: LA21 programme office, UNCHS; reports from Municipality of Leuven*

**Implementation of urban policies and strategies** is perhaps the most challenging aspect of managing cities today, and to be successful it requires a wider range of more complex activities than has traditionally been designed into local government systems. This involves use of the full range of instruments including regulatory approaches, strategic investments, economic incentive mechanisms, public information strategies etc. It also involves the development of action plans, synthesis of different implementation techniques and capabilities, mobilisation of resources, and the strengthening of operational management. There has been relatively little work specifically focused on this part of the urban management process, other than through the international programmes which deal with the process overall (such as the Sustainable Cities Programme). However, some C2C partnerships which focus on particular sectors have often had strong elements of focus on implementation and related operational aspects (see section 3.6 below).

***Box 3.5.4 - Kharkov, Ukraine formulates a public information strategy through the TACIS partnership with Lille, France***

**C2C Context:** This cooperation project supported by the EU’s TACIS City Twinning Scheme addressed ways of formulating a strategy for communicating official city information to the public, as a vital step in strengthening democracy and overcoming historic public suspicion of officialdom in the former capital and second city of the Ukraine. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The work plan started with a review of the city administration’s activities and means of communicating them to their target audiences. Trainees from Kharkov studied the various techniques and media used for city communications and observed these in operation in a variety of contexts. The second stage focussed upon the day-to-day responsibilities of the Kharkov staff by providing them with extensive contacts with people in the public and private sectors in Lille aimed at demonstrating how positive communications networks operate in practice. **Issues Arising:** It became clear that the transition to open public information is necessarily a step-by-step process in a country where the population is still highly suspicious of official information. Thus the project had to be kept concrete and realistic, and not too ambitious. There were some tensions between the partner cities at both political and administrative levels over the selection of trainees, the implementation and monitoring of the programme, and the consequential restructuring required in the services.

*Source: adapted from the TACIS Compendium of Projects, European Commission 1998*

Management of the process of change and institutional reform, in relation to the urban management process, encompasses many different features of a city’s organisational structures, procedures, relations to civil society, etc. - features which are central to a set of issues that are sometimes referred to collectively as “governance”. This area of concern has been a focus for certain C2C programmes, especially North-South partnerships and

city-focused interventions by international programmes. Institutional aspects, particularly in relation to democratisation and transition to a market economy, have been an important part of both C2C and international programme activities in relation to the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

**Box 3.5.5 - Institutional reform in the education service through the partnership between Hillerød, Denmark and Darkhan-Uul, Mongolia**

**C2C Context:** Hillerød is a town of 35,000 population not far from Copenhagen with a mixed occupational structure. Darkhan-Uul with 86,600 population is the second largest city of Mongolia, with a rich mineral resources, a growing SME sector, wide educational facilities, but also many traditional farms. The cooperation project supported by the EU's TACIS City Twinning Scheme was aimed at capacity-building and organisational structure development in the education service, in order to improve education provision in reinforcement of the local and regional development of democracy and the market economy. Key features were human capacity-building, institutional linkages and personal relations as a basis for project implementation.

**Outcomes/Lessons:** The project focused upon the development of Mongolian expertise through intensive study visits to Hillerød institutions. Four Mongolian educationalists spent three months in Denmark, acquiring the expertise to select priority areas for service development and to act as trainers on their return. Subsequent seminars and workshops in Mongolia on standards and indicators, together with the production of handbooks, have helped to spread a confident new vision for the education service. **Issues Arising:** The critical issues were seen as: partnership based upon open and flexible attitudes, ownership of the project by those responsible for implementation, sustainability through this high degree of local commitment, and monitoring and evaluation of performance at every stage.

*Source: adapted from the TACIS Compendium of Projects, European Commission 1998*

### 3.6 Comparing City Practices by Thematic Focus

Clearly, the scope of substantive topics addressed through C2C practices can span the whole range of local government activity - as well as encompass areas which are largely outside the responsibility of local government. As a result, one may find C2C undertakings focused on one or more of a great variety of different sectoral themes: municipal finance, environment, water supply, solid waste management, transport, housing, public health, economic development, education, etc. These might be oriented about specific projects (e.g., building a new sewage treatment works) or involved more with long-term collaboration (upgrading of local tax collection and financial accounting). In either case, a sectoral focus is relatively easier to operate for C2C cooperation simply because both partners tend to be organised in broadly similar ways and focused on generally comparable municipal tasks.

Traditional official twinning links often evolve into a focus on particular local government departments or functions, depending upon the needs and capabilities of the partner cities. **Municipal finance**, for example, attracts considerable attention in North-South and in West-East relationships. In the field of **urban renewal**, the extensive recent experience of a North partner (Rotterdam) underpinned a highly-focused cooperation project with the South twin (Shanghai) which included training and technical expertise as well as a field demonstration and which also involved the Dutch international development agency.

**Box 3.6.1 - Financial management improvements in Chegutu, Zimbabwe through partnership with Canada**

**C2C Context:** An established link with Hinton, Canada enabled Chegutu to draw upon Canadian municipal expertise in financial management. **Outcomes/Lessons:** Chegutu's finance and treasury departments were computerised, such improvements enabling the town's revenue base to be improved substantially to a tax collection rate of 75%. Once the town's accounts could be audited on a regular and timely basis, it qualified to receive World Bank funds under the national infrastructure programme. **Issues Arising:** This is a classic instance of peer-to-peer exchange in a mainstream local government function of major importance to the efficient functioning of a city. Schemes for replicating such exchanges within and between countries of the South would make tangible improvements to local government capacity and sustainability.

*Source: UNDP Report 'The Challenges of Linking', 2000*

**Box 3.6.2 - C2C provides the basis for a housing renewal project (Rotterdam and Shanghai)**

**C2C Context:** Rotterdam, the Netherlands and Shanghai, China have a long-standing twinning relationship. In the late 1980s Rotterdam was considered a leading city in the field of urban housing renewal, a task Shanghai was just beginning to address. Jointly with experts from the Institute of Housing Studies (IHS) (supported by the Netherlands Government), the municipality of Rotterdam undertook a series of training events, held in both cities, and followed up with a demonstration project of renewal in a block of old housing in Shanghai. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The exchange of experience through professional visits and training in both cities provided a good foundation for the following demonstration project, which itself succeeded in physically renovating an old housing block thus showing an alternative approach and illustrating new technologies for renovation. **Issues Arising:** This cooperation showed a successful way of combining a direct city-to-city collaboration with support from a national government development programme. The lack of follow-up to the demonstration project, however, limited the impact of the undertaking.

*Source: experts from IHS*

In relation to basic municipal services, **solid waste management** has attracted considerable attention among C2C projects. For example, Haarlem (Netherlands) supported Mutare (Zimbabwe) in developing strategies and plans for solid waste management (domestic, industrial, hazardous) and in subsequent implementation. **Transport** was the focus of cooperation between Kirklees (UK) and Kampala (Uganda), in which personnel exchange and related technical support led to a road and traffic plan which was accepted by the World Bank for implementation.

**Box 3.6.3 = North-South cooperation upgrades waste management in Mutare, Zimbabwe**

**C2C Context:** Within the context of a broadly-based twinning relationship formed in 1992, Haarlem, Netherlands and Mutare have worked together under the banner of Local Agenda 21 on improvements to several municipal services including housing, social services, education, and waste management. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The programme included the preparation of a master plan for handling domestic refuse and industrial and hazardous waste, and to control dumping and leakage. The plan is being implemented progressively in conjunction with an NGO. The link has provided assistance with vehicles and training, and has also led to the production of national guidelines on the management of hazardous waste. Funding has come from Haarlem's own budget, community sources, and technical assistance funds administered by the Association of Netherlands Municipalities. **Issues Arising:** The priorities in service improvements have been determined by Mutare but input from Haarlem has served as a catalyst in achieving better living conditions. Reciprocity is a basic principle in the relationship, expressed through dialogue and input of expertise on both sides rather than at a material level. NGO participation is fundamental at both ends of the link.

*Source: UNDP Report 'The Challenge of Linking', 2000*

**Health** is another municipal sector on which C2C cooperation has been focused, for instance with training of health workers, operational support, and construction of new facilities. An interesting example in the sector of **security** has stemmed from the UNCHS Safer Cities Programme, through which a number of cities in South Africa were stimulated to set up their own network for direct city-to-city exchange of experience. In more recent years the **urban environment** has become a more frequent focus of activity, primarily through international programmes which work with cities (for example the Sustainable Cities Programme of UNCHS/UNEP), but also through networks which have developed out of such work, for instance the Urban Environment Forum.

**Box 3.6.4 – Bamako, Mali expands access to primary healthcare through French connection**

**C2C Context:** Bamako has been twinned with Angers, France since 1974, and a wide range of municipal services have benefited from inputs of funding and expertise, with the participation of many community groups on both sides. **Outcomes/Lessons:** A major area of cooperation has been in the development of primary healthcare services through the provision of several community health centres, upgrading of hospital facilities, training of doctors and nurses, and provision of medical supplies. **Issues Arising:** As well as contributing significantly to quality of life in Bamako, the flow of technical assistance from Angers institutions (including significant private sector engagement), supported by French Government aid, has had the effect of mobilising public solidarity. The wide span of activities within the link, including major cultural components, has helped to promote multicultural understanding and to combat racism in Angers.

Source: UNDP Report 'The Challenge of Linking', 2000

**Box 3.6.5 – City cooperation on urban security in South Africa through the Safer Cities Programme**

**C2C Context:** The Safer Cities Programme of UNCHS (Habitat) works with cities to help develop strategies and plans for urban security based on local partnerships. The beginning stages involve the use of experts (often provided by cities in the North) to assist local analysis of the situation as well as training, before moving on to a local participatory formulation of strategies. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The approach has worked well in many cities, particularly in Africa and Latin America. A notable success has been the exchange of expertise among cities, sharing of experiences, and mutual learning - much of which involves directly initiated city-to-city linkages with the Programme acting as facilitator. **Issues Arising:** The foundations laid through the Programme's work with individual cities have enabled the formation of local and regional networks of cities, to encourage greater C2C collaboration. Cities within South Africa have made the greatest progress, responding to an awareness of shared problems and establishing their own network. The regional networks have not made similar progress.

Source: the Safer Cities Programme unit, UNCHS (Habitat)

**Box 3.6.6 - C2C on urban environment facilitated through global networking**

**C2C Context:** The Urban Environment Forum (UEF) is a global network of cities and urban development practitioners (including partners from international support programmes), defined by its members' shared concerns for urban environmental management. It evolved from a global project of UNCHS (Habitat), focused on the environmental planning and management (EPM) process, which held regional meetings and assembled case study material. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The UEF came into existence because of the benefits seen by cities (and by international support programmes) in having a forum of exchange focused specifically on the key issues of urban environmental management. Global, regional and thematic meetings have brought cities together around specific environmental planning topics and have successfully involved those international support programmes which are concerned with the same issues. City experiences have also been documented and published in the widely-circulated EPM Source Book. **Issues Arising:** It is clear that the UEF met a real need, by providing a global forum devoted specifically to the issue of urban environmental management, since a focused network is more effective than one with generalised aims.

Source: the Urban Environment Unit, UNCHS

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# Organising Support for City-to-City Cooperation

## 4

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### 4.1 Framework for Characterising Support Systems

An increasingly wide range of support mechanisms has developed over the years to support the process of C2C and to broaden its scope and increase its effectiveness. In the early period support came through international organisations of local governments (the earliest being the International Union of Local Authorities - IULA) and later, especially in Europe, with strong support from national governments and also facilitated through national associations of cities. (see Annex 1). As C2C activities spread beyond Europe and other developed countries, however, the supporting frameworks become progressively more diverse. Both national (bilateral) and international (multi-lateral) development assistance agencies and programmes became important support mechanisms, particularly as C2C activities moved more into North-South, North-East, and South-South forms of cooperation. Just as the range of C2C practices (described in Chapter 3) has become ever more varied, so too has the range of C2C support options.

In order to make clearer not only the diversity of support options but also their relative strengths and foci of activity, it is important (as discussed in chapter 2.2) that support options be compared in terms of a systematic set of characteristics. For the purposes of this report, three main categories of characteristic are used to compare support options:

- facilitating structures (organisations, institutions, groups)
- funding and resources (types and sources of funding and resource mobilisation)
- support modality (nature of support activity).

### 4.2 C2C Support Options Compared by Organisational Structure

Perhaps the most straightforward way of characterising and comparing support options is in terms of the organisational structure and function: what is the nature of the institution or group which is providing support to C2C? The most fundamental of these, of course, is the **individual local government** itself: cities themselves provide the essential support without which C2C cannot function - administration, staff time, other in-kind resources, and perhaps finance as well - and above all, cities provide the official framework within which C2C activities can function. In some C2C activities, especially traditional town twinning, there is sometimes no organisation involved other than the two local governments themselves.

In most countries of the North, and increasingly elsewhere, there are **national associations of local governments** which link cities within that country. These generally originated to promote the interests of the country's local authorities, for example by lobbying at national government level or by taking part in collective negotiations. Many of them, however, have gradually expanded their areas of activity and have become significantly involved in support to C2C activities, not only within the country but across national boundaries, acting as a clearing-house and intermediary between member cities and cities in other countries. Some have set up modest support funds to support new C2C links, although more commonly they will negotiate with national governments for such financial support. The Dutch local authority association (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten - VNG) for example is very active in supporting North-South C2C, and has been particularly successful in integrating member cities in the Dutch development assistance programme. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has similar achievements, both in promoting C2C and in working with the national development cooperation agency.

***Box 4.2.1 - A national municipal international cooperation programme administered by a national association of local authorities***

**C2C Context:** The Netherlands Inter-Municipal Development Cooperation Programme was launched in 1994 with the twin aims of strengthening local governance through peer-to-peer cooperation and of fostering public support for international cooperation in the Netherlands. The programme, jointly designed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) and operated by the latter, permits Dutch municipalities to respond to requests from overseas cities for technical and managerial assistance. **Outcomes/Lessons:** During the first three years more than 110 Dutch municipalities and their partners took part in the programme, 400 advisory missions took place, and 500 municipal officers from the South held internships in the Netherlands. The evaluation of the first phase underlined the effectiveness of peer group exchanges in furthering institutional development. The creation of new consultation and decision-making bodies between cities and citizens' organisations in housing projects, municipal strengthening through innovative environmental and housing measures, improved communication between councillors and citizens and better knowledge of democratic procedures, and the development of an enabling role for cities towards the private and voluntary sectors, were mentioned as positive benefits by cities from the South. **Issues Arising:** The programme is ongoing and a large proportion of the Dutch municipalities are engaged in it, but to date few other national governments have developed programmes of this kind. The contribution of the programme to establishing longer-term C2C linkages is worthy of examination.

*Source: Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG)*

***Box 4.2.2 - on the activities of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in facilitating C2C***

In addition, there have arisen a variety of **international associations of local government**, the fundamental purpose of which is to promote the interests of local governments around the world; they are the primary mechanisms through which cities can make their voices heard on the world stage. These comprise the **global associations**, notably IULA and UTO, as well as active **regional associations** of local governments in Africa, Asia and the Arab states. These various associations, several of which are grouped within the WACLAC coordination structure, have been increasingly instrumental in promoting and facilitating city-to-city cooperation as well as representing the views of their members towards the international support agencies.

***Box 4.2.3 – A sanitation project in Peru facilitated by an international association***

**C2C Context:** Four small towns in France (Eybens, Gières, Meylan, and Poissat ) have since 1998 been supporting the reconstruction of water and sewerage services in the poorer parts of the district of Independencia in Lima, Peru (population c 250,000), where some 20% of the population are not connected to these services. The purposes of the cooperation are to improve basic services in the poorest parts of Independencia, to help strengthen local government capacity in the Lima metropolis, and to develop exchanges of experience between French and Peruvian municipalities. **Outcomes / Lessons:** The French municipalities, with French Government funding, provide the materials and the work is carried out by local people under the supervision of the water company, with some construction work and technical assistance made available by the municipality of Independencia. UTO administers the funds and coordinates the work via its representative in Peru. Since it started the project has provided fresh water and sewage connections to some 5,000 dwellings. The project has led the local population to recognise the value of local self-government and the need for its institutional strengthening. **Issues Arising:** It has not proved possible to extend the cooperation into other fields owing to political and institutional constraints. However, a new awareness has been generated of the value of cleansing public areas, to which the municipality has responded with new services. A need is seen to create a wider exchange of experience network in North Lima and to link up with other support programmes.

*Source: UTO report*

***Box 4.2.4 - example of a regional association supporting C2C***

In a variety of ways, **national governments** can provide important support to C2C, both within the country and internationally. Many national governments have promoted international C2C links by direct support to C2C activities, for instance through national programmes which may provide a match-making service and/or financial support (especially for North-South linkages). This is often (but not exclusively) the case when the target partner cities are in countries with linguistic and/or former colonial ties. In Europe, the effort to build goodwill among former warring nations led the national governments of France and Germany to support town twinning as a way of bringing communities together, and the Franco-German Youth Office still supports exchanges among twinned cities. In recent years a new support approach has emerged, as national governments in the North have begun to give cities and/or their associations a role to play in the implementation of national development policies and programmes (as described in the following paragraph). In the South there have also been similar developments; in Tanzania, a national government programme to replicate in nine cities the experience of the Sustainable Dar es Salaam project has provided explicit and direct support for C2C among the designated cities and between them and Dar es Salaam.

***Box 4.2.5 - example of French national government support to C2C work in francophone Africa***

The role of **international development organisations** (both bilateral and multilateral) has been rapidly increasing in importance for C2C. Broadly speaking, the most important shift in attitude has been the growing willingness and desire of development agencies and programmes to work in and with cities. This shift can be seen in the changing policies and practices of **national (bilateral) development agencies** in several countries, such as the Netherlands, Canada, the UK and others. For example, Dutch development assistance includes programmes which are administered by the VNG (the Dutch local authority association). (See box 4.2.1 above). Equally, British development assistance has responded to proposals put forward by cities and their associations by providing limited support to C2C via a Local Authority Technical Links scheme within its much broader Know-how Fund to assist democratic development in Central and Eastern Europe (see box 3.5.2 above) and, more recently, via the Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme administered by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (which is an international network headquartered in the UK).

The potential of **international (multilateral) development agencies** for support to C2C has slowly begun to be realised, as they have changed their attitudes and practices in relation to cities, especially in response to the urban components of Agenda 21 (since Rio 1992) and to the *Habitat Agenda* (since Istanbul 1996). The basic shift has been their growing willingness to work directly with cities, with local governments and their local partners, rather than working exclusively through national government agencies. In the past decade a wide range of programmes have been put in place by different UN agencies, the World Bank, the regional development banks, the EU, and others - all aimed at directly addressing urban issues and working with cities. Most of these, however, remain initiatives in which the linkage is simply between the international programme and the city, usually a one-way link not involving any other cities. For example, the Urban Management Programme (UNCHS/UNDP/World Bank), the Healthy Cities Programme (WHO), the Cities Alliance (UNCHS/World Bank), the Safer Cities Programme (UNCHS), and the Urban Governance Initiative (UNDP) have developed strong and diverse links through working with cities but are only beginning to evolve programme elements or activities which are specifically focused on city-to-city cooperation.

In a few cases, however, direct support to C2C activity has evolved out of the original programme-to-city activities. For example, in the case of the Sustainable Cities Programme (UNCHS/UNEP), support to global and regional meetings and exchanges of experience became an important element, latterly becoming integrated with the Urban Environment Forum, a global network to promote and support direct city-to-city exchange which developed out of related work in UNCHS (Habitat). Similarly, some support for direct C2C has evolved out of the Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme of UNCHS (Habitat), as an extension of its basic focus on networking for information exchange. Even more rarely, some international development programmes have begun to involve national associations of local governments as direct partners, specifically to promote C2C linkages, as happened with an SCP-initiated project in the Philippines.

**Box 4.2.6 - Global C2C network (UEF) incorporating international programmes**

**C2C Context:** The Urban Environment Forum (UEF) is a network of cities and international support programmes focused on urban environmental management (see box 3.6.7). The UEF exists solely as a network, to bring its members together to share experience and learn together how best to approach common urban environmental problems. Although it originated in an international project (the Sustainable Cities programme of UNCHS), the UEF was established as an independent network, with UNCHS providing only the secretariat function. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The UEF has sponsored a series of global, regional and thematic meetings and workshops, which have been quite successful both for experience exchange and for raising awareness of common tasks and of the potential for C2C collaboration. It has been particularly successful in bringing international support programmes together with the cities for whom their support is aimed. Experiences have been documented in a series of publications (the EPM Source Book and meeting reports) and a web-site has been established. **Issues Arising:** The UEF shows that C2C practice through this type of networking can be quite successful. It also shows how international programme initiatives can lead to wider C2C activities which move beyond the original programme-led undertaking. The challenge, however, is to maintain momentum and to assure continuity between network events.

Source: *the Urban Environment Unit, UNCHS*

**Box 4.2.7 - C2C activities springing from the Best Practices Programme**

**C2C Context:** The Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme (coordinated by UNCHS) is an initiative to collect, document and disseminate information about “good practice” in urban development. It is integrated with the Dubai Awards for International Best Practices, the submissions to which are added to the Best Practices database. A dedicated web-site is the primary mechanism through which this information is compiled and accessed. **Outcomes/Lessons:** As the database has grown, and become gradually more systematised, its usefulness for cities has increased, and this has led to a steady growth in C2C linkages being created. These linkages, however, are not planned or organised, but are self-created by cities in response to particular needs and desires, e.g. a city seeking information about best practices in relation to a particular topic can be matched with relevant city examples. **Issues Arising:** As the original data comprises self-written submissions to the Dubai Awards, there is a considerable variety in form and content even though the reporting framework is pre-defined, and this can hinder the “match-making” function. However, the structure and organisation of the web-site is progressively being up-graded to facilitate this process of seeking and finding the appropriate C2C links.

Source: *Best Practices unit, UNCHS*

***Box 4.2.8 - Involvement of a local government association in an international urban development project (the Local-EPM Project, the Philippines)***

**C2C Context:** The Local-EPM Project in the Philippines is an initiative of the global Sustainable Cities Programme (of UNCHS and UNEP). National replication was built into the original project design, with the three initial project cities intended to become regional focal points from which the experience would be extended to other cities. The League of Cities of the Philippines was brought in as a partner in the project, specifically with the responsibility for facilitating the sharing of experience and supporting the replication of the process to other cities. **Outcomes/Lessons:** The League has utilised its existing system of “sharing workshops” as a way of sharing information and extending awareness and understanding, and the Project thereby gained from being connected to this well-established C2C mechanism. Although the national government is the leading partner, it is clear that practical cooperation and collaboration are most effectively organised in a decentralised way, which is the strength of the League and its direct C2C role. **Issues Arising:** The League can only devote limited resources of its own to the substantial task of supporting replication. Training in the project concepts and methods, as well as financial and technical assistance to the League, will be required.

*Source: the SCP team, UNCHS, and project consultants*

An interestingly different approach to support for C2C has come through **professional associations** concerned with cities - associations of municipal managers, planners, city engineers, etc. Such associations are usually national, sometimes regional, in scope and are primarily concerned with promoting and developing the shared professional interests of their members. However, some of them have been moving toward a more explicit outreach activity, in which the professional association, either alone or in partnership with national associations or national development agencies, provides direct technical support to city-to-city initiatives. In addition, some combined trade and professional associations are also discovering the potential of utilising the expertise of their members to support C2C activities.

***Box 4.2.9. - an example involving the International City and County Management Association (ICMA) with a USAID programme***

***Box 4.2.10 - Moving professional association activities towards support for direct C2C (USA)***

**C2C Context:** The Air and Waste Management Association (AWMA) is a professional and trade body in the USA which brings together cities, private companies, and professionals who are concerned with air quality and waste management. They hold very large annual meetings, which are both trade fairs and technical exchange events and function as large and diverse C2C meetings. Recently, the AWMA established an International Urban Environmental Infrastructure Forum, specifically to bring in cities from the South, as well as international support programmes, for direct C2C technical exchange. **Outcomes/Lessons:** Two international meetings have been held (the second in association with UNEP and under the umbrella of the UEF) and both succeeded in extensive C2C information exchange on the topic of urban air quality management. The participation of cities from the USA, particularly those with no previous history of international involvement, was a key feature, as was that of various international development programmes. **Issues Arising:** As the North-South C2C linkages from the international forum were a new undertaking for the AWMA, there was not yet a clear mechanism for follow-up, and this has somewhat reduced the longer-term impact; steps are underway to provide a more durable mechanism for ensuring continuity.

*Source: UEF Salt Lake City 2000 - Meeting Report (UNCHS & UNEP)*

Finally, although it has not traditionally been a strong focus of their activity, international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have started to become involved in C2C, usually as an extension of their normal work with cities. There are examples of this involving the NGO working with or on behalf of a development agency.

***Box 4.2.11 - A development NGO facilitates a C2C link***

### 4.3 C2C Support Options Compared by Funding and Resources

Financial resources for supporting C2C can be drawn from a wide variety of sources, individually or in combination. This support can take many different forms: financial contributions toward an agreed project or programme of joint work, longer-term financial support for the overhead costs of C2C links, underwriting exchanges of expertise and information, travel and communication costs etc. But however they may be used, the important question is how are the funds raised and from what sources - what are the different ways in which financial resources can be mobilised and applied to the support of city-to-city cooperation? Because finance comes from a wide variety of sources, it is useful to examine the different options for financial support for C2C.

In many, perhaps most, cases finance is derived not from one single source but from several sources in combination, often with different financial resources being applied to support different aspects of the cooperation activity. For instance, for its partnership with Bamako (Mali), the city of Angers (France) raises substantial funds from each of four different public and private sources. [see Box 3.6.4]

The most important option for financial support for C2C is to rely on the budgets of the participating cities - **“own-budget” funding**. There is some variation, reflecting the legal framework regulating local government expenditure, but in general all of the cities involved in city-to-city cooperation provide significant financial support out of their own budgets. This may be through the funding of in-kind services (such as paying the salaries of city employees working on C2C activities) or it may be through special budget lines specifically for supporting C2C (for instance to pay for travel and communication costs). Cities in richer countries typically provide a proportion of the necessary finance out of their own budgets - although this has become harder through the combined pressures of public sector budget cuts and cost-centre accounting - but obviously in lower-income countries this is often not possible.

Another important option for raising finance for C2C is by mobilising contributions from a variety of **local partners** in one (or both) of the cities. There is a wide range of potential local partners: private business and industry, charitable foundations and trusts, community fund-raising, local institutions etc. For example, the small city of Boston in the UK raises the bulk of the funds for its cooperation with Jalchatra (Bangladesh) through voluntary fundraising efforts in the local community.

#### **Box 4.3.1 - C2C supported by community fund-raising**

**C2C Context:** Boston, UK has been linked with Jalchatra, Bangladesh since 1975 and raises about \$40,000 per year through a variety of promotional activities involving many partners for the purpose of supporting projects focusing on health, education, income generation, and community participation. **Outcomes/Lessons:** Extensive improvements have been made to healthcare and educational facilities and water supply in Jalchatra, and various measures implemented to expand rice and textile production. Literacy levels and incomes have improved substantially, and infant mortality has reduced dramatically. The Boston community feels close to the Bangladeshi partner and contributes generously to upholding the link. **Issues Arising:** Through creative use of revolving funds the Jalchatra community has contributed to income-generating projects, and it provides labour and materials for the health and education facilities. The strong community base of the link at each end and the shared decision-making ensure effective and sustainable use of limited funds which can make a major impact on quality of life.

*Source: UNDP Report ‘The Challenge of Linking’, 2000*

Especially in relation to North-South, South-South, and West-East linkages, the role of **development programme or project funds** is extremely important. Indeed, this is a crucial support option for the majority of such C2C activities. The growing willingness of development agencies to work with and through cities has meant that the financial resources of their programme and project budgets can increasingly be tapped to provide support for C2C. Very few, if any, of these international programmes are focused primarily on C2C, but many have components or parts of their budgets which can be directed

toward support for such cooperation. Thus, several of the examples mentioned earlier illustrate the ways in which cities (or their associations) can access funds from international development programmes or projects. For example, it was programme funds for the national SCP programme in Tanzania which funded the exchanges among the nine cities (see Box 3.2.6 above) and it was the UK Department for International Development's funds which paid for the C2C activities supported by the Know-How Fund (see Box 4.2.8 above).

**Self-funding activities** are another option for financing C2C activities, although this generally applies only to relatively narrowly defined investment project activities, such as two cities cooperating to establish a solid waste management service paid for by the users. Such self-financing activities are expected to generate a stream of revenue which then pays for the original capital investments. This also promotes sustainability of the improvement and makes it easier to link it to an international development initiative.

Another option for financial support is to secure backing from a **charitable foundation or trust fund**. Usually located in a country of the North, few such trusts or foundations will have C2C as an explicit purpose, but it is possible nonetheless to use available funding to support specific aspects of C2C. For example, there are a number of foundations, such as the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (UK) and the political foundations in Germany which have provided finance for travel and expenses for staff and representatives from the partner city.

***Box 4.3.2 - C2C supported by a foundation***

#### **4.4 C2C Support Options Compared by Support Modality**

Initially, the modalities of C2C support were fairly limited, being concerned primarily with goodwill exchanges and similar social-cultural relationships, often based on shared language, language learning or historical background and typically with an objective to raise mutual awareness and understanding. A primary modality for this cultural linking activity was personal exchange, with groups and individuals (youth, sports teams, musical groups etc) visiting each others' cities. Exhibits and information displays, films, media coverage were often included as well. In more recent times, the modalities of C2C support have become very much more diverse, the established approaches still being used but with many new and different approaches being introduced, particularly in relation to C2C associated with development cooperation work (as described extensively above).

One support modality of rapidly growing importance is **documentation of good practice** and related match-making activities. By documenting good practice examples of how cities have undertaken some particular tasks, it is possible to make that information known to a great many other cities - a much wider dissemination of information than could ever be possible through one-on-one exchanges. The leading example of these activities is the Best Practices Programme of UNCHS-Habitat (which is in turn supported by the city of Dubai through its Awards for International Best Practices). (see Box 4.2.7) The steadily expanding base of information gathered through the Best Practices process, available on a web-site and on CD-ROM, provides an extensive array of useful knowledge about how cities have addressed their problems of sustainable urban development, thus facilitating C2C match-making between cities desiring information about specific solutions and cities with the relevant experience.

One of the more commonly used modalities, for many different kinds of C2C activity, is the **exchange of specialised staff**. In this modality, the technical and professional staff responsible for certain activities in one city physically go to the partner city and work with their counterparts there. Most frequently, this involves staff from cities in the North going to their partner cities in the South to directly assist with

particular work. In many cases, there is two-way exchange, which allows both parties to learn from the different approaches of the other. Part of the Rotterdam-Shanghai cooperation, for example, involved bringing officials from China to the Netherlands to study urban renewal in Rotterdam (see box 3.6.2 above), and the TACIS City Twinning Scheme projects frequently included staff attachments to the Northern partner city. Such exchanges and attachments do not have to be restricted to local government staff, of course; there have been exchanges involving doctors and public health workers, academics and researchers, private transport operators, etc.

There is also a related modality of support, the **exchange of information and technical knowledge**. This can take place in a number of different ways, for example through the transfer of technical documentation and related professional papers, especially where these relate to specific items of technology with which one of the partner cities is unfamiliar or untrained. It may take the form of providing specialist scientific skills and information, for instance one city providing an analysis of particular water or soil samples which the partner city is not equipped to handle, or assisting with the advanced analysis of statistical information. As can be seen, this modality of support is often connected with the exchange of staff.

Closely connected to, and indeed over-lapping with, several of the other modalities of support is the rapidly growing emphasis on **networking** - the establishing of flexible systems of communication and exchange among large groups of cities. This fits the new paradigm of development cooperation and its fundamental idea that cities and urban practitioners can most effectively learn from one another, pooling information and exchanging experience through peer group exchanges. A network is the most basic way in which this can be done, by providing a structured way of presenting and accessing information which is relevant and useful to the cities at various levels from the mayors downwards. In this way, networks provide a facilitating structure for C2C, supporting cities in making direct contact with one another, in pairs or in groups, on practice issues of mutual concern.

Networks often have their origins in specific programmes or initiatives, and they represent a creative way of moving beyond the time and resource and geographic limitations of programmes. For example, the Urban Environment Forum (UEF) grew out a project for developing an urban environmental planning and management process and benefited from a close early association with the global Sustainable Cities Programme (see box 3.6.6). A wide variety of networks have been developed in recent years, with varying topical or geographical focus and often as a spin-off of an international funding programme, all having the clear potential to support a wide range of city-to-city interactions.

**Box 4.4.1 - CityNet as a South-South technical cooperation network facilitating transfers of effective practices**

**C2C Context:** CityNet was established with the assistance of the United Nations Regional organisation ESCAP as a technical cooperation network of cities, NGOs and private sector partners concerned with urban services in the Asia Pacific area. Headquartered in Yokohama, Japan it runs a wide range of conferences and seminars on urban management issues, facilitates transfers of experience and learning, and participates actively in regional and international cooperation fora. **Outcomes/Lessons:** Through a partnership with the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and the UNCHS (Habitat) Best Practices programme, CityNet has produced detailed practical Guidelines for transferring effective practices on a South-South basis. It provides for the exchange of expertise and experience among stakeholders on a continuing basis, identifying information and resources needs and ways of meeting them. **Issues Arising:** The potential for building up effective C2C practices in this large and rapidly urbanising region is vast, and the challenge is to reach out to ever increasing numbers of cities, using to the full the benefits of new communications technologies. The relative advantages of pursuing C2C within and between regions should also be explored more fully.

*Source: CityNet 'Guidelines for Transferring Effective Practices', 1998*

Derived very much from the experience of work in the international development field, there is a support modality which can be called demonstration-replication, together with the creation and dissemination of

guidelines and working tools or toolkits. The underlying idea is that a development programme will undertake a specific city project as a “demonstration” - to show how this new approach can work out in practice. But to have a significant impact, it must be implemented much more widely than an individual programme can possibly manage. Therefore, the emphasis is on replicating the demonstration – reproducing and adapting it in numerous other cities, based on the activities and lessons of the original demonstration. There may not yet be any examples of this modality which are strictly C2C in orientation; but the case of the Sustainable Cities Programme in Tanzania, in which the national replication was intended specifically to build upon the experience of the demonstration city (Dar es Salaam) and indeed to use staff from that city to support the replication cities. (see box 3.2.6)

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# Issues Arising from Experience

## 5

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### 5.1 Key Factors and Trends in C2C Practice

The analysis of C2C practices set out in Chapter 3 illustrates the array of linkages existing within and between the continents, the wide diversity of activities and approaches, the extensive range of partners involved or potentially involved, and the breadth of the thematic content being addressed. It is hoped that this comparison of practices on the basis of a systematic analytical framework will provide cities and local authority associations with an accessible guide to the C2C scene. Such a guide, when further developed with full illustrative material, should both help new entrants to find their way more easily and enable those already involved to identify and explore relevant new areas.

It is a fact of life that both the existing C2C links and the various support schemes have grown up incrementally over the years, each according to their own rationales. Inevitably, the present spread of C2C relationships is complex, with some overlaps but also many gaps. This complexity has meant that the range of opportunities available to cities has often been difficult for them to assess without access to tailored advice and guidance.

Against this background, the analysis suggests that the following factors and trends in C2C practice can be noted in relation to the five categories used for the analysis:-

#### **General:**

1. Cities see tangible benefits for themselves and their citizens in engaging in international exchange. The development of C2C from the original culturally-based town twinning concepts to the present much broader range of motivations could not have occurred without the keen interest and active commitment of elected members and officials.

#### **Geographic Orientation:**

2. C2C has spread widely within the North, where cities generally have clear legal powers to commit resources to it and the political motivation to build up cooperation.

3. Development policies of national governments and international agencies are increasingly recognising the impact of urbanisation trends and giving more emphasis to addressing urban issues. They see cities as essential partners in delivering effective cooperation in both East and South, and cities are eager to respond.
4. South-South C2C is difficult to initiate and sustain at city level, owing to limitations of resources and/or legal powers, and is most often advanced through involvement in support programmes. South-South C2C within countries can also be facilitated in this way and is needed in view of the limited capacity of local authority associations and professional networks to provide for such interchange.
5. North-South C2C practices are beneficial to both partners. The Northern partners gain new ways of looking at issues and resources which can widen their horizons and they often become advocates for the cause of development in their own communities and countries.
6. South-North C2C is a largely untapped concept but has significant potential in facilitating sustainable development.

**Linking Modality:**

7. Networks of cities having shared characteristics or pursuing issues of common concern provide valuable opportunities for C2C to develop incrementally.
8. There appears to be greater emphasis upon technical and professional exchanges than upon exchanges between political leaders, yet effective local leadership would appear to be a key component of successful decentralisation processes.
9. Peer-to-peer exchanges offer particularly effective means of transferring experience and expertise. The existence of long-term links between cities which have carried out a partnership project provide an in-built maintenance capacity for the project after the externally funded element has been completed.

**Primary Cooperating Parties:**

10. Stakeholders in the private sector, NGOs/CBOs and academia are playing an increasingly active part in C2C practices. Their commitment is essential to the ongoing sustainability of projects.
11. Cities may need to take care not to multiply their international commitments beyond a manageable level. Partnerships require consistent and reliable inputs from both parties.

**Focus in the Urban Management Process:**

12. Cities need to have constitutional stability and some core financial and human resources capacity in order to be able to make best use of C2C opportunities.
13. Cities are best able to engage in C2C initiatives where they have the ability to apply resources of their own and/or those generated within the local community to this purpose.

## 5.2 Key Features and Trends in C2C Support

Through its systematic comparison of C2C support options, Chapter 4 has shown how wide is the range of support which can be given to city-to-city partnerships. Indeed, even with the limited examples so far available, Chapter 4 shows clearly the great diversity of different ways in which C2C can be supported. It also shows that this diversity is increasing, with newer forms of support for C2C steadily being developed and brought into play. Within this general context of diversity and increasing complexity, a number of general features and trends may be identified, grouped under the three main headings from Chapter 4.

### Facilitating Structures

1. National associations of local governments have long been active in supporting C2C partnerships within their own countries and, especially in Europe, in promoting C2C links with other countries. Increasingly, however, national associations (particularly in the North) have become involved in supporting C2C partnerships with cities in the South, often in association with development programmes or agencies. In addition, there is also a move toward involving national associations in the South as partners in development initiatives precisely because of their potential to facilitate C2C, although the institutional weaknesses of national associations in the South are recognised as a constraint that needs to be addressed. These trends seem likely to continue.
2. International associations of local governments (global or regional) have been supporting C2C partnerships for a long time, but their activities are expanding: on the one hand, they have joined together (through WACLAC) to provide a common front for political negotiations and lobbying, especially at global fora; on the other hand, they are beginning to work with UN and other agencies at the operational level, to combine their experience in C2C linkages with the new approaches to development cooperation increasingly being promoted. This focus on operational support needs further development, which can most usefully be done through the establishment of still closer partnership between the representative associations and with UNCHS (Habitat).
3. National governments have traditionally not been very active in promoting C2C, with the exception of some European governments supporting “good-will” twinning and/or promoting ties with former colonies. In recent times, however, some national governments (in the North) appear willing to expand this role. In the South, however, there has been relatively little interest in C2C on the part of national governments, and efforts should be made at this level to increase governments’ awareness and understanding of the potential of C2C.
4. Bi-lateral (national) development organisations are gradually becoming interesting in supporting C2C activities, particularly by showing an increasing willingness to involve their national associations of local governments directly as partners in particular development initiatives.
5. Multi-lateral (international) development organisations have over the past decade become more active in working directly with cities, but on the whole have not incorporated the potential of C2C linkages as an integral part of their work. Some programmes, however, particularly those of UNCHS (Habitat), have begun to incorporate explicit C2C linkages and partnerships into their development initiatives, and this new approach should be reinforced and extended.
6. Professional associations and NGOs are potentially significant sources of support for C2C and their expertise and networks need to be drawn into the process, even though they have not been particularly active in this field to date.

## **Funding and Resources**

7. Democratisation and decentralisation trends in many countries of the East and South, reinforced by the international community, make it necessary to expand capacity-building measures at the local level, and C2C offers a range of effective mechanisms.
8. Successful funding of C2C activities, especially where this involves more than traditional twinning, increasingly requires the pooling of financial resources from a variety of different support sources. The ability to assemble a “consortium” of funding sources in support of C2C is likely to be a critical skill for the future.
9. The most important sources of funds for C2C activities are the “own-budgets” of the participating cities. Local authority budgets are usually under pressure, however, and it is not easy to ensure an allocation of funds for this purpose. Nonetheless, for long-term sustainability of C2C partnerships, own-funding is critical. Even in low-income cities it is desirable to have visible counterpart contributions, however modest.
10. There is also a potentially important financial support role for business and industry, and other local institutions, community fund-raising, etc. These local partners are an under-utilised resource, yet in some cities their involvement has been very successful. In addition, it is sometimes possible to find charitable trusts or foundations which provide financial support for some aspects of C2C, for instance international travel and exchanges.
11. Probably the most important financial support option for promoting C2C in cities of the South is the utilisation of international development programme or project funds. Although so far seldom focused directly on C2C, such programmes or projects have begun to accept that C2C linkages can be an important element in successful implementation of development initiatives. As a result, many new approaches are being worked out, and there is little doubt that in future there will be ever more scope for international development funding for C2C activities.
12. Cities in some of the Least Developed Countries stand to gain substantial benefits from C2C but the constraints upon their administrative and managerial capacity and resources for effective absorption of support and implementation require special attention.

## **Support Modality**

13. The most familiar modality of C2C support is probably the sort of social / cultural / good-will activities which have developed extensively through city twinning and similar programmes. However, more diverse forms of support to C2C have been rapidly developing in recent years, particularly in the context of C2C and development cooperation, and these can be expected to continue growing in importance.
14. The exchange of specialised staff and of technical knowledge has been a notable form of C2C support in the past and remains so today; indeed, in the context of cities in the South, these exchanges (which can be two-way) are increasing in importance. They can provide highly focused support in response to very specific needs and are usually both successful and widely appreciated.
15. Systematic documentation of good practice in urban management and development is a relatively recent development but one which is growing rapidly in importance. It is a specialised form of information exchange which also includes some of the characteristics of a network.

16. Networking as a form of support to C2C has excellent potential for bringing together cities in ways which one-on-one cooperation cannot. With a properly organised network, cities can link with one another in various combinations, depending upon the topic of interest, and can join with as many other cities as have common interests to share. The linkages are thus not institutionalised; but they are valuable and useful nonetheless, precisely because they quickly respond to demand. It can be expected that networks will continue to grow in importance.

### **General - Convergence**

A final point is worth emphasising here. Looking over the different forms of support to C2C and the ways in which they have been evolving and changing, it is clear that the UN's new development cooperation paradigm (bottom-up partnerships based on information exchange and mutual learning and committed to developing ideas from practice) is very well-suited for close collaboration with cities and for active support to C2C. There is thus a strong convergence in thinking and practice which is bringing the UN, especially UNCHS (Habitat) as its lead agency on urban affairs, together with cities, particularly through the joint promotion of C2C approaches. Through this evolving partnership cities should become increasingly closely associated in the decision-making by international agencies, thus helping to ensure that support is more demand-led than supply-driven.

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# The Way Forward

## 6

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### 6.1 Laying the Foundations

The *convergence* of the new trends in development policies based upon decentralisation and partnership, the recognition of cities as key actors in local and national development, and the determination of cities to address their responsibilities effectively, brings the practice of city-to-city cooperation into the limelight as never before.

Six significant *events* have addressed C2C in the first half of 2001. Three of these events related directly to the Istanbul +5 review process. This process has focused international attention upon the need to press forward with the implementation of the *Habitat Agenda* and the ambitious commitments which it contains for efforts at all levels to underpin and facilitate decentralisation and partnership. Two of these meetings related primarily to the role of local authorities in this process and more generally to the development of their partnership with the United Nations. And one event addressed the particular needs and priorities of cities in the least developed countries (see box 6.1.1).

*This report*, prepared in support of these events, represents a first attempt to offer a structured analytical framework for assessing the present reality of C2C in terms of city practices and support options. It is based upon a wide-ranging but at this point still incomplete inventory of the diversity of activities as currently documented, and it is hoped that it will prove to be useful in informing the debates currently underway at international level. The report's aim is to inform city leaders, local authority associations, national governments and donors, representatives of UN partner agencies, NGOs, researchers, and all other interested parties of the state of the art of C2C and invite discussion on how best to develop the potentials of closer collaboration in this field.

The findings of this report were among the matters discussed at a workshop session on decentralised cooperation within the framework of the *IULA/UTO Unity Congress in Rio de Janeiro (May 2001)*. The representatives of local authorities from both South and North endorsed the approach of the report and the broad thrust of its findings. They welcomed the development of this analytical framework as a means of advancing cities' understanding of the various forms of C2C and devising positive ways of facilitating such cooperation. While emphasising the autonomous responsibility of cities to determine the methods and focus areas of cooperation which suit their individual circumstances, delegates noted the need for enhanced dialogue with the international institutions about optimising the effectiveness of support available from

them. Given that the primary aim of C2C is to build local government capacity, both in the cities themselves and also importantly in their national associations, this was seen as making a significant contribution to attaining international targets for poverty alleviation. However, support to C2C takes its place alongside the major bi- and multi-lateral assistance programmes and, in order for it to fulfil its potential, new financial instruments for urban development were seen as becoming an urgent necessity. Particular concerns highlighted at the workshop thus included the need to integrate institutional strengthening of local governments and national associations more fully in the various sectoral support programmes operated by international institutions and agencies; and the importance of associating the cities more closely through partnership approaches in the formulation and implementation of the evolving urban agendas of these institutions.

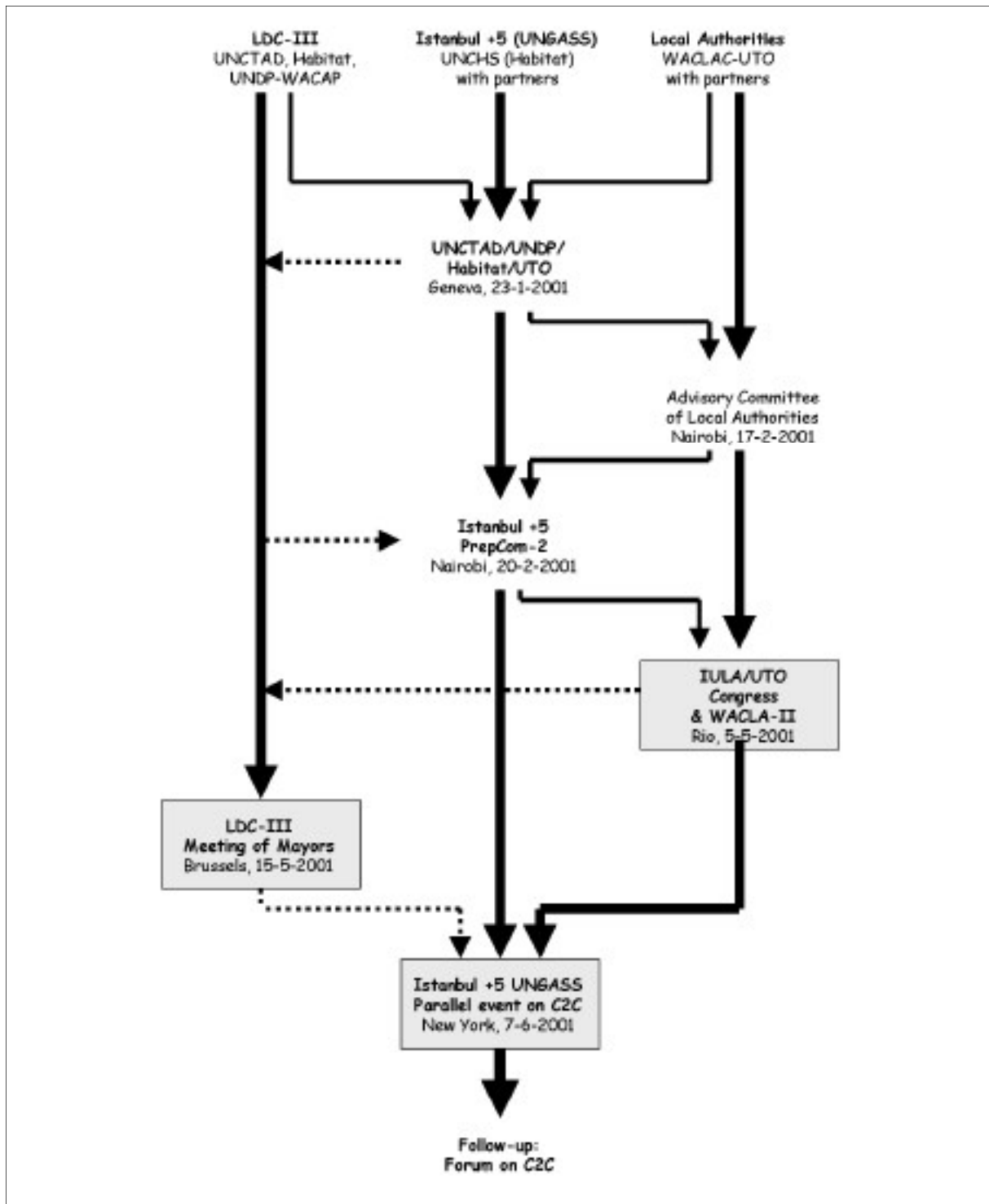


Table 6.1: City-to-City Cooperation (C2C) Events in January-June 2001

These concerns were also addressed at the *Second World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities (WACLA II)* convened on the occasion of the IULA/UTO Unity Congress to formulate local government's collective input to Istanbul +5. The WACLA II Declaration reaffirms local authorities' wish to intensify their collaboration with UNCHS (Habitat) as their primary linkage with the United Nations system, and commits them to promoting direct international cooperation between cities and their associations for the purposes of fostering exchanges of knowledge and experience and cooperation between local actors. The Declaration calls upon the national governments to recognise and support the development of direct cooperation between cities, and to define partnership models that will ensure its complementarity with bi- and multi-lateral cooperation programmes. The United Nations and the development agencies are urged for their part to mobilise the necessary resources to promote new action strategies for the urban areas, to collaborate closely with local authorities and their associations in formulating and implementing local development assistance programmes, and to devise new financial instruments that can be directly accessed by cities in the developing countries.

The concept and purpose of this report were also introduced by the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) in her opening address at the Meeting of Mayors on C2C which took place within the framework of the *Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Brussels, May 2001)*. That Meeting also underlined the value which cities place upon partnerships and peer-to-peer exchanges as components of sustainable capacity-building and institutional strengthening programmes, calling in particular for the further development of the so far under-utilised potential of South-South links.

In concluding this first round of events, there will be a WACLAC/UTO-organised parallel event on city-to-city cooperation during the *Istanbul+5 UN General Assembly Special Session in New York (7 June 2001)*. This event, involving mayors, representatives of associations of local authorities and international aid organisations, will review the inventory of C2C practices as well as comment on cities' C2C needs and priorities in the light of their own C2C experience. Looking ahead to the next stage in the practice of C2C as a factor of growing importance in development policy, the key stakeholders are expected to endorse the orientation and thrust of efforts to date and to reconfirm their interest and commitment to continue the exchange and cooperation on C2C through a more structured forum.

## **6.2 Consulting among Key Partners**

The report already raises a number of issues about the future development and promotion of C2C, and it is anticipated that there will be a demand on the part of the key actors in C2C in further pursuing international debate about these issues. Accordingly, it is suggested that a practical next step would be for a *round table meeting* to be convened by UNCHS (Habitat), perhaps under the auspices of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities, to review the information and the issues set out in this report as well as the conclusions of the recent events on C2C and to explore appropriate ways forward.

- Such a Round Table, organised to chart and agree on a collective way forward, should involve all the key partners whose cooperation is required for successful advancement of city-to-city cooperation mechanisms. Three groups of partners are of special interest here:
- Those who are the actual C2C *practitioners* - local authorities and their associations, spearheaded by WACLAC as their collective voice vis-à-vis the United Nations. This group will ultimately also include local authority partners such as the private sector, civil society, the academic and professional communities, and relevant departments of national government;
- Those who provide support to cities in their cooperation - the associations of local authorities who have been providing this support for decades, together with their partners responsible for designing and operating bilateral and multilateral support programmes, drawn together by UNCHS (Habitat) as the UN focal point; and

- Those who provide strategic *funding* to both the local authorities and the supporting organisations – donors, especially in bilateral and multilateral funding institutions, foundations, the international private sector, etc.

A convenient opportunity for such a round table will present itself on the occasion of the next meeting of the *International Forum on Urban Poverty (IFUP)*, to be hosted by the City of Marrakech, Morocco, in October 2001. This meeting, organised by UNCHS (Habitat), is already scheduled to bring together cities and their associations, representatives from the development support community including the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and bilateral organisations, as well as interested donors.

### 6.3 Launching a C2C Forum

It is hoped that the analytical framework suggested here will be seen as a useful working tool to be progressively developed over time. Further, the concrete collaboration which has been initiated through this joint effort between WACLAC and the United Nations, facilitated by UTO and Habitat respectively, is expected to provide a solid foundation on which to build in future work.

For the longer term, opportunities should be explored for launching a standing Forum on C2C, which would bring together city representatives, support organisations and donors on a systematic basis. Such a Forum could provide a framework for developing the analysis of C2C practice, assembling diverse experience and disseminating results among all relevant actors. The Forum could have both mutual exchange and policy development functions, and could, for example, report the results of its work and any policy recommendations systematically to the UN Commission on Human Settlements via the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities. Its working procedures would clearly need to be concrete and results-oriented, with the facility for structured interaction between cities, support programmes and donors, and careful thought would have to be given to the means of ensuring balanced participation by cities from all regions as well as ready access to its work by those unable to participate directly.

An excellent opportunity for a first meeting of the C2C Forum is afforded by the next meeting of the Urban Forum, planned for May 2002 in Nairobi, which will bring together the cities, support programmes and donors of both the Urban Environment Forum (UEF) and the International Forum on Urban Poverty (IFUP) in a major global event. Matters which the C2C Forum could address might include questions such as the following:-

- *What are the local authorities' needs and priorities in C2C?* Answers could address the geographic orientation of C2C, linking modalities, primary cooperating parties, focus in the urban management process, or thematic focus (see Chapter 3);
- *How could a city use documented lessons of experience to optimise C2C arrangements for its specific needs and circumstances?* Answers could help cities design successful combinations of thematic focus, geographic orientation, linking modality, etc. This could, for example, result in a better understanding of how to associate the private sector, NGOs, professional associations, and the research community in developing best practice in C2C and spreading its benefits;
- *What type of support is most effective for what type of C2C practice?* Answers could help cities select from available options for facilitating structures, funding and resources, and support modalities (see chapter 4);
- *What type of C2C support is best adapted to which type of urban development support agenda?* Answers to this question could assist support organisations in tailoring their C2C support to their specific area of mandate and thematic specialisation. It also could help national governments in the preparation of strategies for effectively integrating C2C schemes with national development programmes;

- *What complementarities and synergies among the activities of support organisations can be exploited, what critical gaps could be filled, what duplications or even conflicts could be avoided?* Answers to these questions could help support organisations to promote individual and collective efficiency. This could, for example, result in better coordination of C2C support schemes, extension of their geographical spread, and improvement of their accessibility to cities and their associations. It also could result in the extension of existing international urban capacity-building programmes to incorporate C2C opportunities. In addition it could help identify any critical bottlenecks, such as the need to prepare model provisions regarding the legal powers of cities to participate in international cooperation and exchange schemes;
- *Where would additional funding have the most beneficial impact in relation to a donor's specific support agenda?* Answers to this question would allow strategic targeting by donors of their investment, promote transparency and donor confidence, and ultimately provide a framework for attracting funding to C2C;
- *How should the successes and failures of C2C practices and support be measured and monitored?* Answers to this question could help cities, support organisations and donors to learn systematically from lessons of experience. It could result, for example, in the joint preparation of analytical tools for monitoring and evaluation of C2C practices and their contribution to the achievement of development goals.

## **6.4 Maintaining a C2C Information Base**

At the same time, it would seem useful for this report to be further developed and expanded, with a view to providing a comprehensive and authoritative analysis of the state of the art of C2C, within a structure which will allow continuous updating and refinement of the data, and which will serve as a reference framework for future policy development by all relevant actors. In conjunction with this, a dedicated interactive C2C website could be set up, possibly within the framework of an existing UNCHS (Habitat) site, to facilitate access by cities, support organisations, donors and all other relevant actors to the full range of accumulated practice and support options. Such a joint database on C2C practices and support options, allied with the associated website, would be a critical prerequisite for the success of the Forum. It would also promote the exchange of information between the Forum's sessions, support the sharing of know-how and generally improve, naturally and automatically, collective efficiency among the wide range of actors in city-to-city cooperation.

Nairobi, 25 May 2001

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# Annex 1

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## INFORMATION SOURCES

Further information about any of the matters discussed in this report may be obtained from the organisations responsible for its production (details given on reverse of the title page). The following is a selective list of publications from which material was drawn for the purposes of the report. It may be supplemented by the periodical publications and the websites of the international institutions and agencies, the international, regional and national associations of local authorities, and of the cities themselves.

### CITYNET

Guidelines for Transferring Effective Practices – a Practical Manual for South-South Cooperation, 1998

### COMMONWEALTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM

Partnerships in Governance – People-Centred Development in the New Millennium, 2000

### EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY MANAGEMENT

Decentralised Cooperation and Joint Action: Building Partnerships Between Local Government and Civil Society in Africa, 2000

### EUROPEAN COMMISSION

A Europe of Towns and Cities – a Practical Guide to Town Twinning, 1997

TACIS City Twinning Programme Compendium of Projects, 1998

### INTERNATIONAL UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES (IULA)

Trilateral Municipal Cooperation – Who? What? Where?, 1996

Local Challenges to Global Change – A Global Perspective on Municipal International Cooperation, 1995

Into the New Millennium – A Framework for Action in Municipal International Cooperation, 1996

Municipal International Cooperation - The Role of Government in Decentralised Development Cooperation, 1999

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

Know-How Fund Local Authority Technical Links Scheme, 1999

### METROPOLIS

6th Worldwide Congress Report: A Network of Cities for World Citizens, 1999

### TOWNS AND DEVELOPMENT

Berlin Charter and Action Agenda, 1992

TOWNS AND DEVELOPMENT / INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES / IULA

Partnerships for Sustainable Development

Africa

Asia

Europe

UNCHS (Habitat)

The *Habitat Agenda*, Istanbul 1996

Environmental Planning and Management Source Book:

Volume 1: Implementing the Urban Environment Agenda

Volume 2: City Experiences and International Support

Volume 3: Urban Environment Forum Directory

Chengdu International Conference on Urban Construction and the Environment for the 21st Century: Conference Report

Draft Political Resolution for Istanbul +5: Cities and other Human Settlements in the new Millennium.

UNDP

The Challenges of Linking – City-to-City Cooperation as a Development Modality for the 21st Century, Interim Report, 2000

Guide to Successful City-to-City Cooperation, Exposure Draft, 2001

UNITED TOWNS ORGANISATION

Europe-Central America Decentralised Cooperation Programme, 2000

WORLD ASSOCIATIONS OF CITIES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES COORDINATION

WACLA I Declaration, 1996

WACLA II Declaration, 2001

**United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)**

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