

# Inclusive Urbanisation

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Event  
Materials

Urban

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## Contents

|                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Workshop Reflections</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| Introduction                         | 2        |
| Politics, laws and planning          | 3        |
| Urbanisation and inclusive economies | 5        |
| Services for Excluded Populations    | 6        |
| Data for Inclusive Urbanisation      | 7        |
| Environment and risk reduction       | 8        |
| Violence                             | 9        |

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International Institute for Environment and Development

80-86 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8NH, UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 3463 7399

Fax: +44 (0)20 3514 9055

email: [info@iied.org](mailto:info@iied.org)

[www.iied.org](http://www.iied.org)

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## Workshop Reflections

This summary reflects the substantive presentations and discussions of a workshop, “From Urban Exclusion to Inclusive Urbanisation,” held from 28-30 October 2015 in London, hosted by UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the Institute for Development Studies (IDS). Its contents are meant to encompass the diversity of issues addressed, convergence on key points and implications for future actions.

### Introduction

In the international arena at least, governments agree that cities have a critical role to play in addressing poverty and inequality, and that to achieve this they need to be open and welcoming. We believe that the SDGs provide an opening to better develop, measure and pursue such an ambitious and inclusive urban agenda. Within the 2030 Agenda, the 11th Sustainable Development Goal is to ‘Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’. The big international meeting in 2016 will be on cities and towns, [Habitat III](#), and will include a focus on the ‘Right to the City, and Cities for All.’

Yet [surveys of government views and policies on population](#) suggest that a large and growing share of governments, particularly in urbanising regions, believe their rates or levels of urbanisation are excessive. In 2013, 70 per cent of governments in “less developed regions” wanted a major change in where their population resides, and 84 per cent had policies to reduce migration from rural to urban areas. In 1996, the same statistics were only 48 and 41 per cent. Clearly cities cannot be inclusive and “for all” if the official response to urbanisation and population growth is to try to keep out or drive out those who cannot afford acceptable homes or secure acceptable jobs, a response that was common as well for many urbanised countries.

Moreover, the same comprehensiveness of the 2030 Agenda that signals its ambition, provides the grounds for competing agendas and policy ‘packages’ likely to be at odds with inclusive urbanisation. The 2030 Agenda states that the goals “are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.” Yet this statement will not make it so. The politics of these three different dimensions are often in opposition, and in particular the contemporary politics of economic growth (though not the prerequisites of economic growth) still leave insufficient room for environmental and social goals.

Inclusion is an increasingly popular term, and in many international statements of good intentions it has to bear an inordinate share of the weight of social aspirations. The term has not always implied ambitious social goals. The social inclusion of disadvantaged groups can in principle be done on adverse terms and with adverse outcomes for those included, even if the term connotes a more beneficial process for the once excluded. The possibility of adverse inclusion is clearly not meant to be read into the goal of “inclusive” cities, but the content of the more ambitious meaning is often illusive. With this in mind, we have adopted a more explicitly multi-tiered definition, which bind the more ambitious levels of inclusion with outcomes more explicitly beneficial to those included. Specifically, these tiers of inclusion involve:

- a) removing discriminatory exclusions, such as those denying particular groups the right to settle in the city (space), buy property (markets), send their children to school or access health care (services), or have political influence.
- b) ensuring that prevailing institutions (regulating markets, the provisioning of services and the use of space) empower, incorporate the voice and reflect the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- c) ensuring that the human rights of otherwise disadvantaged groups are fully met through, among other means, markets, services and access to spaces.

The centrality of space in the practice of inclusion and exclusion suits the construction of agendas for urbanisation and cities. Cities and urban areas are intrinsically spatial. Spatial exclusion from or with cities and towns are central to their dynamics of social, economic and political deprivation. With that in mind, the following sections draw on the workshop discussions of urbanisation, inclusion and: urban

politics, laws and planning; economic challenges and opportunities; social services and excluded populations; environmental challenges; violence.

But why is inclusive urbanisation important to achieving the 2030 agenda? We would argue that, in simple terms, without inclusive urbanisation the different indivisible dimensions of the 2030 Agenda will be divided. Inclusive urbanisation stretches across all SDGs and should be treated as such.

## Politics, laws and planning

**Socially rooted inequalities reinforce economic material inequalities** – Discrimination and disadvantage rooted in social differentiation based on caste, religion, gender, ethnicity, etc. help explain both the level and patterning of economic and material inequality in cities. It is not merely the anonymous hand of the market. There are various causal mechanisms involved here, often including mechanisms of exclusion. In everyday urban life, this manifests itself in differential powers to claim rights, secure entitlements, and gain access to resources. This can be formalised (levels of political enfranchisement) or can be embedded in everyday interactions (casual discrimination in rental housing or employment). Urbanisation itself can provoke more or less exclusionary responses. Inclusive urbanisation will have implications for the social geographies of cities, and the spatial patterns of economic and material inequality.

### *Implications for Action*

- To identify the exclusionary mechanisms that need to be countered, data on intra-urban inequalities need to be obtained and used to illustrate how dimensions of social inequality interact. Data should go beyond standard quantitative indicators, to qualitative information on and generated by communities.
- Mixed-use urban spaces will often need to be promoted to overcome some of the social barriers and facilitate inclusive. One example is Singapore's social housing model that started as high-density and high rise Housing Development Board flats in 1960s. Singapore's public housing communities today house 85% of the population. These public housing communities are often self-contained satellite towns with schools, supermarkets, clinics, hawker spaces and recreational facilities.
- Education that embodies inclusion as well as teaching about the risks of exclusion has an important role in changing long standing norms that perpetuate and reinforce social inequalities. For example: caste dynamics in India are often expressed in treatment of students in classrooms and have been shown to affect the educational outcome. As greater mixing of social identities takes place with increased migration, the role of educational institutions in promoting the integration of migrant children will become important (especially when migrants come from diverse linguistic background as compared to the language of instruction in host communities). Addressing changing gender dynamics and roles in the process of urbanisation, and the need for new norms and values on gender equality, will be critical. Urban poor women's groups promoting education of girls and young people have been effective in forging gender equality. Comprehensive sexuality education that directly addresses gender and power has also been shown to be effective.

**Changes in the political economy are transforming the opportunities and challenges of inclusion** – In much of the world, social, ethnic, economic inequalities are now manifesting themselves in a new urban political economy, and new forms of urban political contestation. This new political economy is marked by changed investment landscapes and growth patterns as well as visions of urban development (smart cities, world class cities etc.). It has entailed changes in the kind of claims that can be made by residents (especially by the urban poor/socially marginalised/rural-urban migrants) and how effective they will be. Socially and economically marginalised groups have to transform their claim making to frame it within the language of the “acceptable” vision of the city to policy makers. The new political economy also complicates the ability of city and local governments to respond as economic and political processes that are operating “above” and “through” them reduce their ability to use policy instruments to shape outcomes in their cities. One example of this is the way FDI has re-shaped real

estate markets in many cities, with the pressure on cities to compete for investment externally making it difficult to reserve land for affordable housing.

#### *Implications for Action*

- To promote development of a civil society willing to modify the anti-poor repercussions of the new development policies. This means going beyond the proliferation of NGOs/CSOs and middle class led agendas, and recognising organisations led by and made of urban poor, with the aim of creating platforms for direct interactions with local governments, chambers of commerce etc.
  - Insights can be borrowed from the work of SDI in Africa and Asia, CODI in Thailand and PNPM Urban in Indonesia. Also from Orangi Pilot Project's approach of supporting communities and linking them with the urban resource centre, which carries out research, advocacy and city-wide networking (increasing the institutional surface area and interactions between the local government and disadvantaged groups). Formation and steadily empowering informal settlement women's groups in Indore and Agra and UHRC's capacity building input to help them generate and manage collective social needs funds has gradually given them power to tactfully but forcefully negotiate for services and infrastructure from civic authorities and improve family economics, health, education, nutrition, housing improvement and overall social well-being for entire neighbourhoods.
  - The idea is to promote coproduction of community infrastructure with urban poor while leveraging existing systems. However, the limitations of coproduction and strategies relying on conciliation and cooperation also need to be recognised, with more confrontational or autonomous approaches adopted when appropriate.
- Land use needs to be guided by social and environmental considerations, and not on the basis of exchange value alone, and this importance of use value needs to be recognised and promoted by city governments. In this regard, the institutionalisation of citizen engagement across the socioeconomic spectrum will be key.

**Site and Scales of Action** – Understanding the appropriate scale of action and intervention remains important. Contestations arise between the city, province/state and the national spheres of government, and also between neighbourhood, city and the larger urban agglomeration/city-region. The scale of settlement, and the distinctions between the megacity and the small urban town, matter. We need to be clearer on the specific dynamics of urbanisation at play, and the different institutions that can act and respond in each scale of urbanisation. As a marker, “slum” can be a useful category, but can also be misleading and even disempowering. The slum is not a homogenous category. Not everyone in a slum is poor. Not all economically deprived urbanites reside in slums. Slum-based interventions risk missing the real geography of vulnerability in urban areas.

#### Inclusive urbanisation:

- To promote inclusive urbanisation through the development of governance frameworks that facilitate policy coordination at urban agglomeration/urban region level, and not only within individual cities. There needs to be a greater focus on more environmentally and socially responsible expansion on peripheries, rather than allowing urban land markets and governments to push low-income settlements beyond the bounds of municipal jurisdiction.
  - The institutional basis for such coordinated development must be backed up with the necessary powers. In the National Capital Region of Delhi, there was an NCR Board set up that included governments of surrounding states. There was a governing body that would work towards coordinating urban expansion of Delhi and the development of the areas that fell within the adjoining states. But this Board had no implementing authority and the efforts have not amounted to much.

- There needs to be more experimentation in this domain, and examples of where this has worked need to be understood comprehensively. Since urbanisation is most advanced in LAC, examples of success exist there and can provide a basis for learning, but their relevance to places still undergoing rapid urbanisation needs to be ascertained
- Urban agglomeration region of Chengdu (Sichuan Province) can provide positive lessons.
- To enhance the capacity of local governments to be able to carry out inclusive urban planning. While decentralisation has taken place in many countries, it has not been accompanied by strengthening the capacity of local governments to develop effective policies or do effective investments (even assuming they are not captured by private interests opposed to the public interest). To counter existing capacity gaps it is important:
  - To support local governments and ensure the necessary skills and skilled personnel are available within departments. Often the transfers between departments of the few staff with technical skills affect continuity of good practices and weaken the capacity to local governments to plan effectively.
  - To counter the tendency for departments of local governments to work in silos, a culture of data sharing needs to be fomented. This may require new incentive structures to spur integrated planning that enables data sharing etc.
  - To enable local governments to elicit engagement of and seek input from disadvantaged urban populations, personnel with social planning skills their partnership with local agencies that have such skills can help demand side planning for the urban poor.
- Special attention needs to be paid to the development of small and medium sized cities, which may be able to link with rural development more effectively, but also tend to have low infrastructural and institutional capacities
- Countering the geography of vulnerability requires recognition and active inclusion. Regularisation of slums may not be sufficient – the stigma of being informal needs to be addressed. Vulnerable families/populations acquiring government address proof and picture IDs (e.g. Voter Cards) and submitting written petitions to civic authorities and maintaining paper trail has helped overcome the tyranny of being unrecognised (UHRC).
- Technology can provide the leverage for recognition and inclusion. Participatory Mapping can create recognition by literally putting people on the map. Mapping can also help to identify built environment typologies of spatial exclusion. Documenting the settlement histories can create an identity and sense of belonging and this has been very useful when evictions came in— water bills, electricity bills to establish the life cycle of the settlement (Orangi).

## Urbanisation and inclusive economies

Urbanisation is associated with both economic growth and increasing inequality, especially when urban economies are exclusive. At the same time, urbanisation brings a younger cohort of workers through fertility decline as well as migrants to cities who are disproportionately young and working age. This can be a boon to the economy, but only if the additional working age population is included in productive economic activity. Therefore, the for the achievement of SDG 8 – sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all – especially in rapidly urbanising and least developed countries, depends on economic transitions in cities and the extent to which young people in them and moving to them are empowered, educated and employed in decent jobs. Young people must be at the heart of delivering the SDGs.

Inclusive urbanisation is a cross-cutting issue, linking beyond SDG11 (making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable) to many or all of the other goals. The urban



condition (poverty, informality, vulnerability, etc) is highly heterogeneous, within and across cities and integrated, outlying towns. These are spaces that will encompass all aspects of sustainable development.

#### *Implications for Action*

- Facilitate the disadvantaged to have choice and access to basic services, linking multiple SDGs and targets including 11.1. This includes urban land use planning and access to water, sanitation, electricity and transport.
- Facilitate the voice and power of all people, especially women and young people traditionally excluded from economic activity, so that they are at the center of development and decision making processes;
- Promote youth investment through quality higher education, employability, entrepreneurship skills and innovation.
- Enable women and girls to be free from discrimination, violence and harmful practices, and to make critical decisions about their lives, including generating enabling environments and engaging men and boys.
- Urban inclusion should be a cross-cutting dimension in government policy and programming. Multi-stakeholder and sector coordination is key across local, provincial, state and federal governments including but not limited to education, employment, health urban planning departments and national statistical offices.
- Integrate urban dimension in development planning and financing systems; ensure budgets are available and spent on inclusive urbanisation centrally and local government levels.
- Urban policies should be consistent with existing international agendas, including Agenda 2030.

**Informality of jobs and settlements is here to stay.** Inclusive cities must look for realistic solutions, addressing the excesses of informal jobs (e.g. lack of safety, insecurity, exploitation, indecent work) and informal settlements. Informal work is highly diverse and gender segmented.

#### *Implications for Action:*

- Policy solutions must be tailored to encourage entry in the formal sector, discourage exit and reduce exploitation. At the same time, governments must acknowledge and work to improve informal economic activity and informal work, and stop ignoring and excluding these in laws and policies.
- Safeguards and social protections must extend to all, not just formal workers or through formal employers. At the center is ensuring the dignity of work and the dignity and human rights of all people.

## Services for Excluded Populations

**Urban residents, including migrants and mobile populations, need to be able to establish identity and citizenship as rights-holders in cities, though also without losing rural residence as currently happens in many countries.** Rural to urban migration cannot be stopped, and efforts to slow or stop it lead only to further exclusion in cities. The transition from “migrant” or “other” to “resident” takes too long for some, or may never happen for others, with serious resulting exclusion and deprivation – particularly among seasonal migrants, unregistered residents, residents of informal settlements and others not recognised by governments. There is a need to recognise that women’s mobility is often invisible in statistics as well as policy discourses. Further, data from India show that seasonal migrants are severely disadvantaged compared to other urban residents in accessing social services.

Policies against rural urban migration are hardening despite not being based on evidence. Evidence from case studies across Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia show that there is a need to recognise the gap between policy and poor rural urban migrants' actual realities. This is as much about recognising and including the urban poor as migrants, given the similar exclusions they face. And it is about recognition that migrants face trade-offs between rural and urban areas, and challenging decisions about moving, that are exacerbated by registration systems that fix them in place.

*Implications for Action:*

- Strengthen and modernise birth registration everywhere and issue documentation for migrants/new-comers and other vulnerable and marginalised populations and communities in cities. This can be done in connection with SDG target 16.9 on legal identity including birth registration.
- Create other mechanisms of “alternative registration” from citizens (government ID and address proof) for legitimacy as citizens.
- Provide better information for potential migrants about urban opportunities and challenges.
- Share lessons within and between countries on how to handle internal, as well as international, migration.

**Sexual and reproductive health behaviours, as well as barriers to SRH service access, are different for urban and rural residents, as well as for new-comers to cities.**

- Considering the whole problem – supply side, demand side and access barriers – and build mechanisms to overcome those gaps.
- Consider new approaches to deliver services: technical personnel, community services, mixed-provision, mobile health clinics that include SRH services to reach everyone, including mobile populations.
- Hold service providers accountable through strong community engagement and participation to drive action.

## Data for Inclusive Urbanisation

**Stronger information systems and new approaches to data collection and use are essential for recognising, engaging and learning from urban and urbanising populations.** Without such data infrastructure, people and organisations at the local level cannot identify needs, establish goals, assess progress and negotiate for improvements. Local communities often have a very good sense of what are local priorities for development action. These can clash with views of policymakers.

*Implications for Action*

- Build open data systems that can aid transparency and broader participation in public policy design, including stronger georeferencing of statistics.
- Consider locally based information systems where national systems do not exist or have major gaps, including enumeration and local mapping by the community and facilitating inclusion on city, sub-city map.
- Metrics and statistics need to capture urban complexity better, including paying attention to inequalities between population groups within (areas within) cities. Being more sensitive to context may come at a cost of trading off ability to compare across cities/countries, however local government policy demands locally specific evidence. The price is worth paying.
- Governments must recognise communities' ability to self-prioritise, and integrate community views in decision-making processes. This can be in shape of community data collection and analysis, and

through participatory decision-making, especially when coupled with systems to support community capacity. Ensure evidence and information collected is fed back to communities.

- Enhance data and information availability at local level, including data disaggregation and utilisation for the evidence of unequal distribution of human capital and age-structure at sub-national and local level.
- Local communities need to understand and inform data collection and analysis, not just access data, requiring translation and simplifying mechanisms.
- Support negotiations with the state – data driven, specific, solution-focused and with a paper trail – to enhance empowerment, demonstrate existence of unlisted needy pockets and co-produce solutions.

## Environment and risk reduction

The rise of environmental hazards, especially those relating to climate change, will unfold during the course of very large scale urbanisation in many countries in Africa and Asia. Both climate change mitigation and adaptation are increasing in priority in the arena of urban planning and policy. Much as with other policy objectives, the need to safeguard the city from environmental threats could disproportionately impact the poor and disadvantaged groups, who have less security of tenure and are more likely to live on fragile and insecure lands. The unequal spatial distribution of land and resources in many cities exacerbates this possibility. An inclusive process of urbanisation means strong inclusion of the voice and needs of disadvantaged groups in meeting environmental hazards.

**Rights claiming through documenting and demonstrating:** Official land use and cadastre maps – often legacies of colonial planning systems – often exclude informal settlements as they are not viewed as a legitimate part of the formally planned city. Informal residents are thus excluded from decision-making processes and planning procedures, so their developmental and environmental needs are largely neglected or, more frequently, undermined entirely. Census data also often overlooks informal settlements while the limitations linked to the aggregated data that inform SDG progress have been well-documented. Development interventions and finance linked to Agenda 2030 have to be responsive to local needs to be effective, and have space for meaningful community participation/ownership and community capability to inform and contribute to implementation of solutions – not simply proscriptive solutions.

### *Implications for Action*

- Enumerations and mapping used to a) collect local data for identifying and prioritising the development needs of communities as a basis for developing cross-sectoral development agenda, and to b) negotiate with urban authorities to get these needs addressed through formal recognition (e.g. getting informal settlements mapped onto existing city, sub-city, zonal maps), financial support, regulatory reform, etc. Much of this data overcomes the limitations of
- Demonstration projects used to show the ability of communities to organise around development deficits that municipalities should be addressing and to show the extent to which communities can plan, manage and implement projects often more effectively and efficiently than other ‘traditional’ development actors (including local governments).

**Addressing the gap between regulations and socio-economic realities.** A key driver behind the growth of informal settlements are anti-poor or pro-wealthy planning regulations that fail to consider the socio-economic realities of the urban poor either because governments are unable or willing to do so. Many examples of practical and affordable basic services solutions that work for communities are not recognised by governments because of inappropriate planning regulations. Incremental progress towards universal access should not be overlooked, and the work undertaken as part of the SHARE city-wide programme demonstrates how context can shape the sorts of sanitation solutions that are acceptable to different communities.



*Implications for Action*

- For inclusive and universal progress to be achieved, federations of the urban poor demonstrate how networked communities at the city level, and even nationally and internationally create and important platform for learning and a significant voice for low-income groups to shape planning regulations and policies.

**Urban governance (bottom-up and top-down)** – There are limitations to what communities can achieve at-scale without strong and accountable local governments, especially in financing and building the ‘piped’ infrastructure (including required to withstand extreme weather). But local governments require support from higher levels of government in the form of decision-making power on the one hand and financial capacity to implement on the other. Organised urban disadvantaged groups have been demonstrated to develop capacity to make strong claims, negotiate perseveringly and non-confrontationally with civic authorities gradually evince improved response from authorities.

*Implications for action:*

- Partnerships between community organisations and local authorities premised on component sharing or co-production can underpin the development of affordable, appropriate basic services, and serve to create meaningful spaces for the participation of low-income groups in planning processes. But the process requires resources and energy, particularly during periods of political flux, as demonstrated in Zimbabwe.
- Using innovative financing mechanisms (city-wide revolving loan funds managed in a decentralised manner, including by urban poor groups) to address locally defined development and environmental agendas (including those regarding climate change adaptation), but local channels for cities were lacking with the MDGs and are lacking with current international climate change adaptation funds.

## Violence

Differential effects of urban violence: Women and men are affected by different forms of violence, in different spaces, and in different ways, depending on multiple and intersecting their social identities (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, income, caste, religion, sexuality, nationality, etc.). For example, terrorist attacks often discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, religion or nationality (e.g. political violence against ethnic groups in Karachi), but not necessarily on the basis of gender. Gang violence often disproportionately affects men (particularly young men), yet also directly impacts many women and has spill-over effects on domestic violence and reproductive work (e.g. caring for victims) normally carried out by women. Women are disproportionately affected by GBV in the home, but also increasingly in public spaces. The relationship between violence and urban space is thus non-linear and in constant flux, especially during urbanisation as both land and population change rapidly.

There has been much progress on recognition and awareness of GBV and urban violence; however, there is a major disconnect with how formal policing is carried out – how crime is reported, investigated and adjudicated – where comparatively little has been achieved despite this increased recognition. Further, the state is not the sole provider of security in urban areas; private security companies are increasingly responsible for urban security, often most credibly and legitimately but at the same time highly unequally distributed and often extremely patriarchal.

*Implications for Action*

- Extending GBV interventions into public spaces (e.g. through transport planning), but without neglecting the need to address domestic violence other interventions (e.g. through behavioural change).
- Addressing norms and values that are changing through the process of urbanisation, including through comprehensive sexuality education relating to power, gender and interactions between partners.

- Planning and managing urban change in ways that produce spaces that are safer and more secure for women and men for the purposes of living, working and travelling.
- Providing training for GBV responders and stakeholders, including law enforcement, private security, health workers and others, to respond to GBV more effectively and efficiently, as for instance in post-conflict Sierra Leone.
- Empowering groups particularly impacted by violence, including young people and migrants, to engage in innovations to mitigate violence, with the involvement of community leaders (including faith-based organisations).

Cities as inherently conflictual arenas: Cities can breed conflict where large numbers of diverse interests compete for control over scarce resources (e.g. land, services, employment, income, etc.) in dense spaces. If these resources are unequally available and/or inequitably provided, mounting social tensions and resentments may reach a tipping-point where conflict becomes violent. Violent trajectories may become reinforced in rapidly growing cities where the state is either unable and/or unwilling to engage in more inclusive planning and equitable policing. This is a particular concern in cities where the social contract has been broken, for instance where large portions of the population are caught in insecure and vulnerable land and housing. Ensuring violence does not become inherent to the urban fabric is central to achieving inclusive urbanisation.

Scalar dimensions of urban violence: While there has been a shift in the discourse on conflict from fragile states to fragile cities, cities cannot be seen in isolation from global processes. Cities are now interconnected with international networks and processes that shape urban violence (e.g. trans-national terrorist networks/international arms/drug trafficking, as in Karachi). At the same time, cities are often affected by conflict-induced displacement from other countries (near and far), which may create new challenges for security and inclusion in cities where resources are scarce and competition for them is high (as in many middle-eastern countries affected by the Syrian refugee crisis, including Lebanon).

#### *Implications for Action*

- Using urban planning as a tool to (re)distribute resources in ways that reduce real or potential conflicts so that tipping-points are avoided.
- Engaging 'non-traditional development actors' in bringing the municipality, planners and the police together with neglected/un-policed communities (including the poor and displaced)
- Addressing de-weaponisation linked to international arms trafficking at all levels (e.g. through international conventions, local gun control/registration?)
- International/national migration policies, coordinated with urban planning policies, which promote the inclusion of newcomers at the local level.