Promoting Sustainable Urban Development
Networking in African Cities

SUD-Net Workshop
17-19 February 2009, Cape Town

UN❂HABITAT   Sida   ACC
                                  AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CITIES
                                  UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

This report summarizes the presentations and discussions at the SUD-Net Workshop 'Promoting Sustainable Urban Development Networking in African Cities', held at the Townhouse Hotel in Cape Town, South Africa, on 17-19 February 2009.

1.0. Introduction

The Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net), supported by UN-Habitat, is an innovative network of global partners working with actors and existing networks to promote a multi-lateral and inter-disciplinary approach to sustainable urban development. The overall aim is to work at the local level to build the capacities of national governments, strengthen the power of decision-makers of local authorities and promote the inclusion of the community in decision-making processes.

Despite the existing knowledge on the impacts of rapid urban population growth and environmental changes, decision-makers and managers in many developing and least developed countries still lack the necessary capacities to leverage resources to implement sustainable urban development policies. In addition, there is a significant gap between teaching, research and practice on sustainable urban development as well as a lack of skills and professional capacities to deal with environmental and developmental challenges at national and local levels in Africa.

SUD-Net seeks to address some of these critical issues. SUD-Net serves as a key network hub for sustainable urbanization and will support cities to mobilize partners and networks, build partnerships, implement innovative, pro-poor projects and stimulate learning and knowledge sharing of good practices. As such, it provides a mechanism that enables urban players to interact and access up to date information (tools and guidelines, resource packages, documents) and feedback on the global, regional, national and local level debates, initiatives and activities on the broad areas of sustainable urban development. SUD-Net also supports partners' efforts to enhance the capacities of institutions through improved governance and leadership in the context of decentralization.

A vital part of the SUD-Net mandate is dealing with the issue of climate change. SUD-Net also has a strong mandate to promote decentralization of decision-making and resources to local authority level. Its action plan includes focusing on developing competence in cities to be able to achieve and sustain this. For the last six months, SUD-Net has been aggressively engaging in policy debates and trying to raise the voice of cities. Links have been created between local urban knowledge networks, city councils and universities, raising the voice of the urban dynamics. Five new pilot cities in Africa have now been added to the existing Cities and Climate Change Initiative, and work is being initiated in collaboration with the World Bank. The SUD-Net Africa workshop was helpful in identifying the gaps, decide what is needed and who should be involved.

As a global facility with a clear local-level focus, national and regional networks and knowledge arenas are important. SUD-Net acknowledges the need to forge regional linkages and consensus on key urban development priorities. More specifically, SUD-Net's role and functioning will need to be defined in relation to the specific regional contexts and priorities.

The purpose of the SUD-Net Africa workshop held in Cape Town in February 2009 was therefore to help identify regional priorities that will set the agenda for SUD-Net Africa and define ways of promoting information exchange and interactions within both the regional and the global SUD-Net networks. The workshop was hosted by UN-Habitat in collaboration with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Africa Centre for Cities (ACC).

1.1. Objectives of the workshop
- To identify and strengthen existing urban planning networks in Africa, as well as identifying gaps and possible linkages;

- To share experiences, highlight the challenges of linking research to practice and identify ways of bridging the gaps, including identifying the type of support needed;
- To define the role of SUD-Net in the Africa region in promoting integrated urban planning, management and governance and enhancing the capacities of cities to address environmental changes;
- To define a possible road map for making SUD-Net Africa active, useful and relevant in addressing the urban development challenges in the Africa region while linking to the global network of SUD-Net;
- To launch the 'SUD-Net Africa' regional network.

1.2.   Organisation of the workshop

The workshop participants, drawn from 9 countries in (largely) Anglophone Africa (Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe) were representatives from cities, education and research institutions, civil society and existing (planning) networks and associations. In total, 41 participants attended the workshop. The workshop took place in three days.

Day 1: The first day introduced the workshop objectives with presentations from UN-Habitat, SIDA and the African Centre for Cities. These presentations i) outlined the mandates and urban policies of the three organisations, ii) provided an overview of the vision, goal, objectives and focus areas of SUD-Net and iii) set the pace for the workshop for assessment of existing networks and gaps at national and sub-regional levels. This was followed by a site visit to the Cape urban Observatory – an initiative on knowledge development and sharing to improve urban development. Day 1 closed with a dinner talk by Dr. Laureen Platzky, DDG, Western Cape Provincial Government, on Climate change initiatives in the Western Cape.

Day 2: Plenary session aimed at identifying concrete actions and institutional form for SUD-Net Africa. Representatives from the 9 countries provided an overview of the key urban planning and development challenges specific to their countries and outlined the existing relevant networks involved in addressing the issues. The Workshop delegates were divided into three working groups: Civil society and academia; planning practitioners and associations; and national and local government. The working groups were tasked with identifying concrete actions and the institutional form for SUD-Net Africa:
- Create an inventory of existing networks in Africa and their focus (including those beyond their representation) and identify gaps and linkages;
- Highlight challenges of linking research to practice, and ways to bridge the gaps;
- Identify what is needed to improve networks on a regional, national and local level;
- Discuss institutional ways to maximise synergies and partnerships;
- Define the role of SUD-Net Africa and possible starting points; and
- Discuss mechanisms for monitoring proposed actions.

The discussions were wide-ranging and insightful. It allowed delegates to learn about comparable processes in various country and city contexts that will in itself contribute to a number of informal networks of collaboration.

Day 2 closed with the launch of SUD-Net Africa with a key note address from Mr. Andrew Boraine, South Africa Cities Network/ Cape Tow partnership. Other key statements were delivered by: Lars Reutersward, UN-Habitat; Thomas Melin, SIDa; Henrik Nolmark, MISTRA; and Edgar Pieterse, ACC.

Day 3: Plenary session with presentations of country-level actions in a regional perspective which was ensued by discussions to identify commonalities of country-level actions, definition of concrete regional actions for SUD-Net Africa and a summary of the consensus points from the workshop.

The outcome of this workshop is presented in section 2.0. - 4.0 of this report with annexes of the workshop proceedings providing the various presentations delivered to participants, the reports from working groups and the list of participants. Section 2.0 provides a summary of the key issues identified in the three working groups together with outcomes of the subsequent plenary discussion on the issues raised. Section 3.0. provides a summary of the conclusions drawn from presentations, the working groups and the plenary discussions. The final section (4.0.) offers a possible way forward with concrete actions for SUD-Net Africa. The full proceedings of the workshop have been provided as Annex 1.

2.0.   Summary of the Key outcomes from the Working Groups

Despite the diverse constituencies that the three groups represented, four striking commonalities were identified amongst the key actions identified by each working group (please see Annex 1 Proceedings from the workshop, on Working Groups: Identifying Action to Meet the Challenges, for details). The commonalities identified were as elaborated in (i) to (ii) below:

   i)   Championing the Urban Agenda

All of the groups concurred that we have some distance to travel to persuade governments and other leaders that the urban agenda requires considered and sustained policy attention. The key in fostering champions for the urban agenda at national and local levels would be to identify good local initiatives that demonstrate the impact that can be achieved in developmental terms if public policy leaders take a serious interest in sustainable urban development. In other words, we need to move away from simply invoking the policy imperative to advance sustainable urban development to making the case more clearly through practical, real-life examples on the ground. SUD-Net can play an important role equipping policy managers and leaders with the relevant information, suitably targeted and packaged, to enable them to become the internal champions of the urban question. There was general agreement that national governments are unlikely to shift their attitudes unless there is considerable pressure from within countries in conjunction with external engagement.

   ii)   Advocacy & Learning

It is not enough to supply urban policy makers with useful information about the importance of the urban agenda. It is also necessary to engage these actors, along with leaders from business, civil society and knowledge institutions on the importance of local, national and regional urban issues. Given the urgency of the condition, it is important that such engagement take on an advocacy format because there is a need for political and policy action in the short-term. One of the examples that emerged from the discussion was the case of Johannesburg and other metropolitan authorities in the Gauteng region of South Africa. It was pointed out that the Gauteng city-region extends as much to Durban, Richards Bay and Bloemfontein in South Africa as it does to Luanda, Kinshasa, Dar es Salaam and Maputo. Given this transnational urban condition, it is important to target various public policy agencies with clear advocacy messages. However, it

was also recognised that the lack of policy attention and action is not simply a matter of intransigence but more often related to a lack of useful information. Advocacy was therefore closely linked to a learning agenda. It was stressed by many in the three working groups that we need to recognise the virtuous circle between teaching or knowledge sharing, greater capacity for learning amongst various stakeholders and shifts in policy thinking and practice. So, the sentiment was that advocacy delinked from a learning agenda would be short-sighted.

iii)   Portal function

The concern with learning and knowledge sharing fed into a widespread discussion on the need for effective portals where a wide range of interested stakeholders who must a play a role in the broad-based process of sustainable urban development can access accurate, user-friendly and action oriented materials on topical issues. There was a strong sentiment across the working groups that to a large extent many of Africa's cities and towns are struggling with very similar and certainly comparable problems. This suggests that there is great potential to design and operationalise knowledge sharing instruments that can have widespread and quick impacts. In an era of web-based learning and sharing, SUD-Net must explore how best it can facilitate such a portal service. A portal does not have to be the repository of all information but at a minimum it can fulfil a referral role so that those with needs and questions can find their way to specialised resources. For example people from ICLEI and the World Bank pointed out that they also have relevant knowledge resources and would be happy for a SUD-Net portal to refer people to them and vice versa.

iv) Inventory

A strong and shared theme that arose from across the working groups was the need to create and maintain an inventory of existing networks. It was pointed out that there are already a plethora of knowledge and training networks that relate to urban topics but often these are very specialised or geographically limited. SUD-Net should develop a comprehensive inventory of these networks, assess their relevance, coverage and utility and see how SUD-Net could bridge gaps that may exist and strengthen existing networks. A recurring theme was that SUD-Net should not replace existing networks but add value to them and provide higher order services that can help people see linkages and comparable learning at various levels organisation.

Two primary themes dominated the plenary discussions following the working group reports:

I.   The need to identify and define concrete actions that will enable *SUD-Net as a facilitator of resources, knowledge, and capacity/skills sharing and enhancement* in the region. This should include SUD-Net's key role in promoting the inclusion of effective and relevant knowledge in policy dialogues at national and city level.

II.   The need to develop very *specific regional interventions which will respond to the peculiarities of the sub-regions* (economic, social, cultural, language, planning, governance and management historical contexts etc), without losing track of the local priorities or the larger systems that they fit into.

These two high level imperatives clearly incorporate the four themes identified as priorities by the working groups.

The synthesis from the three working groups generated discussions around some key pertinent issues:

a) There was concern about possible advancement of bureaucratic processes and suggestions made to address this included making SUD-Net in Africa a loose affiliation, but which retains strong and structured institutional set-up to have the ability to influence policy. As one delegate mused, "is a structure with governmental focal points still a network?" In contrast, some delegates noted that "it is difficult to think of networking in a loose sense. There are always issues of authority and accountability, especially in the context of government entities."

b) While regional networking was vital, warning bells were however raised against 'ignoring the local in favour of the regional since the local agenda needs to be encouraged and supported. The suggestion made was that SUD-Net could perhaps facilitate this, especially if a local area is doing something that provides a lesson to be learned for the region, and can share it in a positive way. As some delegates pointed out, national focal points were more relevant, and what was done there would filter down into the local level anyway.

This need for clear entry or focal points to anchor SUD-Net at a national and sub-continental level was not a shared view and there were indications if national focal points are established, it may become complex since it intimates a differential dynamic whereby some members of the network may be more pivotal than others. Pragmatically it was felt that this was unavoidable but an important part of ensuring the networks success as an active conduit of knowledge and learning.

The conclusion drawn against this point was that since SUD-Net seeks to bring together urban actors within governments and across the government-civil society distinction, and these respective organisations work with different senses of mandate and protocol, it will be imperative for SUD-Net to be clear on its role, functions and modus operandi.

c) The need for SUD-Net to interact and collaborate with existing regional political networks was strongly emphasised indicating that the national governments and established regional bodies like NEPAD, IGAD, the AU should be drawn into the network. The proposal made was that the interaction needs to be well conceived so that the network remains relatively independent of political manoeuvres. The political and financial support that regional networks like NEPAD could provide found relevant to SUD-Net.

d) There was recognition of the fact that SUD-Net looks at the urban agenda in a holistic manner and its potential for providing a platform for harmonised resources through the global portal was re-emphasised. In this respect, within the region, SUD-Net will have to aim at fostering strengthening existing partnerships and provide access to urban development services and tools. This was in recognition of the fact that this network makes provision for different ways of engagement and different partnership levels. Participants reiterated that a key feature of the network will be a high degree of flexibility and permeability so that numerous stakeholders can experience it as a value-add resource for their own work and agendas.

e) Highlighting the importance of networks traversing national boundaries, the President of the Commonwealth Association of Planners, explained how an African planning language was starting to emerge as a result of the interactions between Commonwealth countries; "the network offers us a voice to the heads of government…some countries have become members of the Commonwealth even though they were never British colonies. We are seeing the development of south-south and north-south links, as well as a critical breakthrough into the Francophone countries."

Such contributions reflected the growing realisation that at regional and broader linkages are vital in a globalizing era but this does not have to be at the expense of local context and specificity.

f) There was further emphasis on the importance of regional networking. Highlighting the fact that 'a city is not as strong as a group of cities… you need a group of cities, but they don't have to be in the same country in order to cooperate. The possibilities are huge. You need to trade energy and other resources that are scarce in some countries but abundant in others. For example, Dar es Salaam and Nairobi may have more in common with each other than they do with other cities in their own countries. Governments have not really acknowledged that, and there is a need for strong regional organisation like SUD-Net that can support these issues by guiding and teaching and advocacy." (Thomas Melin, Leading Urban Specialist, SIDA).

Such an observation goes to the heart of SUD-Net's challenge of changing mindsets of policy decision makers to recognise very different inter-dependencies and linkages between cities and towns in their national territories. It was acknowledged in this discussion that regional development issues continue to be defined by and large as an inter-nation state affair!

g) The mechanisms of how and who should have access to and become part of the network was discussed. Some of the other key issues raised included the need for SUD-Net to engage with marginalised groups at lower levels including slum dwellers. As confirmed by UN-Habitat, there are processes of identifying players at the local level who can interact with SUD-Net including the utilization of the existing and new local urban knowledge arenas and multi-stakeholder forums. Additionally, UN-Habitat's ongoing work through regional, and country offices will act as crucial local hubs. Efforts will be harnessed to strengthen, develop and improve. This is in recognition of the fact that existing structures are vital to reach the players that need capacity building. The emphasis was laid on the fact that SUD-Net is seeking to reinforce and strengthen such existing structures in a more harmonised and accessible manner.

3.0. Conclusions & Recommendations

A strong consensus that emerged from the workshop was that there was a great need to define the regional roles and the functions SUD-Net is positioned to fulfil. In the African context, the conclusion was that SUD-Net will require clarity and speed on resolving four critical issues:

i)   identifying, supporting and growing effective champions for the urban agenda within governments (at all levels), knowledge institutions and civil society at large;

ii)   channelling a highly focused and refined advocacy agenda to raise the awareness of key decision-makers but also to facilitate broad based learning about the centrality of sustainable urbanization to national and regional development efforts;

iii)   Undertaking these activities at scale will demand the creation and expansion of effective portals and entry points for various urban actors with a stake in the sustainable urban development agenda; and finally,

iv)   SUD-Net's success will depend on knowing what is already existing and how best to work with those initiatives so that the players in the field see and feel the network will add value to their work.

SUD-Net in Africa will therefore need to **facilitate knowledge sharing and the translation of this knowledge into policy and practice.** The network should not be seen as a mechanism for creating new knowledge. Of crucial importance to the countries was the need to clarify the institutional set-up for SUD-Net Africa while still recognising the impact of the sub-regional particularities (related to language, institutional set-up, level of urban development socio-cultural issues etc).

Whereas it was clear that SUD-Net is about sharing knowledge than generating new knowledge, it is important to demystify what SUD-Net actually means at a national and city level. There is an urgent need to assess the skill deficit and be as precise and pragmatic as possible about what to do about it and how long such interventions will take. There was great emphasis on the fact that there is a capacity and quality gap citing that worldwide there are only about 1.3 million architects. Of these, 30 000 are in Africa (the same number as there are in Italy) and 20 000 of these work in Egypt!

SUD-Net's mandate is not to solve the problems, but to highlight issues needing urgent attention in order to promote sustainable urban development. It was proposed that it may attractive to talk about pioneer SUD-Net cities, to recognize excellence and serious political commitment, to provide an ideal to which people can aspire, as this can demonstrate what SUD-Net can catalyze. UN-Habitat supported the importance of focus cities as a means to avoid spreading too thinly. In the same vein, SUD-Net Africa will start being operationalized in Anglophone Africa, but over time it is expected to be established in other sub-regions on the continent.

It was thus proposed that in order to have a balanced view of the urban planning and wider urban development issues within the African region that SUD-Net will address, other sub-regional workshops to cover the Anglo-phone countries and the northern African countries was necessary. A final all-inclusive workshop should then be held to define a road-map for Africa, which gives consideration to the different sub-regional contexts. As was pointed out by UN-Habitat, it is important to bear in mind that **SUD-Net is not a project, but a global a global initiative**, and hence not limited or confined to the regions. It is meant to serve as an umbrella that coordinates and brings together ongoing and future activities, with the intention of improving practice and results. In Particular, UN-Habitat is keen and works towards the reduction of slum growth. From the perspective of sustainable urban development therefore addressing this is not primarily a question of resources, but about putting it onto the agenda and enabling systemic change.

The feedback received from the evaluation of the workshop submitted by participants indicated that the workshop was a very fruitful forum for the exchange of knowledge and practices at country and city level. The workshop served to identify existing planning networks in Africa, their strengths and potential gaps, and offered opportunities for further linkage. It also enabled the creation of new relationships and partnerships among participants and their institutions, be they cities, national government, universities or professional associations. More specifically, the workshop resulted in a clearer strategy on how to take SUD-Net Africa forward, including its modalities of operation. The event culminated into the launch of SUD-Net Africa.

4.0. The Way Forward

The next steps for UN-Habitat to take the process forward are threefold:
- I.   Engage in comprehensive mapping of existing networks and their roles;
- II.   Further conceptualize SUD-Net to respond to the gaps and challenges identified in Africa; and
- III.   Bring other sub-regions of Africa together this year.

To ensure effective implementation of the proposals offered in this workshop the following specific activities have been identified for possible focus of follow-up activities.

1. Immediately *undertaking a comprehensive mapping of existing urban planning networks, associations*, etc with an eye on identifying who is who, highlighting mandates, roles and responsibilities, level of interaction and past, current and planned activities. This mapping should also highlight the strengths/weaknesses or success and challenges facing them. This review will further show where linkages between education, research, policy and practice exist or lack in the different countries.

2. *Holding further and sub-regional meetings* (considering the representation for this workshop was Anglo-phone) to gain further insights and consensus on the key gaps and demand. This knowledge is vital to inform the design and implementation activities of SUD-Net Africa, given the peculiarities/heterogeneity of the sub-regions and countries. Such ongoing engagements are essential to bring to enable an African identity to encourage buy-in.

3. *Assessing the skills and capacity deficits* with regard to sustainable urban development in government and knowledge institutions. Related, identifying the quality issues that affect access, management and sharing of resources, technology, and information/knowledge. This work will be essential to focus the priorities and services of SUD-Net.

4. *Identifying pioneer or pilot SUD-Net cities* that will set the pace for the African region in addressing existing urban planning (management, governance) skills and capacity deficits. Such pilots should show how linkages with governments and networks could benefit the relevant city and region. The pioneer cities should enable city-city networking particularly across the sub-regions and across continents (i.e. traversing national and regional boundaries). SUD-Net can play a role to support the African region in designing and developing model initiatives that will in effect become "interactive learning centres."

5. *Identifying and defining mechanisms for championing 'urban'* in the local, regional and global agenda. This will be framed in view of the prevailing environmental and developmental challenges in the region that must be addressed in advancing the long-term sustainability principles. Given that the urban question is still very under-recognized, particularly in Africa, SUD-Net's role in holding and linking two kinds of information – an inventory of regional and urban networks and relevant policy information to ensure awareness of urban issues – can position it effectively to facilitate effective advocacy through participating networks.

6. *Defining a multi-sectoral approach* to sustainable urbanization in Africa, which can serve as a possible platform for enhancing a broad based understanding of a multi-dimensional approach at city scale, which reinforces the need for effective partnerships between disciplines engaged in urban planning, management and governance. Once SUD-Net provides this framework it will be positioned to serve as a gateway for partnerships in Africa.

7. SUD-Net will position itself to ***support the local agenda for action within the region through SUD-Net platforms*** that will strengthen existing local knowledge arenas and multi-stakeholder forums. The UN-Habitat regional and country offices will come into their own as crucial local hubs supporting local knowledge arenas. SUD-Net will prioritise the elaboration of clear methodologies that can facilitate different ways of engagement and partnership to unlock the sharing of services, tools and information.

8. ***Defining a regional monitoring and tracking mechanism of urban development performance*** against Habitat Agenda objectives and MDG targets. Furthermore, SUD-Net will support the development of common regional positions on key urban development issues such as renewable energy, climate change, intra-urban inequalities, etc. In this way sustainable urban development themes and priorities can be linked more effectively to action on existing mandates of political regional bodies and institutions like NEPAD, AMCOW, UCLG-A, etc.

9. SUD-Net will define how best it can play a role in ***augmenting Spatial data from country to country*** and identify ways of engaging with relevant regional actors that have inputs into the planning processes. SUD-Net will seek to provide the platform for the elaboration of a knowledge access and management portal (including sharing of good practices and experiences).

10. SUD-Net will explore how best it can facilitate and support ***the establishment of an African research publication on prioritized sustainable urban planning and development issues*** to promote and protect intellectual outputs and property of the African region.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Proceedings from the workshop (presentations and working group reports)

Annex 2. Workshop programme and Aide memoire

Annex 3. List of Participants

Annex 1: Proceedings from the workshop (presentations and working group reports)

Meeting the Challenge of Sustainable Urbanisation through Networking

Presentation by Lars Reutersward, Director of UN-Habitat's Global Division

The world's urban population is expected to double in just over a decade with an additional 1.5 billion people moving into the world's towns and cities. This wave of urbanisation will pose critical challenges to governments around the world.

Urbanisation in Africa is a different phenomenon compared to most other continents. In Africa, 50% of people will live in cities, mainly in secondary cities and towns, by 2030. Large cities will develop into urban regions whilst rural-to-urban migration will result in greater numbers of poor people living in these built-up areas.

Planning tools that have been created in the developed world are not always relevant to African contexts. Tools that were developed in Britain, for instance, would simply not work in a city like Yaounde, since they don't take the challenge of slums into account and may be ineffective or even irrelevant to the context.

The Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net), supported by UN-HABITAT, has been established to assist governments to face and plan for the major challenges of urbanisation. UN-Habitat's vision is to develop and promote better urban policies, improve the capacities of governments, institutions, decision-makers and other urban actors and facilitate the development of liveable, productive and inclusive cities. SUD-Net seeks to contribute to this vision by facilitating cooperation, dialogue and knowledge management.

SUD-Net has arranged its activities around five key themes: urban governance; urban planning; environmental planning and management; education, training and research; and the urban economy. These themes are operationalized through existing and planned initiatives, such as the Cities and Climate Change initiative and the Habitat Partner University (HPU) network. SUD-Net seeks to reinforce existing synergies, deepen and expand cooperation and mobilise resources for joint activities.

The Habitat Partner University (HPU) network, one of SUD-Net's existing initiatives, has identified the world's universities as critical partners in sustainable urban development, and recognises that universities around the world are becoming the engines for economic growth. The HPU network is intended to bridge the gap between education, research and practice in sustainable urban development. Actively engaged partner universities include University of British Columbia in Canada, the Norwegian University of Technology working with Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, and Tongji University in China.

Introducing SUD-Net Africa

Presentation by Rafael Tuts, Chief Urban Environmental Officer, UN-Habitat

The Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net) initiated by UN-Habitat is an innovative global and multi-disciplinary network of partners committed to sustainable urban development. It is intended as a partnership platform for the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

SUD-Net supports local action towards sustainable development through a range of activities, including networking, policy dialogue and participation of urban stakeholders, tools development and knowledge management, and awareness raising, education, training and capacity building.

SUD-Net's added value lies in its inter-disciplinary and systemic approach, which will reinforce and create synergies between existing urban development networks and partnerships. It will also deepen and expand the cooperation within UN-Habitat and with other UN agencies. Furthermore, it is envisaged that SUD-Net will mobilize resources for joint activities for quick wins and to promote smart partnerships to facilitate implementation in countries and cities.

As a key network hub for sustainable urbanization, SUD-Net will work in partnership with a wide variety of organisations, ranging from government (local, national) to civil society organisations (NGOs/CBOs, training institutions, research and education institutions), media and the public more broadly. SUD-Net will also work with city networks, professional planning associations, the private sector international organizations and development banks.

The intention is to create regional networks, which come together in a global network for sustainable urban development. There are a variety of ways to engage with SUD-Net. Institutions, organizations, networks and professionals who have registered at the SUD-Net website can become members. Organizations who support the overall goal of SUD-Net can become endorsers, receiving information via newsletters and participating in on-line events. Global partners are those who contribute substantial knowledge and resources, both financial and technical.

Addressing the Inertia on Urban Planning in Africa

Presentation by Edgar Pieterse, Director of the African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town

Over the years, scholars have been trying to figure out why sustainable urban development in Africa seems to be impossible. A number of reasons have emerged. At the top of the list is the reluctance of African leaders to grapple with the urbanization challenge, and to recognize its scale. African politicians are in fact in denial about what the massive flood of people currently pouring into the continent's towns and cities will really mean.

The latest data indicates that Africa has the highest rate of urban growth in the world, the highest number of urban dwellers in slums and the mostly rapidly rising rate of urban poverty. The percentage of people in the world living in urban areas has increased from 37% in 1970 to 47% in 2000 and is expected to reach 60% in 2030, according to UN-Habitat figures. Part of the problem underpinning the lack of response is the lack of reliable data. The limited data that is available refers mainly to colonial definitions of the city and ignores the real city. As a result, urban scholars and practitioners are flying in the dark, with little real notion of what is going on.

The crisis of leadership and policy generation is exacerbated by anti-urban legislation that criminalizes people who want to move to the cities along with a large-scale failure to manage urban growth. There are a number of drivers behind this failure to acknowledge and cope with urban growth in Africa. Government denial of the problem together with the discouragement of migration is one aspect.

Another key challenge is political authoritarianism and the fact that this kind of politics prefers weak but tightly controlled urban areas. Small tax bases and inappropriate fiscal policies also militate against the mobilization of adequate resources for effective urban interventions. In

addition, weak civil society institutions in African combined with a lack of political accountability make it virtually impossible to sustain an urban policy reform agenda.

The consequences of this failure to come up with decent policy include the stifling of local democracy efforts, the passage of anti-urban policies together with a deadening policy inertia that has held policy-makers in thrall for decades.

What is required is to change the paradigm of the discussion, one that recognizes, understands and trusts the efforts of ordinary people, and takes consideration the views of the urban poor. Along with developing policies that are inclusive and pro-poor, it is also important to gather credible data in order to target advocacy efforts. It is essential to arrive at a more balanced, sustainable and integrated development agenda on the back of a desperate need for better infrastructure.

SIDA's Perspective on Global Priorities for Sustainable Urban Development

Presentation by Thomas Melin, Lead Urban Specialist, SIDA

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) has one central goal: to help create conditions that enable the poor to improve their lives. In its work, SIDA is guided by a rights perspective and is particularly keen to look at things from the perspective of the poor. To achieve its goal, SIDA works with a variety of development partners, such as local authorities, national governments, civil society, multilateral agencies and development banks, and regional and local institutions.

Since 2006 Sweden has contributed 1% of its Gross Domestic Product to assisting developing countries. Many of these countries are post-conflict states who are in urgent need of support for infrastructure provision and institutional reform.

SIDA has two urban objectives: creating cities without slums and sustainable cities. In reality, these objectives are not always compatible with governments' development agendas indeed this has proven to be a major challenge. Safe, healthy neighborhoods and sustainable cities are not usually on governments' agendas and are thus also not raised as priorities in deliberations between the south and donors. Still it is key to raise these issues as political commitment is key to drive urban planning issues to feature not only on to the agendas of regional institutions but also of central governments.

There is clear evidence that most countries in the world have neglected infrastructure. Thus, massive investment in infrastructure is urgently needed, because economic development needs infrastructure.

SIDA is currently involved in a wide range of projects, including a project on housing improvements in Guatemala, waste removal in Honduras, an urban land rights project in Kenya and an integrated urban planning project in South Africa. SIDA also supports a Cities Development Initiative in Asia that helps municipalities to access resources for initiatives aimed at improving urban air quality, green house gas reduction, improved road safety and more accessible public transport, such as bus rapid transit systems and non-motorized transport. At the global level, SIDA supports the Community Led Infrastructure Financing Facility (CLIFF), a strategic financing facility that enables community-led slum upgrading and housing construction through small scale saving schemes and provides assistance for these groups to get access to joint loans from banks and financial institutions.

With 100,000 people per day moving into cities across the globe, governments and institutions are faced with huge challenges. These challenges includes inappropriate regulations, uncoordinated civil society, a lack of regional institutions, limited private sector involvement, huge climate change adaptation needs and a lack of educated urban specialists. These are precisely the areas that the Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net), which has recently been established by UN-Habitat with the support of SIDA, aims to affect. Regional institutions are very important in addressing these urban development challenges, yet relatively few regional institutions exist in Africa. Part of SIDA's task is to support and build these institutions.

Links and Gaps Between Education, Research and Urban Planning and Management

Presentation by Rose Osinde-Alabaster, UN-Habitat

The UN-HABITAT evaluation of the project 'Strengthening of National Training Capacities for better local governance and urban development'[1] identified a need to bridge the gap between teaching, research and practice through the development of innovative learning systems. In 2008, the Training and Capacity Building Branch of UN-Habitat undertook regional assessments to identify sub-regional linkages, existing challenges and gaps influencing the achievement of sustainable urban planning and management. Four sub-regional studies were undertaken: in Latin America, West Africa, Central America and Southern Africa.

The Southern Africa study took place in eight Anglophone countries in the SADEC region. The purpose of the study was to assist UN-Habitat and its partners in the design of relevant interventions to promote the relevance of tertiary educational institutions in addressing the challenges faced by urban planners, decision-makers and managers. A comprehensive assessment was done which involved reviews, internal and external consultations, and tele-correspondence.

A number of key findings emerged from the study.
- High urbanization processes, coupled with relatively low economic growth, led to serious urban challenges.
- Most countries participating in the study were ill equipped to deal with this due to lack of skills and capacity.
- Currently the education sector is not adequately addressing knowledge gaps or facilitating the exchange of data, including spatial data.

In relation to the above issues, decentralization in these countries has tended to follow an instrumentalist approach, with choices defined by law, not demand. Conventional urban planning systems therefore remain inadequate under these processes of urbanization and decentralization. Thus, better governance, relevant education research and training, and urban planning are keys to harnessing skills needed for SUD-Net.

Most urban planning and development curricula and research in universities is undertaken by the departments, faculties, schools of geography, architecture, engineering or the built environment. Urban planning and infrastructure however requires professional competencies from a broader set of disciplines. As such, urban planners in several of these countries were found to be ill equipped for their tasks and responsibilities.

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[1] UNHABITAT (2007), Evaluation of the project 'Strengthening of National Training Capacities for Better Local Governance and Urban Development'.

The study further found limited interaction between different academic institutions dealing with urban development and between these institutions and the urban planning and development sector. Thus, there is a need for improved and more targeted knowledge sharing and for mechanisms to promote linkages between these sectors.

In an effort to respond to these issues, UN-Habitat is engaging in education for sustainable urban development through the Habitat Partner Universities creating linkages and platforms for interaction through the global, regional national and local portal, and strengthening local and regional urban knowledge arenas through SUD-Net.

Site Visit: The Cape Urban Observatory

The Cape Urban Observatory (CUO) is an initiative on knowledge management and sharing to improve urban development. The purpose of the Cape Urban Observatory (CUO) is to contribute to the development of sustainable human settlements in the greater Cape Town area. It aims to facilitate evidence-based decision-making and improved collaboration and learning by providing a public platform for the storage, dissemination and analysis of timely and reliable geo-spatial information and analysis on themes relevant to integrated development planning.

The CUO, initiated by the African Centre for Cities, is fundamentally a partnership between local and provincial government, academics, and civil society. Its organisational structure includes the CUO Forum, which includes representatives from the Provincial Government of the Western Cape, the local governments of Cape Town and adjacent municipalities, the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), the South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the ACC.

Workshop participants were introduced to the CUO, to understand how it fits into existing efforts by the City of Cape Town and the Provincial Government of the Western Cape, and to discuss related themes of integrated development and partnerships between practice and academia.

Climate Change Initiatives in the Western Cape

Dinner Presentation by Laurine Platzky, Deputy Director General in the Western Cape Provincial Government

The world can be divided into six floral kingdoms and the Western Cape, making up just 0.04% of the landmass of the earth, is one of them. There are over 8 700 plant species in the Western Cape, of which 68% are not found naturally anywhere else in the world.

While this makes the Western Cape a real attraction for tourists, the provincial government wanted to ensure that the desired growth in the tourism industry does not compromise the uniqueness of the natural environment. In 2002, the local government looked at the spatial aspect of tourism development and realized that sustainability was the way to go in the Western Cape. It soon became clear, however, that there were no real guidelines and no effective regulatory framework in place.

After much intense work, contradictory pressures and a host of difficulties, this ultimately culminated into the Western Cape Climate Change Action Plan in 2008, the first such strategy by a

regional government in Africa. The plan includes targets to reduce reliance on fossil fuels by 15% within five years by increasing consumption from renewable energy sources.[2]

Certain problems that are emerging now could have been avoided through better planning 20-40 years ago. For example, sustainable urban development is significantly challenged by current land use management frameworks and practices as well as an apartheid legacy of suburban planning. Natural disasters, such as fires and floods, have also had their toll in the province in recent years, which has informed a reassessment of the impacts of developments.

The Western Cape Provincial Growth and Development Strategy identifies path-breakers, which are initiatives that are expected to make a real difference, because people need to see that change is happening. The single biggest intervention, or path-breaker, is around public transport. The plan calls for effective and efficient use of resources that will make it easier for people to access all areas of the Western Cape. The plan also makes provision for cleaner fuels and the development of South Africa's first electric car as well as new public transport systems across the province. The second path-breaker is in skills development, making sure that there is a match between supply and demand. The third path-breaker is in the integration of human settlements, creating neighborhoods that can provide the best possible quality of life.

Woven throughout the action plan is a triple bottom line, which implies asking three key interrelated question: How does this create jobs, improve social cohesion and maintain and build ecological integrity? By effectively answering this question, the Western Cape government will have succeeded in its mandate.

Outcomes from the Working Group discussions

Working Group 1: Academia and Civil Society

- Create a thorough inventory of country-to-country networks that already exist.
- SUD-Net should identify and engage with relevant regional actors that have an input into the planning process at a national level as it pertains to urbanization policies and at a city level as it pertains to sectoral and multi-sectoral planning processes.
- If technically feasible, SUD-Net could augment spatial data from country to country to reinforce the importance of rigour and cross-country comparability.
- Given the over-reliance on external knowledge, SUD-Net could promote an African research publication to promote and protect intellectual outputs and property from the Africa region.
- Act as a portal for knowledge access and management (including sharing of good practices and experiences) for urban development practitioners and scholars from across the Continent.
- Given the shortage of practical illustrative ideas, the group argued that SUD-Net should design model initiatives i.e. interactive learning centres, such as Local Urban Knowledge Arenas. In such multi-actor settings collaborative approaches to solving urban problems could be advanced, documented, leart from and re-applied elsewhere

Working Group 2: National and local government

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[2] This can be downloaded at http://www.capegateway.gov.za/Text/2008/10/western_cape_climate_change_strat_final_2008.pdf

- Build on existing networks and institutions such as the African Ministerial Conferences and UCLG-A or civil society networks. There was a strong sentiment that SUD-Net should not duplicate, or reinvent the wheel but rather position itself to draw disparate and uneven knowledge sharing initiatives together.
- Champion sustainable urban development themes and priorities. Perhaps do this by establishing a network of focal points or agents of change to champion the urban agenda.
- Provide structured knowledge sharing support, by becoming the 'Google' for urban development and facilitating discussion groups on selected topics.
- Monitoring and tracking urban development performance against Habitat Agenda objectives and Millennium Development Goals and other international goals and targets that have a bearing on sustainable urban development.
- Facilitate the development of common positions (or at least thinking notes or discussion papers) on key urban development issues such as renewable energy, climate change and reducing inequality.

Working Group 3: Planning Schools & Associations

- SUD-Net could explore fulfilling an 'Information Portal' functio around accessing funding for research and capacity building initiatives in the domains of urban development.
- Linked to the first issue, also explore how sometimes contradictory funding initiatives of donors and development agencies could be coordinated more effectively.
- A logical consequence of these roles would then be to play a role in facilitating the distribution of funding, e.g. providing an endorsement for alligned applications. SUD-Net should only take on these kinds of roles if it is properly geared up to do it effectively.
- It was stressed that despite the envisaged centrality of SUD-Net to the urban development policy world, it must resist becoming a gatekeeper of donor programmes and new emerging networks; its role must be that of facilitator.
- SUD-Net is well placed to be a repository of information, i.e. seek, identify and coordinate information into central repository for widespread access. This could be regarded as being a filter or moderator of information.
- Given that many existing networks and initiatives are severely under-resources, SUD-net could identify and channel support for networks.
- To avoid information assymetries, SUD-Net could audit donor funding agencies and match their interventions better with networks; i.e. facilitate appropriate connections across the system.
- In terms of SUD-Net IT function it could optimise web-based exposure of existing networks and broaden their effectiveness.
- Given that so many local efforts dissipate, SUD-Net could be effective by leveraging support for developing and resuscitating networks in particular thematic areas and/or geographical regions.
- All of the above requires SUD-Net to maintain an accurate inventory of existing networks.

The workshop also provided space for the collection of information in a number of key areas from the participants. This information is summarized and presented in the below text boxes.

Is Africa special?

Workshop participants were asked if there was anything specific about Africa that should be highlighted in the global context of SUD-Net and/or that would determine the work of SUD-Net Africa. The feedback from country representatives included the following:

Namibia: At the level of governance *corruption* was highlighted as a special issue ravaging countries in Africa: "What special issues about Africa should be taken into account?" asked Fenni-Fiindje Nauyala, Deputy Director of Housing, Habitat, Planning and Technical Services Coordination in Namibia. "I can tell you in one word: corruption!"

Botswana: Africa is developing in an un-uniform manner for various reasons. This concept of sustainability is taken as known, but how many people actually understand how to do this? SUD-Net could sensitize governments on how to work sustainably, even starting on smaller concepts like urban agriculture. African relevant applications are vital.

Ethiopia: Yes, we are different, and most of African countries have a big problem. Our leaders have to have a willingness to hear the voice of the people, and this is not always the case. We have good networks, but sharing expertise and resources is not always happening

Ghana: Populations are growing and so are the slums. SUD-Net should aim at a more sustainable urban environment in Africa by strengthening specific policy areas. SUD-Net should prioritize African urbanization challenges because of the seriousness of African problems.

Malawi: Cities in Africa are heterogeneous and it would be critical for SUD-Net to have an African identity in order to encourage buy in. We have some positive things in our cities that other parts of the world can learn from; it's not all bad.

Namibia: The one key issue that needs special consideration in the African context is corruption. We also need to consider which elements are sustainable and what we can build on to bring about a sustainable urban agenda that has African ways of doing things. Don't make solutions so generic that they negate local culture.

South Africa: Networking in Africa is hard work for various reasons that need to be taken into consideration. Avoid falling into the trap of looking at Africa as a whole. North Africa is very different to Southern or Eastern Africa, for example, so commonalities may not be solely within Africa. The content must drive the way we share and who we share with.

Tanzania: When it comes to the application of technology, the level of knowledge is significantly lower than on other continents. Also language is an issue. Many issues in Africa are different, especially when it comes to governance and access to services. It is not the Africans that are different; it is that the issues are different.

Zimbabwe: Yes, Africa is special. We have governance issues. The nature of politics in Africa means there is an absence of political will in terms of the efforts of people, universities and civil society. Also African governments tend to be suspicious of networks and they shackle them to prevent delivery and function. Many issues are not talked about, such as the fear to discuss HIV/AIDS. With regard to HIV/AIDS, what are we planning for in terms of

SUD-Net Africa: A gateway for good governance/looking ahead

SUD-Net Africa was officially launched at the workshop. The importance of knowledge sharing and networks as vehicles for sustainable development was emphasised at the launch.

As Professor Edgar Pieterse, Director of UCT's African Centre for Cities commented, "making networks work requires a subtle alchemy of science and art". If the commitment and enthusiasm shown by the nearly 50 delegates from 10 African countries at the three day workshop are an indication of a successful network, then it would seem that the magic is already at work.

Guest speaker Andrew Boraine of the South African Cities Network and Cape Town Partnership was excited by the promise of SUD-Net. "The urban question is still very under-recognised, particularly in Africa," he said. "In our own country, when we point out that most of the poor live in urban areas, people still get up and ask about rural and agricultural development. There are still a lot of myths about urban areas. The emphasis on rural development means that cities are often seen as problems rather than solutions," he said.

According to Boraine, one of the problems was that the relatively high average wealth of cities masks the huge areas of urban poverty and unemployment. "So the national policy tends to see cities as cash cows rather than as places needing investment," he said. Boraine welcomed SUD-Net's focus on good governance and environmental management, and had particular praise for the emphasis on planning in the urban economy. "In Cape Town, our economic department does not even employ an economist," he said. "Sadly, this is probably the norm rather than the exception in African cities and this must change."

Thomas Melin, Lead Urban Specialist for the Swedish donor agency Sida, one of the hosts of the workshop, agreed. "We want to support initiatives that use a multisectoral approach to give people a platform to fulfil their dreams. We've noticed that many dreams are urban, but in Africa we haven't found many institutions we can work with that acknowledge the strength and relevance of cities. We hope SUD-Net will be a gateway for partnerships in Africa, so that we can all go ahead at the speed that is needed to raise the profile of the urban agenda," Melin said.

In toasting the launch of the new network, Lars Reutersward, Director of UN-Habitat's Global Division, said: "We are proud of the work we have done to conceptualise SUD-Net," he said. "But our purpose here at this workshop is to listen. The UN alone cannot do what needs to be done. We need to work together, to think hard and to find new ways of meeting the challenge to develop sustainable cities."

Other data generating facilities in Africa & Feedback on the CUO from workshop delegates

Botswana: The National GIS-based system was started in 1990s and has been improved year by year. There are protocols on dissemination. It covers both urban and rural areas. This has been cascaded to five pilot villages.

Ethiopia: We appreciate the collaboration between the university and the government. I'd like to see this in my country. In Ethiopia we have had a lot of censuses but have no access to the data for research purposes.

Ghana: Data is collected and synthesised but not at the level we saw at CUO. We have a statistics service responsible for data collection and dissemination. Since the mid 1990s, we have had an integrated, three tier planning system: National (which prepares guidelines for development planning), Municipal (municipal level planning and coordinating unit, responsible for short and medium term action plans, which dovetail into national framework) and Rural.

Malawi: The visit to the CUO was very relevant to us because our national observatory plans are underway. The problem will be with the collection of data. We have a national spatial data centre and GIS capacity building supported by donors and government.

Namibia: The visit to the CUO was not really an eye-opener because we have something similar under the Government National Planning Commission. We intend to create a National Observatory which will cover all 13 areas of the country, both urban and rural.

Rwanda: The Ministry of Infrastructure oversees the whole process of planning, both urban and rural. There is also a programme of mapping the whole country, funded by Sweden.

South Africa: The impact of the CUO could be strengthened by feeding into research agenda of various organisations interested in urban development dynamics. We need to strengthen and formalise the relationship with Statistics South Africa so that the national statistics system uses data captured by CUO and vice versa. Also, there is a need for close working relationships with emerging observatories such as the Gauteng City-region Urban Observatory.

Tanzania: Growing urbanisation results in crime, squatters and environmental degradation. The municipalities have limited capacity to collect and dispose of waste. Urban sprawl is a big issue as our cities experience horizontal growth.

Zimbabwe: The CUO reminded us of initiatives started in Zimbabwe in the 1990s, but which have not been sustained. There were links between local authorities, but these are now not now functional. The issue of resources comes into play. Credibility of information is under question because it is easily manipulated for political gains. The central statistics and census figures have no credibility because of political manipulation.

Existing Networking Initiatives in Africa

Botswana: There is a National Information Coordinating Committee which gathers data from all sectors, including water, roads, sanitation. The system is being set up to be more universally accessible. Twinning of international cites has also brought some interesting ideas. The Mayors' forum also meets and shares ideas regularly.

Ethiopia: There is a forum of about 82 members (national and international). The intention is to change it to be more network driven.

Ghana: There is networking in place but it is government controlled.

Malawi: There are plans underway to use networks to facilitate urban structure planning. The biggest and newest network is the Malawi Urban Forum. Main challenges include technological and financial constraints.

Namibia: In Windhoek, a number of forums have been established. There is a programme initiated by the Minister of Land, funded by the Netherlands, and run by the Polytechnic of Namibia. However, some professional bodies in planning feel these students are not adequately prepared so there is an issue around certification standards.

Rwanda: Cabinet established a board two weeks ago to coordinate networking and planning.

South Africa: There are many networking initiatives in South Africa, so it is difficult to map who does what and to avoid duplication. We still don't optimise the use of communication technology. Knowledge capture and sharing takes a back seat to day to day work.

Tanzania: The Tanzanian Cities Network established 2006 now has nine members. The network looks at governance, sustainability and productivity and is busy preparing State of the Cities Report. All town planners in Tanzania must be members of the town planners' association in order to be legally registered.

Zimbabwe: There are several networks but there is limited collaboration between networks. Also, most of them are dormant and dysfunctional at the moment.

Annex 2: Workshop Programme & Aide Memoire

Promoting Sustainable Urban Development Networking in African Cities
SUD-Net Workshop
Townhouse Hotel, Cape Town
17-19 February 2009

Programme

Day 1 Tuesday 17th February

08.30 – 09.00 Registration (Outside Mostert Room, Conference Centre)

09.00 – 10.15 Opening session

- UN-HABITAT: Welcome & introduction to workshop – perspectives on urbanization (15 mins)
- Country groups: Buzz groups & summary of key urban challenges (25 mins)
- UN-HABITAT: Introducing SUD-Net, urban themes and challenges - Lars Reutersward (20 mins)
- Comments from the floor (15 mins)

10.15 – 10.45 Tea/Coffee

10.45 – 12.30 Opening session (continued)

- SIDA: Perspective on global priorities for sustainable urban development – Thomas Melin (20 mins)
- ACC: A perspective on advancing sustainable urban development through education, research and training in Africa – Edgar Pieterse (20 mins)
- Comments from floor/discussion (25 mins)
- UN-HABITAT: Presentation of the challenges, gaps and trends in linking education, research and training with policy and practice: Outcomes of a sub-regional study, UN-HABITAT, 2008 - Rose Osinde (15 mins)
- Questions from the floor/discussion (15 mins)
- Setting the pace: Defining workshop expectations & intended outputs - Helen Andreasson (10 mins)

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch

13.30 Depart for Site visit (Collection point: Reception area, Townhouse Hotel)

14.00 – 17.00 Site visit (Venue: Room 1, 6th Floor, Podium Block, Civic Centre, City of Cape Town)

Case study: Cape Urban Observatory – An initiative on knowledge development & sharing to improve urban development

18.00 – 19.30 Dinner talk (Venue: Mostert 1)

Climate change initiatives in the Western Cape, Dr Laureen Platzky, DDG: Western Cape Provincial Government

Country groups: Prepare brief (5 min, 3-4 bullet points) country presentations on key issues specific to that country for Day 2 (Plenary session, 09.00-10.30)

Day 2 Wednesday 18th Feb

9.00 – 10.30 Plenary session

- Country perspectives (60 mins)
- Discussion (20 mins)
- Introduction to working groups: objectives, formation, issues of clarification (10 mins)

10.30 – 11.00 Tea/Coffee

11.00 – 16.00 Working groups (1): Assessment of existing networks (national, subregional, regional) and gaps

Working group 1 – Civil society and academia (Venue: Imbizo 3)
Working group 2 – Planning practitioners/associations (Venue: Imbizo 4)
Working group 3 – Government and local government (Venue: Mostert 2+3)

Key issues/discussion points for each working group:
- Inventory of existing networks in Africa and their focus (not limited to the group composition – all working groups should explore issues beyond their representation)
- Identification of gaps and possible linkages
- Highlight challenges of linking research to practice and identification of means to bridge these gaps

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 16.00 Working groups (2): Identification of concrete actions and institutional form for SUD-Net Africa

Key issues/discussion points for each working group:
- Identify the support and the concrete actions needed to improve linkages and networking (regional, national and local level)
- Institutional implications to maximize synergies and partnerships per represented sector (government, civil society, academia)
- SUD-Net Africa: define role, possible starting points
- Discussion on mechanisms for monitoring proposed actions

16.00 – 16.30 Tea/Coffee

16.30 – 18.00 Plenary session

- Reporting from working groups (20 min/group)

- Comments/clarifications (30 mins)

18.30 – 20.00 SUD-Net Africa Launch (Cocktail event – Venue: Mostert 1)

Keynote: Mr Andrew Boraine, South African Cities Network/Cape Town Partnership
Statements by key stakeholders: Lars Reutersward (UN-Habitat), Thomas Melin (SIDA), Henrik Nolmark (MISTRA), Edgar Pieterse (ACC)

Country groups: Prepare concrete suggested next steps for SUD-Net Africa at country level and at regional level

Day 3 Thursday 19th Feb

09.00 – 10.30 Plenary session

- Country level actions in a regional perspective – presentations by countries (1 hour)
- Plenary discussion on country-level actions and linkages for regional impact (30 mins)

10.30 – 11.00 Tea/Coffee

11.00 – 12.30 Plenary session (continued)

- Summary of commonalities of country-level actions (30 mins)
- Definition of regional level concrete actions for SUD-Net Africa (30 minutes)
- Summary of workshop consensus points (Rapporteur)

12.30 – 13.30 Wrap up & Closing

- Closing remarks by Sida, UN-HABITAT, ACC

13.30 – 14.30 Lunch

14.30 – 17.00 Township tour (optional and by registration)

Collection point: Reception area of the Townhouse Hotel

Promoting Sustainable Urban Development Networking in African Cities

SIDA | ACC | UN-HABITAT
SUD-Net workshop
17-19 February 2008

Aide-memoire

1.0.   Challenges of urbanization

The majority of the world's population now lives in cities. By 2030, it is estimated that three-quarters of the global population will be living in urban areas, making the cities' role in the social and economic development of countries vital. Urbanization is closely associated with increasing levels of income and improvements in social indicators. Efficient cities allow for sustainable settlements and strong urban economies, which are essential for improving infrastructure, education and health, living conditions, and poverty alleviation.

The impact of rapid urbanization on human settlements has both positive and negative impacts, but more often than not, the negative impacts slow down progress in attaining development goals. One of the biggest costs to cities is environmental degradation, which compounds inequities and threatens the sustainability of development, but it is preventable with the right planning and management. Ensuring quality growth that is both sustainable and equitable is a challenge facing many cities, but specially those in the developing countries. Urbanization without sufficient economic growth or growth without jobs undermine the goals and aspirations of sustainable development, hence urban economic governance is a key pillar of sustainability.

The significance of these changes is that citizens and local governments now face formidable challenges, greater opportunity, and growing responsibility to actively address the economic health of their municipalities and the livelihood of their residents as a core component of a sustainable future. Processes of decentralization, the spatial attributes of urban governance, planning and management, and the strong bearing these have on economic development, make local governments strategic players in ensuring and promoting cooperation among the various partners and actors (e.g. public sector, private sector, local government and communities). Local governments have at their disposal a number of instruments, including land use and planning, infrastructure investment and financing, service delivery and a range of policy and regulatory tools which can be used to promote sustainable urban development in cities. But this requires strategic thinking, planning and governance that provide enabling conditions for sustainable territorial development and economic opportunities, for all.

African cities are currently confronted with the problem of responding to rapidly growing urban populations, whilst ensuring that cities remain inclusive, providing adequate shelter and basic urban services, ensuring environmental sustainability, as well as enhancing economic growth and development. Rapid population growth results in rural urban migration and consequently rural stagnations, with rapid urbanization leading to further strain on urban infrastructure and services, often increasing poverty levels. These problems have a spatial dimension and therefore participatory spatial decision-making is key in working toward their solution. The need to improve spatial decision-making to promote the sustainability of urban development within urban planning and management is widely recognized. Sustainable urban development therefore cannot be achieved unless there is integrated spatial planning that is also geared towards poverty

reduction. Spatial planning is required in order to promote sustainable urban development i.e. to satisfy the environmental, social, economic and physical requirement of city residents on a short- and long-term basis. However, the conventional systems of urban planning and management have been found to be inappropriate in promoting sustainable urban development and alternative approaches and tools are required.

At both the regional and national level, there is still a growing demand for city initiatives to strengthen the capacities of local authorities particularly within processes of decentralization and environmental changes and degradation, which have huge impacts on the economy and livelihoods. If cities are to come to terms with these challenges, they require leaders, managers and communities capable of adopting innovative and robust approaches to planning, developing, managing and financing growth for all citizens. Thus, the role of integrated planning, management and governance needs to be highlighted further in response to these emerging threats through strengthened networks which work with clear agendas and address priorities within the regions. It is also important to bridge the gap between teaching, research and practice through creating innovative learning systems that bring formal educational development opportunities to key urban stakeholders.

2.0.   Bridging the gaps between research, education, policy and practice

This workshop draws upon sub-regional studies undertaken by the Training and Capacity Building Branch of UN-HABITAT in April 2008. A situational analysis in eight SADEC countries[3] assessed the existing research areas; the approaches and linkages existing as regards sustainable development including planning and management; the gaps in professional expertise and networks between academia and practitioners; and the challenges of developing curricula and programmes that respond to current urban needs and demands. Results of this study will enable UN-HABITAT design interventions to address urban development challenges facing education, research, training within urban planning, management and governance contexts, particularly in light of urban economic development, decentralization processes and within the dynamics of environmental changes and threats.

The assessment showed that the levels of interaction between the education sector and the urban planning and development sectors differ from country to country, however some common gaps and challenges were identified:

- Curricula development and research in urban planning and development is mainly carried out by departments of geography, architecture and engineering, and that there is a need to expand professional interactions to include economic, social, legal, and governance components, also within the tertiary institutions.
- Gaps between urban planning policies and implementation practice leads to increased difficulties in coping with the challenges of rapid urban development
- Dependency on funded research as a general problem
- Need for more targeted capacity building programmes which also includes community level actors to promote broader participation in urban planning and development
- Lack of linkages between national research strategies and national development policies
- Rigidity of legal and institutional frameworks in implementing national research and development strategies; i.e. urban development choices being defined by law and not demand

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[3] Zambia, South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Malawi

This analysis brings to the fore the need for understanding and investing in processes that bring education, teaching, research, practice and policy together through a framework of interaction, funding, and knowledge management, so that agendas for both research and development interventions are not driven externally, but on demand to promote sustainable urban planning and development.

3.0. The Sustainable Urban Development Network

Based on such challenges and the need to provide a coherent framework that will enable global, regional, and local partners to promote and achieve sustainable urban development in cities, UN-HABITAT is supporting the development of a Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net). SUD-Net is an innovative network of global partners working with actors and existing networks to promote a multi-lateral and inter-disciplinary approach to sustainable urban development. The overall aim is to work at the local level to build the capacities of national governments, strengthen the power of decision-makers of local authorities and promote the inclusion of the community in decision-making processes.

SUD-Net responds to UN-HABITAT's global responsibility towards sustainable urban settlements. It is recognized that there is still a lack of adequate access, relevant forums for interaction and the necessary human, technical and financial capacities for promoting sustainable urban development. Promoting sustainable urban development is therefore a priority for most urban development partners, and is reflected in most urban policies.

Despite the existing knowledge on the impacts of rapid urban population growth and environmental changes, decision-makers and managers in many developing and least developed countries still lack the necessary capacities to leverage resources to implement sustainable urban development policies. SUD-Net serves as a key network hub for sustainable urbanization and will support cities to mobilize partners and networks, build partnerships, implement innovative, pro-poor projects and stimulate learning and knowledge sharing of good practices.

In addition, SUD-Net supports partners' efforts to enhance the capacities of institutions through improved governance and leadership in the context of decentralization. This is in recognition of the fact that most national and local governments going through reforms and decentralization processes often lack the influence, human, technical and financial resources to fulfill the responsibilities for managing urban and environmental changes.

The current focus is on the following priority themes:
- Governance;
- Environmental Planning and Management;
- Urban Economy;
- Education, Training and Research and
- Urban Planning

The entry points identified for implementing the above themes are: *decentralization, climate change, local economic development,* the *Habitat Partner University collaboration (education) and participatory urban planning respectively*.

One of the five SUD-Net components or priority themes is on urban planning. Here, the SUD-Net

aims for participatory urban planning and management approaches to be integrated into urban policies and legal frameworks for human settlements development, including the provision of infrastructure and services. Through the SUD-Net technical assistance will be provided to national and local governments on preparing and implementing urban plans using participatory methods. There will also be a strong focus on capacity building in order to support participatory planning and management. The SUD-Net also aims to work with networks and provide platforms for the promoting of integrated urban planning, as well as a means of information exchange and for the dissemination of good practices. There are clear linkages with the other priority themes, as participatory urban planning is an integral part of environmental planning and management, and in advancing improved governance and leadership within the decentralization processes.

4.0 Workshop on Promoting Sustainable Urban Development Networking in African Cities, February 2009

Substantive focus

Although the mandates of the research and technology institutes in most African countries purport to address national development, their efforts are often not well integrated with each other at the sector level resulting in lack of synergy, which undermines effective transfer between scientific discovery and technology development. (UN-HABITAT, 2008, Sub-regional report SADC). Higher learning curricula, research priorities and polices need to be defined in accordance with the demands and needs arising from urban environmental and development changes. It is important to bridge the gap between teaching, research and practice through creating innovative learning systems that bring formal educational development opportunities to key urban stakeholder groups. This will support to build a foundation for a stronger focus on education for sustainable urban development and address the current lack of skills and professional capacities to deal with climate change existing at national and local levels in Africa.

A mechanism is also required that enables urban players to interact and access up to date information (tools and guidelines, resource packages, documents) and feedback on the global, regional, national and local level debates, initiatives and activities on the broad areas of sustainable urban development.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in collaboration with the Africa Centre for Cities (ACC) and UN-HABITAT are organizing a workshop to bring together regional representatives from cities, education and research institutions and existing networks dealing with urban development issues, as well as key partners from local governments involved in policy-making and practice in urban planning and development. The workshop will help identify regional priorities that will set the agenda for SUD-Net Africa and define ways of promoting information exchange and interactions within both the regional and the global SUD-Net networks. .

Workshop Objectives

The objectives of the workshop are to bring together country representatives from Anglophone Africa; local authorities, city practitioners, researchers and other partners and networks to:

- Identify and strengthen existing urban planning networks in Africa, as well as identifying gaps and possible linkages

- Share experiences, highlight the challenges of linking research to practice and identify ways of bridging the gaps, including identifying the type of support needed for this
- Define the role of SUD-Net in the Africa region in promoting integrated urban planning, management and governance and enhancing the capacities of cities to address environmental changes
- Define a possible road map for making SUD-Net Africa active, useful and relevant in addressing the urban development challenges in the Africa region while linking to the global network of SUD-Net
- Launch the 'SUD-Net Africa' regional network.

Expected Outcomes of the Workshop

- Strengthened existing planning networks in Africa
- New partnerships amongst existing networks, cities, universities etc
- Creation and launch of the SUD-Net regional network to test SUD-Net modalities in the Africa context

Proposed participants

The selection of participants will follow the following principles:
- Ensuring a regional balance. The workshop will particularly draw representatives the from Anglophone regions of Africa.
- Cross-disciplinary and cross-sector representation from countries to ensure we have a critical mass.
- Invite existing relevant (educational, planning, governance etc) regional networks to the workshop

In order to maximize participation, a maximum of 40 delegates will be invited and an attempt will be made to cover at least 8 countries.

Annex 3: Participants matrix

Participants at the SUD-NET Workshop, 17-19 February 2009, Cape Town

Title	Name	Surname	Designation	Organisation	Address	Country	Contact	Email
Mr	Lukman	Abdul - Rahim	Programmes Director	Programmes Director of Peoples' Dialogue on Human Settlements - Civil Society	Art Centre, P. O. Box AC 493, Accra	**Ghana**		gbewaa@email.com victoria.abankwa@undp.org
Mr	Alemayehu Teshome	Abebe	Chairperson	CRDA/ Urban Development Forum	P O Box 28558 Kirkose Sub-City 1000, Addis Ababa	**Ethiopia**	+251 9111245947	liveethiopia@ethionet.et or Alemayehu_Teshome@yahoo.com
Mr	Ashraf	Adam	President	South African Planning Institute (SAPI)		**South Africa**	+27 837867644	sapi@worldonline.co.za or ashraf.adam7@gmail.com
Mr	Sampson	Agbeve	Municipal Development Planning Officer	Tema – Ashaiman Slum Up-Grading Project/Fund (Tamsuf),	C/O Ashaiman Municipal Assembly, Private Mail Bag, Ashaiman, P.M.B, Ashaiman	**Ghana**	+233 2 46196293	sampsonslessor@yahoo.ca
Ms	Helen	Andreasson	Associate Human Settlements Officer	Urban Environmental Planning Branch, Shelter and Sustainable Human Settlements Division (Global Division), UN-HABITAT	UN – Gigiri Complex P O Box 30030, 00100 Nairobi	**Kenya**	+254 20 7625013	Helen.andreasson@unhabitat.org
Mr	Anton	Arendse	Acting Chief Director	AMCHUD Secretariat; Dept of Housing	P/Bag X644, Pretoria	**South Africa**	+27 82 926 9210	anton@housing.gov.za
Prof	Seth	Asiama	Provost	College of Architecture	Kumasi	**Ghana**	+233 2	soasiama@yahoo.com or

Title	Name	Surname	Designation	Organisation	Address	Country	Contact	Email
				and Planning, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology			8152826	soasiama.cap@knust.edu.gh
Ms	Marie	Biermann	Strategy and Development Officer	ICLEI Africa Head Office, ICLEI Africa Secretariat	P O Box 5319 Tygervalley, 7536, Western Cape	**South Africa**	+27 788508209	Marie.biermann@iclei.org
Mr	Joel	Chaeruka	Chairman	Department of Rural and Urban Planning, University of Zimbabwe	Box Mp167, Mt Pleasant, Harare	**Zimbabwe**	+263 912980021	joelchaeruka@yahoo.com or joelchaeruka@sociol.uz.ac.zw
Mr	Vernouman	Endjala	Town and Regional Planner	Sustainable Development, City of Windhoek	P O Box 59 Windhoek 9000	**Namibia**	+264 812922927	nou@windhoekcc.org.na
Mr	Théogène	Karake	Secretary General	Top Management, Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA)	Remera – Rue de l'Umuganda, 3rd Floor Ets Nkubiri Alfred, BP 7249, Kigali	**Rwanda**	+250 08300095	tkarake@yahoo.fr or ralga@rwanda1.com
Mr	Gallican	Kayitaba	President of Land Commissioner	District Gasabo and Housing Bank, Land Commissioner and Technical Department of Housing Bank	Kigali	**Rwanda**	+250 08307974	kayitabag@yahoo.fr
Mr	Christopher Japhet	Kazeri	Senior Town Planner / AG City Planner	Urban Planning, Environment and Transport, Dar es Salaam City Council	P O Box 9084 Dar es Salaam	**Tanzania**	+255 784866778	japhchristo@yahoo.com
Ms	Nellie	Lester	Deputy Director - General	Urban and Rural Development, Department of Local Government	Private Bag x804 Pretoria	**South Africa**	+27 833035294	nelliel@dplg.gov.za or abigailm@dplg.gov.za

Title	Name	Surname	Designation	Organisation	Address	Country	Contact	Email
Ms	Sharon	Lewis	Knowledge Manager	South African Cities Network	P O Box 32160, Braafontein 2017, Johannesburg	**South Africa**	+27 836351445	Sharon@sacities.net
Mr	Christopher	Manyowa	Vice President	Zimbabwe Institute of Regional and Urban Planners	c/o Old Mutual Properties, 100 The chase (West). Emerald Hill, Harare	**Zimbabwe**	+263 11 215843	christopherma@oldmutual.co.zw or peter.mutavati@undp.org
Ms	C Ntombini	Marrengane	Urban Specialist	Africa Urban & Water – Anglophone, World Bank	Pro Equity Ct, 1st Fl, 1250 Pretorius Street, Hatfield 0028, Pretoria	**South Africa**	+27 823762924	nmarrengane@worldbank.org
Ms	Nayoka	Martinez - Bäckström	Programme Officer, Global Programmes	Department for Department Partnerships Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	Valhallavägen 199, SE - 105 25 Stockholm	**Sweden**	+46 70 6108785	Nayoka.martinez-backstrom@sida.se
Prof	Jossy	Materu	Chief	Urban Design and Planning Services Unit, UN - HABITAT	P O Box 30030, Nairobi 00100	**Kenya**	+254 710602635	Jossy.materu@unhabitat.org
Ms	Patience	Matsangaise	National Projects Coordinator	Dialogue on Shelter for the Homeless in Zimbabwe Trust	13 Harvey Brown Milton Park, Harare	**Zimbabwe**	+263 11 609426	patience@dialogshelter.co.zw or pmudimu@mweb.co.zw
Mr	Thomas	Melin	Lead Urban Specialist	Department for Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Services, Sida	Valhallavägen 199, 10525 Stockholm	**Sweden**	+46 70 6985058	Thomas.melin@sida.se
Ms	Keneilwe	Moseki	Executive Director	Environmental Vision for Greater Gaborone	Gaborone	**Botswana**	+267 71738776/	kenmos26@yahoo.co.uk

Title	Name	Surname	Designation	Organisation	Address	Country	Contact	Email
				Private Bag 000376 Gaborone			3913709	
Prof	Aloysius	Mosha	Associate Professor	Architecture and Planning, University of Botswana	Private Bag 0022, Gaborone	**Botswana**	+267 72150285	MOSHAAC@mopipi.ub.bw
Mr	Michael	Moyo	President	Malawi Institute Of Physical Planners	P.O. Box 30725, Lilongwe	**Malawi**	+265 8868 968	mike54moyo@yahoo.com
Dr	Robert	Muigai	Officer	Urban Development Branch, United nations Human Settlements Programme	P O Box 30030, Nairobi 00100	**Kenya**	+254 722476413	kibe.muigai@unhabitat.org
Dr	Casimir	Museruka	Vice Rector	Vice – Rector for Academics & Research, University of Kibungo (UNATEK)	BP 6 Kibungo, Ngoma District, Eastern	**Rwanda**	+250 08675437	muserukac@yahoo.com
Ms	Fenni – Fiindje	Nauyala	Deputy Director	Housing, Habitat, Planning and Technical Services Coordination	Private Bag 13289, Windhoek	**Namibia**	+264 813480565	fnauyala@mrlgh.gov.na
Mr	Henrik	Nolmark	Senior Advisor	The Mistra Centre for Urban Futures Initiative, MISTRA	c/o Nolmark Development AB, Tottvagen 28, SE-169 54, Solna	**Sweden**	+46 70 7777255	Henrik.nolmark@nodeonline.se
Mr	Yohane	Nyanja	Acting Director of Planning and Development	Planning And Development, Lilongwe City Assembly	Lilongwe City Assembly,Civic Offices,P.O.Box 30396,Capital City,Lilongwe 3	**Malawi**	+265 9950557 or 8773842	ynyanja@yahoo.com
Ms	Nancy	Odendaal	Project Coordinator Revitalising Planning Education	African Association of Planning Schools African Centre for Cities	University of Cape Town, P/Bag Rondebosch 7701, Cape Town	**South Africa**	+27 82537 8699	odendaaln1@ukzn.ac.za

Title	Name	Surname	Designation	Organisation	Address	Country	Contact	Email
			Research Project					
Ms	Rose	Osinde	Human Settlements Officer	Urban Environmental Planning Branch / Sustainable Urban Development Network, UN-HABITAT	UN – Gigiri Complex P O Box 30030, 00100 Nairobi	**Kenya**	+254 725492987	Rose.osinde@unhabitat.org
Prof	Sue	Parnell	Professor	Environmental and Geographical Science, University of Cape Town	P/Bag Rondebosch, 7701, Cape Town	**South Africa**	+27 727829006	Susan.Parnell@uct.ac.za
Prof	Edgar	Pieterse	Director	African Centre for Cities, School of Architecture, Planning & Geomatics	University of Cape Town, P/Bag Rondebosch 7701, Cape Town	**South Africa**	+27 21 650 2367	Edgar.Pieterse@uct.ac.za
Ms	Christine	Platt	President	Commonwealth Association of Planners	7 Canal Drive, Westville 3630, Kwazulu - Natal	**South Africa**	+27 834070939	plattcf@mweb.co.za
Prof	Lars	Reuterswar d	Director	Global Division, UN - HABIBITAT	P O Box 30030, Nairobi 00100	**Kenya**	+254 20 7623103	Lars.Reutersward@unhabit at.org
Ms	Lynne	Smit	Journalist	Of Course Media c/o Isandla Institute	P O Box Mill Street, Gardens 8010 Cape Town	**South Africa**	+27 21 4658751	lynne@ofcourse.co.za
Mr	Mavuto	Tembo	Head of Department	Department of Land Management, Mzuzu University	Private Bag 201, Luwinga, Mzuzu 2	**Malawi**	+265 8203143	tembomd@yahoo.co.uk or tembomd@mzuni.ac.mw
Mr	Felix	Tukula	Commissioner for Physical Planning	Physical Planning Department, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources	P O Box 30385 Capital City of Lilongwe 3	**Malawi**	+265 9950751	felixtukula@yahoo.co.uk
Mr	Rafael	Tuts	Chief	Urban Environmental Planning Branch, UN-HABITAT	P O Box 30030, Nairobi 00100	**Kenya**	+254 733894596	Raf.Tuts@unhabitat.org

Title	Name	Surname	Designation	Organisation	Address	Country	Contact	Email
Mr	Kameeta	Walter	Executive Council Member Chairperson: Khomas Region	Environmental Health, Public Service Union of Namibia	P O Box 21662, Windhoek, Khomas - Region	**Namibia**	+264 812965821	psun@iway.na or linda@psun.com.na
Prof	Vanessa	Watson	Exco Member	Architecture, Planning and Geomatics / African Planning Schools Project, School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics,	University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch 7700, Cape Town	**South Africa**	+27 834790932	Vanessa.Watson@uct.ac.za