BUILDING BRIDGES
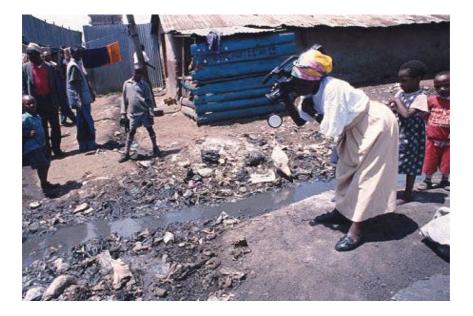## with the grassroots

Scaling up through knowledge sharing

BACKGROUND WORKSHOP PAPER
THEO SCHILDERMAN – ITDG

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Cover Picture:

*Women belonging to a community group in Redeemed Village, Nairobi,
have learned script writing and video production skills in order to
communicate their living conditions and livelihoods issues ©ITDG,Zul.*

BUILDING BRIDGES WITH THE GRASSROOTS

SUMMARY

The towns and cities of the developing world will absorb nearly the entire global population growth between now and 2030. With the urban share of poverty predicted to increase from 30% in 2001 to 40% by 2020 and 50% by 2035, the number of people living in slums is set to double by 2030. Slums provide an unhealthy and dangerous living environment. In many countries, the prevalence of disease and rates of infant mortality are higher in slums than in rural areas; and they are a multiple greater than those in richer parts of cities. Improving the living conditions of slum dwellers and preventing the formation of news slums are among the most significant development challenges of the coming decades.

The internationally agreed target is to improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. Even if this is combined with efforts to restrict the growth of slums, the target seems woefully inadequate given the enormity of the problem. More action is needed, and this can come from stimulating informal slum improvement by slum dwellers themselves. They already invest much more in their living environment than the public sector and donor agencies combined, but their tremendous efforts and investments are too often overlooked. If the investments by residents themselves can be further supported, there is scope for substantial scaling up through decentralized upgrading.

The social networks of the urban poor are an important starting point for slum improvement. They allow slum residents to pool resources, share information, and gain influence. Additional loan funding and the creation of an enabling environment can boost the activities of such networks. But, in order to become more effective upgraders, slum dwellers also require information and knowledge on a range of issues. While their own local knowledge is very valuable, information from elsewhere is often what enables them to innovate. This knowledge can be hard to access for most slum dwellers, who rely on their social networks as sources of information.

Evidence is starting to emerge that good practice can spread, and upgrading can be scaled up, through exchanges of information between networks of slum dwellers, and innovative uses of communication methods. This publication considers a number of such examples and begins to define some guiding principles for building bridges with grassroot organisations of people living in the slums. ITDG hopes that, by disseminating good practice in scaling up, it will achieve a substantial impact on the scaling up of good practice in upgrading itself, hence on the lives of slum dwellers.

Theo Schilderman
ITDG, August 2004

CITIES WITHOUT SLUMS?

ONE IN A BILLION – MAMA SUSAN'S STORY

Mama Susan Taplokoi Maina lives in one of the spontaneous settlements that have sprung up around Nakuru, a secondary town with a population of over 300 000 people, in Kenya. Susan is now 68 years old. She lost her husband in 1989, and of the six children she had with him, four died young. Her family now includes two grandchildren who go to school and have high hopes of a better life.

The Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) first came across Mama Susan in 1997. She was living in a single room house on a plot that was her own. She had managed to buy the plot with some savings, and with the help of others. The house was made from second-hand materials, such as timber off-cuts and corrugated iron sheets. Water can be a huge problem in Nakuru; Susan has to buy it from water sellers, or from the few houses that have piped water in the neighbourhood. Sanitary facilities are poor too, with an average of 100–200 people sharing a single latrine. The roads and footpaths are of soil, turning to dust in the dry season and to mud in the rains. There is a fair amount of crime too.

Mama Susan knew she was getting older and did not want to be a burden to her children. In 1997, her main income came from selling second-hand clothes and vegetables in the market. She needed a more secure income that could provide some savings to help her improve her house. Mama Susan is not an exception. A billion or so other slum dwellers in this world, face very similar problems. Can their dreams of cities without slums come true?

J7 Kenya C5.05 ©ITDG/Zul

Mama Susan initially lived in a one room house, built from timber off-cuts, which she slowly expanded

THE URBANISATION OF POVERTY

Mama Susan is just one of the millions of people trying to make a living in the informal settlements of today's developing world. Their numbers are swelling by the day, in an unprecedented wave of urbanisation, fueled both by migration and high levels of natural population growth. The towns and cities of the developing world will have to accommodate nearly the entire growth in the global population over the next 30 years. According to the latest predictions of the United Nations Population Division[1], the growth of the world population between 2003 and 2030 will be 1.83 billion. The urban population will grow by more than this (1.90 billion), whilst the rural population will decline slightly. In the developing world, urban populations are predicted to grow by 1.78 billion, which represents 97% of the predicted growth in the global population. In the past, developed countries experienced a phase of rapid urbanisation, but this happened alongside rapid industrial and economic growth. With a few exceptions, such as China, the current circumstances in the developing world are very different. How are its towns and cities going to cope?

For a long time, poverty has been associated with rural areas. There is increasing evidence that poverty is urbanising too. Unfortunately, a lot of poverty data do not distinguish between urban and rural poverty, and a precise measure of how many people are living in urban poverty is therefore not readily available.[2] In countries where good data are available, such as India, China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, urban poverty as a proportion of total poverty is found to be increasing[3]. A study by Johns Hopkins University, in the USA, suggests that the proportion of the world's poor living in urban areas will increase faster than the rate of urban population growth.[4] It was estimated, in 2001, that about 30% on average of the world's poor lived in urban areas, and that following current trends that would rise to 40% by 2020 and 50% by 2035.[5] In all likelihood, these figures still underestimate the gravity of the urban poverty problem, because a dollar per day in a city does not go as far as in the countryside.

The most important physical result of the rapid urbanisation of poverty is the proliferation of slums. Some of the key development challenges of the coming decades must strive to stem the growth of slums and improving those that are already there.

SLUMS: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

It is not easy to generalize about slums because they range from dilapidated inner city tenements, to boarding houses rented by the bed, to informal settlements mushrooming on the fringe of towns and cities, like the one in which Mama Susan is living. Attitudes towards slums vary too. Some see only the bad and ugly side, but for others there are positive aspects.

Negative aspects

Many development agencies and professionals tend to describe slums in negative terms. The Cities Alliance, for instance, talks about the squalid and unsafe environments in which slum dwellers live, where they face multiple threats to their health and security. It mentions the lack of basic infrastructure and services in slums. It notes that slum populations are marginalised and largely disenfranchised; they are also exposed to disease and crime, and vulnerable to natural disasters[6].

There is certainly plenty of evidence of the risks and threats that slums pose to the lives of slum dwellers, particularly with respect to their health. Where in the past, this has often been hidden within general urban statistics, from the 1980s researchers started to distinguish slums from other urban areas. We are now beginning to see health indicators (such as rates of infant mortality[7]), in countries as diverse as India, Kenya and Argentina, showing that slums have much worse

health problems than either rural areas or non-slum urban areas. In Karachi, for example, child mortality rates in slum areas range from 95–152 per 1000 live births compared to 32 per 1000 in middle class areas.

In the slums of Nairobi (which house over half the city's population) the prevalence of serious diarrhoea is about three times the average for the city as a whole, and the same is true when the slums are compared to the rural areas[8]. Detailed data from slums in Allahabad, India, and Buenos Aires, Argentina, from the mid 1980s, showed that half the population had intestinal worms and many suffered regularly from diarrhoea. In the case of Allahabad, 60% had scabies, 10-25% of women, children and men had some form of bronchial illnesses. The most common cause of child mortality in the Allahabad slums was malaria, followed by tetanus, injuries, diarrhoea, dysentery or cholera; a contributing factor in many of these ailments is poor drainage, water supply and sanitation[9].

Slum dwellers are vulnerable to a range of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, landslides or storms. Slum dwellers often settle in unsafe locations, such as steep slopes or flood plains, because they tend to be poor and cannot afford other plots, or want to be close to employment opportunities. The evidence of the impact of disasters on urban settlements is nearly always that the poor suffer most. Natural disasters can cause huge losses of life as well as accidents and illnesses; very often investments in housing or productive equipment are lost too. Venezuela's floods and landslides in 1999, for instance, killed about 30 000 people, destroyed 23 000 homes and damaged a further 64 000. A lot of these deaths occurred in informal settlements located on steep slopes.

Slums tend to suffer from a higher than average rate of violence. Its residents run a real risk of being robbed or assaulted. The incidence of alcoholism and drug taking, and in some cases drug trading, can be high too, which again can lead to violence, at home or in the streets[10]. The vulnerability of slum dwellers is worsened by poor governance, and inadequate protection of their legal rights.[11] Where slum dwellers occupy land illegally, they are prone to exploitation and harassment, and occasionally eviction.

In Nakuru, Mama Susan is aware that the neighbourhood she lives in shows many of the characteristics typical of such settlements. It is not very safe or healthy. She has lost no less than four children; their early deaths may well have been related partly to the poor living conditions in her settlement.

Street scene in one of the slums of Nakuru, showing the lack of formal infrastructure

But Mama Susan does not only see the negative side. In the first place, her neighbourhood offers her an affordable place to live, and there is scope for improvement. There are some opportunities to make income within a reasonable distance. Above all, Mama Susan has her networks of relatives, friends and neighbours, which she can rely on in difficult times.

Positive aspects of slum dwelling

There is a growing recognition amongst some organisations, including UN-HABITAT [12] that slums play important roles in towns and cities. They absorb the bulk of new arrivals onto the labour market, and provide accommodation for low-cost labour. They often provide a home for the informal sector of the economy, which in turn supports the formal economy. They represent huge investments of resources by slum residents.

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE CHALLENGE

The lack of an agreed definition of slums made it difficult to monitor their growth or decline. UN-HABITAT (the lead UN agency on human settlements) therefore took the initiative in developing one. This needed to be multi-dimensional, to take account of the multiple aspects of slums.[13] In October 2002, a group of experts, and other stakeholders from around the world called together by UN-HABITAT, defined a slum household as a group of people living under the same roof lacking one or more of the following:

- Access to improved water;
- Access to improved sanitation facilities;
- Sufficient living area, not overcrowded;
- Structural quality/durability of buildings;
- Security of tenure.[14]

Using the above definition, UN-HABITAT calculated that in 2001 there were 924 million slum dwellers world wide, that is one in six of all human beings. Of these, 94% lived in developing countries: 554 million (60%) in Asia, 187 million (20%) in Africa, 128 million in Latin America and the Caribbean (14%). The proportion of the urban population in developing countries living in slums was 43%, rising to 78% in Least Developed Countries. By region, African cities have the highest proportion of urban residents who live in slums (72%), compared to 58% in South-Central Asia, 36% in Eastern Asia, 33% in Western Asia and 28% in Southeast Asia. Proportions are also lower in Latin America (32%) and Northern Africa (28%).[15] The situation can be much worse at the level of individual countries or cities. A number of countries now have more than 90% of their urban populations living in slums, including Ethiopia and Chad (99.4%), Afghanistan (98.5%) and Mozambique (94.1%).[16]

These figures should be treated with some caution because in many countries information is not collected regularly, and coverage may be sketchy both geographically, and in terms of the indicators measured. Changes in the way slums are defined also make it difficult to chart their growth accurately. Despite this, the trends are clear. UN-HABITAT expects that, if no firm and concrete action is taken, the global number of slum dwellers will rise to two billion by 2030.[17] The head of the Urban Management Programme estimates that, by 2020, the global number of slum dwellers will reach 1.7 billion.[18] This suggests that at least half of the population added to the world over the next 30 years will live in slums.

THE FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGE OF SLUMS

The official rhetoric is to strive for cities without slums. It is with this in mind, that the Cities Alliance was launched in 1999 by the World Bank and UNCHS (now UN-HABITAT) as *"a multi-donor partnership with cities and their development partners to make unprecedented improvements in the living conditions of the urban poor".* The Alliance developed an Action Plan that aims to **improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020**.[19] In doing so, it wanted to scale up considerably the slum upgrading programmes that had taken place so far.

The international community has agreed on eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), each comprising a number of Targets (MDTs), which it will strive to achieve by 2015 in most cases. Amongst those goals, the one most closely related to slum upgrading is MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability. The above objective of the Cities Alliance Action Plan was taken up as Millennium Development

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Target 11, under that goal; it is the only target with a 2020 deadline. Progress against this target is being measured by two indicators: Indicator 30: Proportion of households with secure tenure; and Indicator 31: Proportion of households with access to improved sanitation facilities.

The Millenium Development Goals and Targets are inter-related. Pursuing one may have an impact on others. For example, work towards MDT 10 (within MDG 7) aims to halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water will also help to improve the lives of slum dwellers. Similarly, MDT 1, which aims to halve the proportion of people living on less than $1 a day, will contribute to reducing poverty in urban as well as rural areas.

Slum upgrading is not new; it has been practised for at least 30 years, and important lessons have been learned. Quite a few projects or programmes have ended in failure or were only partially successful. One commonly noted outcome was the departure of poorer sections of slum dwellers who could not afford price increases created by the improvements by authorities and funding agencies. Improvements affected not only owners, but also renters. In Karachi, for instance, rent and house prices doubled after upgrading, and in Madras by 100-150%. In Calcutta, upgrading resulted in rent increases - up to fourfold - for new residents. There was a clear incentive for homeowners to force out poorer renters, and replace them with richer residents who could pay more. In upgraded settlements in Zambia, newly purchasing families were consistently richer than the households they were replacing. In both India and Africa, many homeowners moved out of upgraded settlements and rented out their properties, not for profit but because they could not afford to live there. In one of the upgraded slums of Vishakapatnam, India, only 48% of the original residents remained; of the others roughly half had rented out their properties, and the other half had sold the houses illegally.[20] Where owners do not want to leave, it sometimes forces mothers and children on to the labour market, to make ends meet. Another almost universal effect of slum upgrading is densification, which can lead to overcrowding. In Jakarta, where rents increased by 150-300%, tenants made up for the rent increases by increasing space occupancy by 50-100%, and in Madras the population increased by 18% after upgrading[21].

There have been some positive stories, although most have been at a pilot scale. A few successes have had a truly national impact such as the Kampung Improvement Programme in Indonesia and the Urban Community Development Office's work in Thailand. The most positive impacts of slum upgrading have been on the health and safety of slum residents. In El Mezquital, Guatemala, for instance, infant mortality rates fell by 90% and crime by 43%. A decrease in violence was also reported for Brasil[22], and in Calcutta, death from waterborne diseases fell by more than half. [23]

Amongst the key lessons learned from 30 years of formal upgrading projects and programmes are:
- Local participation is critical; communities need to have a say in the level of services they require.
- The level of services needs to be affordable to the community and to the local authority.
- Subsidies may be required to include the poorest residents; these need to be carefully targeted.
- Gender issues are important; women need to be properly represented.
- There needs to be political support for upgrading at the local and national level.
- Upgrading needs to be linked to livelihoods and income generation.
- Scaling up requires appropriate institutions, structures and regulatory frameworks.
- Security of tenure is a precondition for residents to invest in shelter improvements.

In a major recent report on the challenge of slums, UN-HABITAT describes current best practice as *participatory slum improvement*, but it also admits that this has so far mostly been applied on a limited scale. The practice involves an integrated approach, taking into account housing, health, education, livelihoods and gender, with the authorities acting in an enabling role. For UN-HABITAT, the inclusion of urban poverty reduction in the approach is key.[24]

WHEN WILL SLUMS DISAPPEAR?

On current trends, slums are unlikely to disappear as a result of government or aid-sponsored action. The target of improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020 will only reach one in seventeen of their predicted number by then, and is thus woefully inadequate. Whilst there is recognition of the fact that the growth of slums needs to be restricted in the future, there is little evidence that this can be done on the scale required. Progress on other targets, e.g. on improving access to water or reducing poverty, may have some additional positive impact, but it is more than likely that by 2020 there will be hundreds of millions more slum dwellers than the world has now.

There remains some doubt as to whether all MDGs and MDTs will be met. Progress towards them is due to be reported in 2005. Current indications are that the MDTs on poverty and water could be met, albeit unevenly. The greatest progress is being made in India and China, whilst at the current rate it will take until 2147 before the poverty target is met in sub-Saharan Africa. [25] There are currently no reliable data on progress against the slum improvement target. But there is some evidence, e.g. from reports and press releases by the World Bank, the Cities Alliance and UN-HABITAT, that slum upgrading is getting higher priority among governments and donors.

The target of reaching 1 in 17 of all slum dwellers by 2020 is very unambitious, compared to other targets that, for example, aim to halve the proportion of people living in poverty or without safe water. UN-HABITAT considers 100 million as the absolute bare minimum target at which the international community should aim.[26] In all likelihood, the Cities Alliance based this number on what could realistically be reached with official slum upgrading programmes, on the basis of past experience. Even then, the programmes of the past would need to be scaled up substantially. This will require the creation of enabling policies and legislation, and initiatives to disseminate and adapt what works well. The current dialogue on slums, such as one that will lead to a major campaign on secure tenure, seems to be focused largely on policy and legal issues. In comparison, the analysis of past experience and the replication of best practice receives only limited attention; a situation that needs to be addressed if one wants to reach much larger numbers of slum dwellers.

Public action through official slum upgrading programmes will never reach the numbers required on its own. Much more is needed if we want to achieve the aim of cities without slums. That is where the private action of slum dwellers themselves comes in.

INFORMAL SLUM IMPROVEMENT

People like Mama Susan are constantly working to improve their livelihoods and the living conditions in slums. They have to motivate themselves, if only one in seventeen are going to be reached by official upgrading programmes. What has helped, is that it is now less likely than a decade or so ago, that authorities will evict people or destroy their property if they have not followed the rules exactly. This change has increased the feeling of security of slum dwellers, and has encouraged both investments and improvements over time.

Whilst large agencies were developing their Action Plan, Mama Susan was not sitting idly in Nakuru. Using some of her income from selling clothes and vegetables, she built an extra room to rent out. Then she constructed another room, and another. The more rooms she built, the more her income increased, thus speeding up the process. By 2003, she had 12 rooms which she was letting at 500 KShs (approximately $7) per month. These rooms may not be of a high standard, but there is demand for them, since tenants also start at the bottom of the ladder. They have helped Mama Susan to increase her income, and remain independent of her children in her old age. They also allowed her to start saving some money to build an improved house for herself.

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*Mama Susan started to invest in stabilized soil blocks
for the construction of an improved house for herself*

Slum residents are, of necessity, the key actors in developing and improving slums. Sometimes they become small landlords, like Mama Susan. In Kenya, there are cases of larger landlords investing in slums, but not usually living there themselves. In assessing some of its upgrading experience, the World Bank, for instance, found that households had invested $7 of their own in housing improvements for every $1 in public upgrading investment.[27] One of the reasons why the authorities and donors have given up the provision of public housing or even serviced plots, in favour of upgrading, is that the latter is so much cheaper for them. As early as 1980, a World Bank study estimated upgrading projects cost only $38 per household compared with $1000-2000 for core sites and services units, and $10 000 to service the lower end of expenditure on public housing.[28] The truth is that private investments in slums are huge; they far exceed those of the authorities and donors put together. Hernando de Soto[29] estimated in 1997 that US$ 6.74 trillion (million million) had been invested in informal dwellings (not necessarily only in slums). In most countries he looked at, such investment represented a multiple of the total value of the Stock Exchange, or of public investments. It is also about 1000 times the amount, US$ 6.6 billion, that the World Bank has invested in urban development since 1994.[30] However, de Soto also considers this huge investment by urban residents as "dead capital" since, because the properties are untitled, it cannot be used to, for instance, attract credit for further development.

So, rather than urging the public sector and donors to enlarge their own programmes to reach more than 100 million slum dwellers, we should ask what the public sector and others can do to enhance the initiatives, investments and efforts of the private sector.

WHAT MAKES INFORMAL SLUM IMPROVEMENT SUCCEED?

Returning to Mama Susan in Nakuru, there are probably five key factors that have helped her to make a substantial improvement in her living conditions over the past decade or so: her social networks; access to land; access to finance; knowledge and information; and supportive institutions and regulations.

Social Networks

Over her long life, Mama Susan has belonged to community groups that have served different purposes. One was an informal savings and credit group, which helped her to acquire a piece of land. In 1997, Susan was involved in a group that collaborated with the municipality to clean up her neighbourhood.

From this group emerged the Soil Block Housing Association, a group of about twenty people who all were interested in building improved houses. Social networks like these are important to slum dwellers, because they can provide support in difficult times, allow people to save, encourage information sharing, and stimulate people to join forces to achieve a common goal. In most cases, these are relatively modest goals, compared to official slum upgrading programmes. But they are often successful because the activities they get involved in are manageable. They are examples of decentralised slum upgrading, of which there are many of such examples, and their overall impact must be huge.

A meeting of members of the Daima Usafi Self-Help Group

© ITDG / Michael Kinyanjui

In the Kwa Rhoda neighbourhood of Nakuru, the Daima Usafi Self-Help Group is an example of one such network. Its members had been involved in small-scale savings and credit activities, known locally as a "merry-go-round". Members typically contribute a fixed amount on a regular (monthly) basis. Each month, the whole amount goes to one of the members in turn, which they often use for some kind of investment. Building on this, the Pamoja Trust, a Kenyan NGO, encouraged members to change to a system of daily savings, even of small amounts. Thus, in 2002, 52 members formally registered Daima Usafi at the Social Services Department of the Municipality. They defined their aim as acquiring land and building houses. In late 2003, the group had saved enough to buy a quarter acre plot, which they subdivided into 6 individual plots that were allocated to members that were amongst the best savers. Two more plots followed, each of half an acre, bought in March and July 2004; each was subdivided in 10 individual plots. The Group's membership had increased to 150 by August 2004. Their next ambition is to access some additional loan capital to build houses. This is where the Nakuru Affordable Housing and Environment Committee (NAHECO) may come in. NAHECO was established by many of Nakuru's CBOs as an umbrella NGO that would serve their needs. Amongst other roles, it serves as a savings and credit co-operative, and has been able to attract loan funding from external sources, and passes this on to its members.

Access to Land

Mama Susan was fortunate that she had acquired a piece of land that she could afford. Her membership of a group, and their involvement in informal saving helped in that purchase. In Kenya, low-income residents of slum areas now increasingly get together for the purpose of saving and jointly buying a piece of land which they then subdivide into individual plots. The Daima Usafi Self-Help group is but one example.

In a secondary town like Nakuru, it is still relatively easy to buy land. Agricultural land on the outskirts of the town is constantly being bought up and subdivided into large plots (very often exceeding 1000 cubic metres²), which the buyers then subdivide further. In larger cities, plots are harder to acquire and are much more expensive. They will often be a lot smaller, and residents may have to develop them vertically rather than horizontally. In such cities, there will quite often be speculation in land, with richer people investing in land holdings, but not developing them. The public sector can help to regulate the land market and ensure a more equitable availability to all residents.

In an integrated approach to upgrading, as advocated by UN-HABITAT, the improvement of people's livelihoods extends to more than the living environment. It also aims to reduce poverty, for instance by raising incomes. ITDG has worked with several community groups in the informal settlements of Nakuru in an integrated project that aimed to boost their income-generating activities as well as improve their living conditions. The Mwamko Women's Group, for instance, is involved in food processing; producing ice-lollies. Another group is involved in manufacturing peanut butter, and yet another in baking. One group of artisans is producing and selling building materials, as well as constructing with them.[31] There is evidence from the savings groups that those members involved in income-generating activities such as these are able to save more and acquire plots or housing more rapidly.

A4 Kenya B1.10   ©ITDG, Zul

Esther Kirango (left) and Rebecca Kibira (right) of the Usafi Women's Group in Lakeview pour roasted peanuts and salt in a grinder to produce peanut butter.

Access to Finance

Mama Susan has never stopped saving. Initially, it was in the form of a merry-go-round, to acquire a plot. Then she slowly developed her piece of land, using money she saved from her meagre income. She continued saving, as a member of the Soil Block Housing Association, to invest in a better house. Even those investments often took place incrementally; buying one or two bags of cement, producing some stabilised soil blocks, then stockpiling these until they could be used.

Getting a plot, then developing a house, on the basis of personal savings alone, can be a very lengthy process, especially for the poorest slum dwellers. A member of the Daima Usafi group making the minimum daily saving of 5 KShs per day would have to save for up to 20 years to acquire a plot. It could take another 20 years before they could afford to build an improved house. There are ways to overcome this problem. One is to boost daily savings schemes with loan capital from outside. Getting some money up front

can help people to move to a plot more quickly. They can then repay a loan with money they would have used for rent. Another option is to try to raise incomes, so that slum residents have more money available to pay for better housing and services. In Mama Susan's case, this happened through her own initiative, through her investment in rental housing, which has recently allowed her to build a better house for herself. But others need help in investigating good opportunities, and acquiring the skills to exploit these.

Knowledge and Information

The urban poor are resourceful and often make good use of their local knowledge and initiative to improve their living conditions. Riley et al. [32] observed that on the steep slopes of Rio's slums, houses must frequently be built on bare rock or unstable soil. The skills to do so are passed on from one community builder to another, and the activities of the best builders are carefully watched and replicated. Such skills become part of communal knowledge, but such local knowledge is not always adequate, particularly when communities are faced with new challenges. People who migrate to towns from rural areas, for instance, may find that the technologies they were used to are no longer appropriate, because the resources required are not available in towns, so they require other options. People living in disaster-prone locations may require simple ways to strengthen their structures. Others may need to find safer ways of disposing of human or household waste, or of accessing water. The solutions to their problems are often available somewhere else, but how do they get to know about these? Sometimes this happens through their social networks, but often accessing other options can be a real bottleneck.

When Mama Susan's group got involved in cleaning up her neighbourhood, in 1997, they also started to discuss how their houses could be improved. Most residents used to build houses with mud-and-pole walls, without foundations, with a roof made from corrugated iron sheets or sometimes second-hand materials. They had seen other ways of building, such as using the local volcanic stone, elsewhere in town – but none were really affordable. That is where other ideas were needed. Mama Susan and her group were lucky in that at about this time an NGO, ITDG, started working in Nakuru. ITDG had been involved in the review of the Kenyan Building Code, a few years earlier, and knew some alternative options that were now permitted. Mama Susan's group ultimately opted for the use of stabilised soil blocks for walls, since this could involve the use of their own labour in production, which made them a lot cheaper than other durable materials. ITDG provided the group with information on this technology and with training on soil selection, block production and construction.

J7. Kenya C5.14   ©ITDG/Zul

The house in stabilized soil blocks that Mama Susan built

Supportive Institutions and Regulations.

For slum residents to be encouraged to invest in better housing and services, they need a feeling of security. That does not necessarily have to amount to possessing a legal title to a plot, a building permit, or a tenure contract. There are other ways of giving security that may involve less bureaucracy, but can be equally effective in stimulating the private sector to invest in upgrading. To achieve security in such situations requires authorities that understand slum dwellers, have the political will to improve slums rather than erase them and, above all, that can be flexible. However, if one wants to behave legally, laws may have to be revised to make them more pro-poor.

The Building Regulations that prevail in many developing world countries are often still a legacy from colonial times. They tend to be restrictive and to prescribe the use of durable materials, some of which have to be imported. They generally do not allow for alternative local technologies to be considered. Invariably, they make the cost of legal housing unaffordable to the urban majority. Up to 1995, the situation was no different in Kenya, but some revisions to the regulations, but new standards introduced at that time were performance based, and now allowed for the use of much cheaper materials, such as stabilised soil blocks, provided their performance is adequate.

These legal changes had great potential to reduce the cost of standard housing, but they still needed to be adopted and implemented at the local level. In Nakuru, ITDG played a promoting role. On the one hand, the NGO worked with local authority staff to adopt the new Code, and on the other hand it trained artisans and builders in the new technologies that were now allowed, and demonstrated these in a couple of projects. Subsequently, participatory design workshops were held, with the support of Kenya's Association of Architects, which led to a series of standard house plans. The Council agreed to provide building permits to anybody wishing to construct using a standard plan within 30 days. The net result was that the realisation of legal housing got substantially cheaper and quicker.[33]

P 0001011   © ITDG/Lucky Lowe

Standard house plans have been drawn up by professionals and approved by the local authority, reducing the cost of construction for residents

HOW TO ACHIEVE MORE?

We can do a lot more, if we manage to replicate the above conditions in other locations through; support for community groups in their initiatives, help in removal of some key bottlenecks, providing essential information and some finance. Instead of ever-larger upgrading programmes (the scaling up vision of the Cities Alliance), ITDG supports the scaling up of large numbers of smallish projects that CBOs can handle, perhaps with some support. To reach 100 million slum dwellers one could run 100–1000 large and fairly bureaucratic programmes, each targeting 100 000-1000 000 people. Alternatively, the same number could reached through 100 000–1000 000 small projects managed by CBOs, each representing 100–1000 residents. The latter approach is likely to respond better to the needs and priorities of slum dwellers, to attract more of their own resources, and to favour replication. It might ultimately prove to be cheaper for the public sector and donors.

WHAT CAN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND AID AGENCIES DO TO SUPPORT DECENTRALISED SLUM IMPROVEMENT?

- The approach hinges on the existence of active social networks, with whom local authorities and support agencies can start a dialogue to identify the livelihoods needs of the community and how the authorities can provide support. The existence of established women's groups, for instance, was an important success factor in some of ITDG's work. As outsiders, it is almost impossible to create such networks, and there is evidence from past upgrading projects that the establishment of community organizations promoted by project agencies (under the heading of "social engineering") often is not sustainable[34]. Perhaps it matters more that such organisations exist, than the purpose for which they ere originally instigated, for example - savings, income generation, cleaning up, etc. Networks may change their priorities over time, and can be stimulated to take up new activities. What is important, though, is to ensure their inclusiveness.

- An important hurdle to overcome is that of financing several small, community-led projects. The bottleneck here is less the availability of money than that aid agencies do not have the systems nor the personnel in place to deal with lots of small projects. Eventually, they could contract this out to NGOs or local partners. The experiences of successful initiatives such as the Urban Community Development Office in Thailand or the City Community Challenge Fund, piloted with DFID support in Uganda and Zambia, show us the way.[35]

- The authorities, and particularly local authorities, need support to put in place policies and legislation that are more pro-poor, and support slum upgrading. These may have to deal with a number of issues, such as land markets, secure tenure, building standards, etc. There are a number of examples of such policies and laws that have worked well in certain locations, but may not be well-known elsewhere. Sharing this information is important, and the UN-HABITAT Best Practice and Local Leadership Programme has taken the initiative to record and disseminate these examples. Many authorities will need help to establish the proper enabling frameworks for upgrading.

- Slum upgrading will often require residents to do things differently, which requires information and knowledge, some of which may not be easily accessible for them. Lack of information and knowledge is a key bottleneck for slum dwellers, and perhaps one that is poorly recognised. The remainder of this paper therefore concentrates on this issue.

URBAN POVERTY – INFORMATION POVERTY?

WHY DO SLUM DWELLERS NEED INFORMATION?

Poor people can ill afford risks. They may be inclined to keep doing things as they have been doing them before, if changing their ways may carry a risk that they cannot assess. The larger the investment involved, the more likely their reluctance to change. The investments in housing and services are usually amongst the largest people make in their lifetime, so people will often try to avoid risk in making them. Similarly, they may be reluctant to try new income generation activities, if they are unfamiliar.

Slum improvement is about making changes to the slums: changes in the ways houses or infrastructure are built, how services are provided, and how people make a living. These changes involve innovation, and local knowledge and experience may not be adequate. Slum dwellers may be reluctant to change, if they cannot assess the risks involved. They need information, about how things can be done differently, about how they have worked elsewhere, what the cost might be, etc.

WHAT INFORMATION DO SLUM DWELLERS REQUIRE?

In a case study of a community in Alleppy, Kerala, Plummer and de Cleene[36] identified the following general communication and information needs of the poor:

- Health education and access to health services.
- Improved access to services and infrastructure.
- Access to small and medium sized loans.
- Income generation skills.
- Access to information on a broad range of topics including individual rights, municipal actions and the potential benefits of various plans.

These seem to be fairly typical issues that come up in many slums. These issues featured in ITDG's own research into the knowledge and information systems of the urban poor in eight informal settlements in Peru, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe.[37] The research found that detailed information needs can vary considerably, and that it was hard to summarise beyond fairly general categories. Some of the key factors that influenced information needs included: politics and the local policy context; the age or degree of consolidation of a settlement; the size of settlements, urban-rural linkages; and the composition of target groups. The research found that women were often disadvantaged with respect to accessing information, compared to men. Marginalised groups such as the disabled or homeless had particular problems in accessing information.[38]

CAN SLUM DWELLERS ACCESS THE INFORMATION THEY REQUIRE?

Mama Susan in Nakuru was rather fortunate in that she happened to come across an NGO that could provide answers to some of her questions. By contrast, millions of slum dwellers worldwide live in a state of "information poverty"[39]. Research by the World Bank[40] and ITDG[41] concluded that the urban poor hold valuable knowledge, but that it is inadequate to make the most of livelihood opportunities, and cannot withstand certain threats. Other authors, (Stavrou[42] and Warah[43]) agree that it is often very difficult for poor people to access information from outside their immediate neighbourhood. In essence, information providers often let poor people down. Narayan et al.[44] argue that this lack of information contributes to their insecurity and vulnerability, and ultimately their poverty.

ITDG's research aimed to find out how the urban poor access information for improving their living conditions. Where most researchers looked at information dissemination from the supply side, this work specifically looked at the demand side. It tried to find out from poor urban residents themselves whether information supply in their town was meeting their demand. The research established that the dominant information suppliers were the public sector and NGOs, with the private sector only playing a minor role. It found that the links between poor urban communities and information suppliers were inadequate. The public sector was criticised in particular by the urban poor, with NGOs and the private sector doing somewhat better, but sometimes coming in for criticism too. With the occasional exception of the health and education sectors and of authorities in smaller settlements who appear to be more accessible, the public sector in the survey locations was severely criticised by low-income residents for making access to information difficult, for harassing them, or even excluding them entirely. Corruption could make information costly to obtain, and too often information was provided in formats ill suited to the urban poor. NGOs sometimes stepped in where government systems failed, and they frequently made a difference in communities where they were present. But poor people's experiences with NGOs were mixed. Whilst many NGOs were found to be good at listening to the urban poor and at producing appropriate information products that answered real needs, some were criticised for supplying information in line with their own policies rather than poor people's needs, or for acting as gatekeepers - providing only the information which the NGOs themselves felt was important. In most cases, the private sector did not seem to target the urban poor specifically, nor did it always fill an information gap.

SOCIAL NETWORKS: THE PRIME SOURCE OF INFORMATION

The research by ITDG also established that the first and foremost source of information of the urban poor remains word of mouth, via their social networks. This was confirmed by Warah, in his research in Nairobi. He concluded that *"social capital can make the difference between relative information poverty and absolute information poverty in slums, and can be the basis of personal, relational and collective empowerment. Slums with the highest social capital are also the most effective users of the media and ICTs."*[45]

According to Ruskulis[46], social networks are usually based on kinship, a joint place of work, reciprocity, a shared service or location. When social networks do not provide the required information, the urban poor sometimes resort to key informants: people who, because of their function, role or experience have acquired certain knowledge and are willing to share it[47]. In many cases, though, it is social networks that allow the poor to identify and approach key informants. In ITDG's experience, a large variety of social networks exist, each generating its own rules and ways of working. The types of links between their members depend amongst others on the purpose of such networks, the issues being addressed, past experience and trust.

Social networks and their linkages with key informants and information suppliers are all part of the *social capital* of the urban poor, which many see as a key factor in slum upgrading. Woolcock[48] divides social capital into three connecting strands:

- *Bonding* social capital links people to family, neighbours, friends or close business relations. This would generally cover the social networks such as those in which Mama Susan is involved in, or the Daima Usafi Self-Help group in Nakuru.
- *Bridging* social capital links people to others of similar status, who are perhaps more distant or have different occupations and experiences. This would cover links with social networks or individuals elsewhere, perhaps including some key informants. The umbrella NGO, NAHECO, in Nakuru plays such a

bridging role between various grassroots groups and individuals.

- *Linking* social capital describes to the relations of people at the grassroots with those of a higher status, generally having more power or influence, such as the authorities, funding agencies or NGOs. Information suppliers and some key informants could also fall within this category.

According to Narayan et al.[49], poor people generally have plenty of bonding social capital, some bridging social capital, and very little linking social capital. The latter, in particular, makes it hard for them to cope with shocks or to move out of poverty. Individuals or households require bonding and bridging social capital when it comes to daily livelihood issues. There is some evidence that social capital can help the poor to cope better and reduce poverty. In South Africa and Bolivia, for instance, there was a positive correlation between social capital and household welfare[50]. ITDG researchers in Peru found that the jobs acquired by the urban poor had most frequently emerged from their social networks[51]. In Bangladesh, women marrying out of their original villages often are a source of innovation in their new location[52]. All these examples show the importance of bonding and bridging social capital. But communities may need linking social capital too, especially on issues relating to their settlement as a whole, such as the provision of services, or development plans or policies. Warah[53] describes the case of the Muungano wa Wanavijiji in Nairobi who, by organising themselves into a Federation of Slum Dwellers and linking up with the legal aid NGO Kituo cha Sheria, were able to negotiate at the highest level of government, and thus avert evictions and relocations planned by government.

It appears that many low-income people in urban areas have relatively weak links with similar groups or with others that could help them, such as information suppliers. Increasingly, we find people excluded from such networks altogether. It seems that many information suppliers are not very effective at reaching out to them. Thus, although there are examples of good practice in urban upgrading, they often remain relatively unknown, and are insufficiently replicated.

THE ART OF SCALING UP

If we want to make a substantial impact on the reduction of slums, or on their improvement, communication with and between slum dwellers needs to improve. There are numerous examples of good practice in slum upgrading, and these should be more widely disseminated. Slum dwellers need information that allows them to assess the risks involved in innovation, thus allowing them to make the best use of limited resources.

What makes good practice in scaling up? How can we reach the social networks that appear to be the key to transferring information at the grassroots?

There is a considerable amount of information on how it should *not* be done: in a top-down way, controlled by experts, and focusing on a single message or product. For example, two surveys funded by DFID, one by the Max Locke Centre[54] focusing on urban knowledge transfer, and one by WEDC[55] looking at dissemination in water, sanitation and urbanisation, as well as ITDG's own research and evaluations, confirm that the results of projects often do not get disseminated and taken up widely beyond the initial target groups. There appear to be several reasons for this: limited consultation with the end users resulting in products that were not much use to them; the use of linear communication flows which relied heavily on intermediaries; information products that were inappropriate or simply wrong; and limitations in access to the information by the urban poor.

According to Norrish[56], new communication strategies tend to follow from new development paradigms, but take a long time, and old approaches do not always disappear. Current develop-

ment models are focusing on building the livelihoods of the poor, and a key part is building their capacity. Within these models, partnerships and participation have become much more important. In terms of communication, participatory approaches recognise that target audiences have knowledge of their own, which needs to be integrated with external knowledge, and that communication is a two-way process that can be a powerful tool for self-expression, analysis and empowerment. Communication is no longer focusing on a single issue, but on a range of livelihoods issues and using several channels. Communication theory has not quite come to grips yet with the complexities of participatory communication[57]. There is undoubtedly more experience of good practice on specific issues such as HIV/AIDS, or in rural areas, when compared to urban areas. Several groups and agencies have been trying a range of approaches, and it is perhaps by looking at these, that we can start to define what is good practice in communicating with the urban poor. A few examples are briefly discussed below.

A city-wide umbrella NGO (NAHECO)
NAHECO is an umbrella NGO that brings together CBOs and individuals from the seven informal settlements of Nakuru. Its membership now exceeds 300. Its prime role is that of a savings and credit co-operative, both for housing and income-generating purposes. At its regular meetings, members are encouraged to present and discuss their activities. Further learning takes place through exchange visits organised between settlements. Information exchanges are mostly between peers. Occasionally, NAHECO members get involved in exchanges with communities elsewhere in Kenya, through organizations like the Shelter Forum.

Exchange visits (Slum/Shack Dwellers International)
Exchange visits are a powerful tool for learning and replication; this has been proven by Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI). Within this network, exchanges happen both at the national level through national federations of slum dwellers, and internationally, promoted by SDI. Through these exchange visits, slums residents of many South and South East Asian countries and some African countries learned about settlement enumeration and mapping, setting up savings and credit schemes, housing models, and the construction of housing and infrastructure. For people participating in such visits, it is important that they can actually see the developments on the ground, and talk to the people directly involved.[58]

Exchange visits (Mother Centers)
Mother Centers address a wide range of issues, depending on context; one of the key things they do is to strengthen social capital in neighbourhoods where much been lost. Peer visits and exchanges have been key in the replication methodology of Mother Centers. Originating from three centres established in Germany with some government support in 1985, they have grown to about 700 in 2004. Many of them are in Central and Eastern Europe, but also in North America and Africa.
There is now an active 'Mother Centers International Networks for Empowerment (MINE)'. Whilst exchange visits have helped to spread the centres, the establishment of MINE now provides further support, in the form of consultation, training, manuals etc.[59]

International meetings (GWIA)
In 2000, groups like MINE, the Huairou Commission and the Grassroots Organisations Operating Together in Sisterhood (GROOTS) International took the idea that grassroots groups can learn from each other and replicate good practice further by developing the Grassroots Women International Academy (GWIA). In the first GWIA, 60 grassroots women groups from all over the world presented their practices and the underlying skills and strategies that make them work. This allowed them not only to

learn from each other, but also to start influencing mainstream institutions. Through the GWIA, for example, Mother Centres in the North have adopted the group savings and credit model from members of the SDI, whilst women groups in Turkey have adopted community mapping models from SDI members in India.[60]

Participatory video (SPARC, ITDG)
A tool that has been used successfully in several countries for grassroots communities to tell their own stories, is participative video. This method has been used by groups such as the Indian NGO, SPARC (Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres), and by ITDG. Videos have been used by communities to tell the story of their settlements, to indicate problems, or to record events such as enumeration exercises. Community or federation leaders have been able to use such videos in discussions with authorities about the development of their settlements.[61] Thus, video has proved to be a tool that is perhaps more appropriate than written information in communicating with and between slum communities.

Resource Centres (SIDAREC, Viva Favela)
The Slums Information Development & Resource Centre (SIDAREC) in Pumwani, a Nairobi slum with about 200 000 inhabitants, is aiming to develop the awareness and skills of young people between 15 and 35 years of age. They do so, using a range of methods: a newsletter, community theatre, audio tapes used in a weekly radio slot, youth networks, and an internet café. As a result of this, for example, awareness of health issues such as AIDS rose, childcare and income generation activities were created for young mothers, and CBOs got involved in cleaning up the environment. Access to the internet and computer facilities has allowed some young people to get computer-based jobs.[62] SIDAREC receives substantial support from some international funding agencies. Without

such funding, others have found it hard to make internet centres sustainable in low-income settlements. In Rio's slums, the focus has been around a website called 'Viva Favela' which is designed exclusively around the needs of the city's slum dwellers (www.vivafavela.com.br). It now attracts 420 000 hits per month. Many of its contributors are slum dwellers themselves, who provide important information on issues that concern them all. Four internet cafes have been opened, and there are plans for 11 more (2004), giving residents access to the Viva Favela website and the whole worldwide web. Residents pay as little as US$ 1 per hour.[63]

Information trading (Informando)
Elsewhere in Latin America, in Lima, a small company, 'Informando', searches for, creates and sells information that it believes people need. After some trial and error, they established that their market was mainly in legal and current affairs. They will for instance stock and sell copies of certain laws and regulations, and if there is demand for something they do not have, they will search for it and stock up. They also provide information on popular educational topics and do custom-made research for theses and essays. As yet, the service is not profitable, but it has been replicated by two other small companies.[64]

Sharing specialist information nationally and internationally (basin)
Finally, there are a number of specialist information services around, at national or international levels, which focus on either a specific part of the slum problem, or a specific section of the public. The Building Advisory Services and Information Network (basin) is one example (www.gtz.de/basin/). It is a network of nine partners, both in the North and the South, who operate a joint web site with information on low-cost building, produce publications, and hold training workshops and seminars, some of which are free-of-charge. At national or regional levels, the partners are involved in local networks that

aim to share information and further develop technologies. Learning between peers is key in this networking. The main clients of the network are not slum dwellers themselves, but NGOs or others that work with them, or small entrepreneurs and contractors involved in low-income to medium-income housing and building. With slum upgrading becoming increasingly comprehensive, there may occasionally be a need for those involved to rely on specialist information services that can provide additional options.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR BUILDING BRIDGES WITH THE GRASSROOTS

These guiding principles for building bridges with the grassroots are driven by the enormous efforts made by millions of poor slum dwellers in improving their living conditions, by the need to scale up those efforts further, and from our current knowledge gleaned from communicating with slum communities:

1. Slum dwellers themselves are the major actors in upgrading. They are the ones that invest most in terms of money and effort. Others are there to facilitate and encourage but not to direct.
2. Community groups and organizations need to be recognized as effective partners in development. They need to be supported to achieve capacity for making informed decisions, taking practical actions, articulating their needs to organisations such as authorities, banks or NGOs, and holding these organizations accountable.

3. Slum dwellers possess useful knowledge and experience. We need to listen to them, incorporate their knowledge and facilitate its sharing. The traditional one-way communication, often used in the past, must give way to dialogue.
4. Peer exchanges and training are at the heart of much successful replication. That is true for slum dwellers themselves, and also for those that support them, such as NGO or local authority staff. All those can learn enormously of what others in similar positions have experienced.
5. The means of communication of slum dwellers differ quite often from those commonly used by support agencies, or decision makers. For effective communication between them, methods need to be adapted and adopted that suit both sides; participative video is one of them.
6. Poor people can afford little risk. They may reject an idea from elsewhere, even if it has proven to be good practice, because it seems too far away from what they are used to, and they may have no means of testing it without spending what is for them a substantial sum. We need to devise ways to share and reduce these risks, e.g., through subsidising innovation, demonstration, or more detailed information.
7. We need to find ways to include slum dwellers who are currently not well networked, because providing information mainly to community leaders or to CBOs that consist of active community members may not be good enough.

NOTES

[1] United Nations Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects: the 2003 Revision* (www.unpopulation.org).

	Population (billions)			Population change (billions)	
	Year 2000	Year 2003	Year 2030	Years 2000-2030	Years 2003-2030
World Population	6.07	6.30	8.13	2.06	1.83
Urban Population (world)	2.86	3.04	4.94	2.08	1.90
Urban population in developing world	1.97	2.15	3.93	1.96	1.78

[2] Gilbert, Roy, *Improving the Lives of the Poor Through Investment in Cities – An Update on the Performance of the World Bank's Urban Portfolio,* The World Bank, Washington D.C., 2003: 1.

[3] UN-HABITAT, *Slums of the World: The face of urban poverty in the new millennium?*, Nairobi, 2003: 24.

[4] John Hopkins University, *Meeting the Urban Challenge,* quoted in UN-HABITAT, *Slums of the World,* 2003:12.

[5] Ravallion, Martin, *On the urbanization of poverty*, Development Research Group, World Bank, Washington D.C., July 2001

[6] World Bank Group, *Cities Alliance for Cities without Slums – Action Plan for Moving Slum Upgrading to Scale,* Washington, 1999:1.

[7] Hardoy, Jorge E., Cairncros, Sandy and Satterthwaite, David, *The poor Die Young- Housing and Health in Third World Cities*, Earthscan., London, 1990: 15.

[8] Garau, Pietro and Sclar, Elliott, *Interim Report of the Task Force 8 on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers,* UNDP Millennium Project, February 2004: 20.

[9] Hardoy, Jorge E. and Satterthwaite, David, *Squatter Citizen: Life in the Urban Third World,* Earthscan London, 1989: 155.

[10] Stillwaggon, Eileen, *Stunted Lives – Stagnant Economies – Poverty, Disease and Underdevelopment,* Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1998.

[11] Mitlin, Diana and Satterthwaite, David, *Empowering Squatter Citizen: Local Government, Civil Society and Urban Poverty Reduction*, Earthscan, London, 2004.

[12] United Nations Human Settlements Programme, *Global Report on Human Settlements 2003 – The Challenge of Slums,* Earthscan, London and Sterling, 2003:24-25.

[13] Ibid 12: 10-12.

[14] Ibid 2: 18-19. The detailed definitions of acceptable urban conditions are, according to this source:

Water safe for drinking needs to be available at 20 litres or more per person per day, at a cost of less than 10% of the household income. It should not involve extreme effort or take more than one hour per day to collect for the daily consumption, especially for women and children.
Sanitation is adequate if the household has access to an excreta disposal system that is for their own use or shared with a reasonable number of other households and is either a toilet directly connected to a public sewer or a septic tank, a pour flush latrine or a ventilated improved pit latrine.
A dwelling is not overcrowded if there are less than three people per habitable room. Although other indicators have been proposed, e.g., area per person, the number of persons per room has been found to correlate well with health risk indicators.
A dwelling is considered durable if it is built on a non-hazardous site and provides adequate protection from climatic extremes. More specific definitions can be made in terms of permanency of structure, use of durable building materials, compliance with building codes, state of dilapidation of dwelling, repair requirements, and level of hazard of location for example in relation to toxic waste dumps, places that flood, steep slopes or proximity to a dangerous right of way such as a highway, railway, airport or power lines.
Security of tenure is indicated by sufficient protection from evictions or documentation proving right of tenure.

[15] Ibid. 12: Key Findings and Messages.

[16] Ibid. 3:26

[17] Ibid. 12: Key Findings and Message.

[18] Mehta, Dinesh, at a UN-HABITAT Expert Group Meeting on Good Urban Policy and Legislation, Nairobi, July 2004.

[19] Ibid. 6.

[20] Asthana Sheena, *Integrated Slum Improvement in Vishakapatnam, India – problems and prospects,* in: Habitat International, Vol. 18, No.1, 1994, pp. 57-70.

[21] Stephes, Carolyn, and Harpham, Trudy, *Slum Improvement: Health Improvement?– A review of issues in health planning for the urban poor in developing countries with an annotated bibliography,* Health Policy Unit, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, PHP Departmental Publications No. 1, 1991: 16-20; 75.

[22] Ibid. 6: 9 and 14.

[23] Ibid. 12: 127.

[24] Ibid. 12: 132.

[25] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2003 – Millennium Development Goals: A Compact among Nations to end Poverty,* Oxford University Press, 2003.

[26] Ibid. 12.

[27] Ibid. 6:3.

[28] Ibid. 12: 127.

[29] De Soto, Hernando, *The Mystery of Capital,* Black Swan, London, 2001: 30-34.

[30] Ibid. 2: 1.

[31] ITDG, *Building Homes and Livelihoods – Practical answers to urban poverty,* forthcoming publication in the *Building in Partnership* series, Rugby, 2004.

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[33] Yahya, Saad et al., *Double Standards, Single Purpose – Reforming Housing Regulations to Reduce Poverty,* ITDG Publishing, London, 2001.

[34] See, for instance: Stein, Alfredo, *Critical Issues in Community Participation in Self-Help Housing Programmes – The Experience of FUNDASAL,* in Community Development Journal Vol. 25 No.1, January 1990; and Yap Kioe Sheng, *The Urban Poor as Agents of Development: Community action planning in Sri Lanka,* UNCHS, Nairobi, 1993.

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[36] Plummer, Janelle and de Cleene, Sean, *Kerala Community Development Society Alleppy,* Working Paper No. 105, GHK Research and Training, London, November 1999: 5.

[37] Schilderman, Theo, *Strengthening the Knowledge and Information Systems of the Urban Poor,* ITDG, Rugby, March 2002: 10-21.

[38] Ibid. 37: 21-24.

[39] The term "information poverty" was first used by Rasna Warah, when describing how the poor in Nairobi's slums fail to access information, in: Rasna Warah, *Divided City, Information Poverty in Nairobi's Slums,* Nairobi, June 2004: 3.

[40] The World Bank, *World Development Report 1998: Knowledge and Information for Development,* Washington, 1998: 7, 1-3.

[41] Ibid. 37: 4.

[42] Stavrou, Aki, *Information Needs, Flows and the Urban Poor,* paper presented at the 4th International Conference on Urban Poverty, Marrakech, 2000: 3.

[43] Ibid. 39.

[44] Narayan, Deepa et al., *Voices of the Poor: Crying for Change,* Oxford University Press and World Bank, 2000: 151-177 and 237-238.

[45] Ibid. 39: 36.

[46] Ruskulis, Otto, *Literature Review on Strengthening Poor People's Information Systems,* ITDG, Rugby, 2001: 8.

[47] Ibid. 37: 27-29.

[48] Woolcock, Michael, *Friends in High Places? An Overview of Social Capital,* World Bank, Washington, 2000.

[49] Ibid. 44: 116.

[50] ID21, *Development Research Insights No. 34,* IDS, Brighton, September 2000.

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[53] Ibid. 39: 37.

[54] Max Locke Centre, *Improving Knowledge Transfer in Urban Development, Guides 1-8,* University of Westminster, London, 2000.

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[58] Ruskulis, Otto, *Case Studies on Strengthening Poor People's Knowledge and Information Systems,* ITDG, Rugby, August 2001: 45-51.

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[60] Jaeckel, Monika, *The Grassroots Women's International Academy – A grassroots methodology for knowledge building and knowledge transfer,* case study for a workshop on Building Bridges with the Grassroots, Barcelona, September 2004.

[61] Ibid. 58: 49.

[62] Ibid. 58: 37-44.

[63] Ibid. 39: 43.

[64] Ibid. 58: 3-5.

ABBREVIATIONS

basin	Building Advisory Services and Information Network
CBO	Community-based Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development (UK Government)
GWIA	Grassroots Women International Academy
GROOTS	Grassroots Organizations Operating Together in Sisterhood
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ITDG	Intermediate Technology Development Group
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDT	Millennium Development Target
MINE	Mother Centers International Network for Empowerment
NAHECO	Nakuru Affordable Housing and Environment Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SIDAREC	Slums Information Development and Resource Centre
SPARC	Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres
UNCHS	United Nations Center for Human Settlements
UN	United Nations
WEDC	Water, Engineering and Development Centre, University of Loughborough

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with the grassroots

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ROOM 125

Many good examples of successful slum upgrading remain at a small scale. How can they be scaled up to reach the 1.7 billion slum dwellers predicted for 2020?

- ❖ Come and hear the voices of the people who know.
- ❖ NGOs and grassroots representatives from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.
- ❖ Debate the way forward.