EXPERT GROUP MEETING
CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY: PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE
SOCIAL INTEGRATION 10 - 13 SEPTEMBER 2007, PARIS
SESSION VIII.

Review Of Approaches And Methods For Measuring Social Inclusion And Cohesion
UN-HABITAT's Experience in Developing and Applying Indicators

Mohamed Halfani - UN-Habitat

- Within the framework of UN-HABITAT's mandate on advocacy and programming activities – a major focus has been given to improving the lives of urban poor;

- The whole notion of urban poverty alleviation is advanced within the broader agenda of promoting the development of 'inclusive cities';

- In 2001, we defined an inclusive city as ***a place where everyone, regardless of wealth, gender, age, race or religion, is enabled to participate productively and positively in the opportunities cities have to offer;***

- Our approach to designing intervention processes for realizing our normative and operational activities is through what we consider to be the component and corresponding constituents of 'sustainable urbanisation' , including: shelter, infrastructure and services, land, environment, local economic development, urban health, and safety;

- Together with these are the cross-cutting areas of; governance (& decentralization with all its attendant implications of empowerment, mobilization, engagement etc), planning, gender, finance and budgeting, partnership, Right to the City, as well as training and capacity building;

- The underlying premises of our approach, particularly in terms of realizing the objective of promoting inclusive cities is that by developing a structural and institutional framework that allows actors in all spheres of society to engage harmoniously and to realize their respective potential – inclusiveness can be achieved;

- A related premises is that for these actors to be able to engage with each other and to make full use of the system, they need to be mobilized and empowered;

- Tools that we have developed are therefore directed at monitoring and evaluating the functioning and outcome of systemic processes and structures

- Whereas to a large extent these tools have been of a macro-level, in the last couple of years we have been able to develop a tool that looks at intra-city differences for selected variables;

- At this stage we have managed to develop a combination of qualitative and quantitative tools, with measurable indicators of the following nature:

1

- **Urban Inequity Surveys** – Lake Victoria Region (Part of Urban Info)
- **Urban Governance Index**
- **Legal and Institutional Environment Governing Security of Tenur**e
- **Urban Sector Profile Studies** (combining environment, gender, governance, slums, local economic development, basic urban services; & historic and cultural heritage;
- **Safety Audits**

- The development of these tools has involved long processes of expert consultations, testing, mobilizing support and ownership by key stakeholders, training, dissemination and application;

- Gradually, we are building an infrastructure for data collection;

- We are refining the participatory methods of administering the instruments

- Build partnerships with other institutions and organizations, including funding agencies;

- Developing modalities for dissemination;

- In some areas we are contemplating establishing awards;

- Challenges:

  - **Credible and robust indicators:** Indicators need to reflect an acceptable reality and clearly bring out variances
  - **Universality versus contextualisation:** Balancing the need to reflect the specificity of institutional environment (national or local) with the ability to allow for a degree of universality and comparability of data;
  - **Ownership:** The need to build in a high degree of local ownership of the tool and results - stretching beyond local and national governments to include the civil society and private sector, particularly through the collection by participatory processes.
  - **Simplicity and acceptability:** The indicators need to be simple to understand and easy to collect, so as to ensure acceptability and successful application;
  - **Utility at the local level:** The indicators have to help in capturing gaps and constraints in policy implementation, identifying specific capacity-building needs, and formulating change plans;
  - **Integer or profile:** The emphasis should not be on the final number that is assigned as an index, rather the overall profile that finally forms the integer.